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Sincerely,

Anna Groff

Interim Editor
The Mennonite

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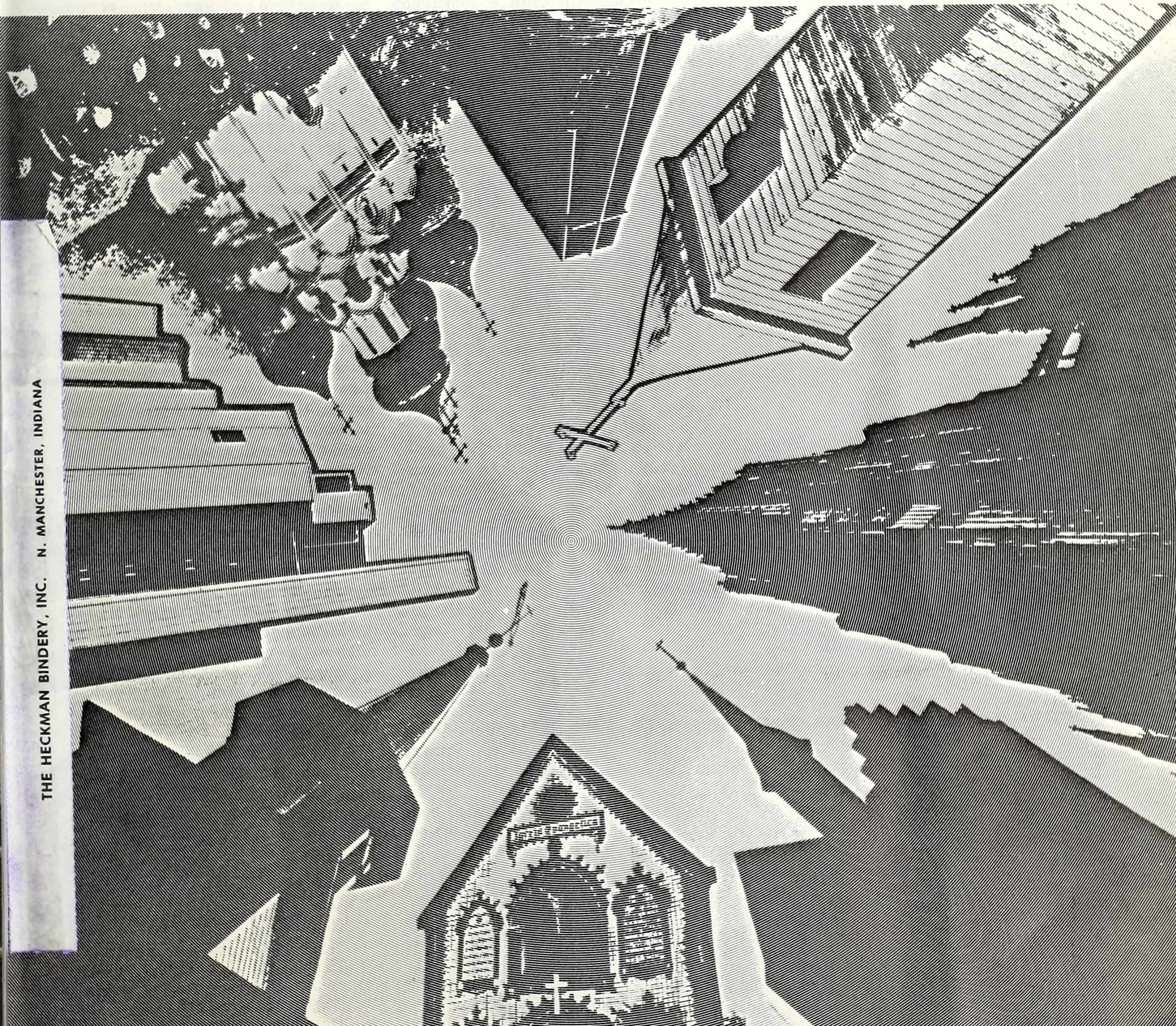
The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93: 1 JANUARY 3, 1978

Inside this issue: Historic peace churches
Mennonite World Conference



THE HECKMAN BINDERY, INC. N. MANCHESTER, INDIANA

the historic peace churches

(Friends, Brethren and Mennonites)

Dale W. Brown

As a lad on the broad Kansas plains, the Brethren were few and scattered. When questioned about our identity, I was taught to say, "We are something like Mennonites and Quakers." Ever since I have been striving to learn what these close relatives are really like. Whether we like it or not, we have been lumped together by others as the three historic peace churches, often as "those peculiar people who will not take oaths or go to war."

Our first major rendezvous occurred early in the eighteenth century in Germantown, which German Pietists had acquired through a real-estate deal with the Quakers. Appreciating the freedom and hospitality of their English rulers, the Mennonites and Brethren voted for the Quakers to keep alive, as long as possible, the holy experiment. Our ancestors were dubbed "plain people" along with Moravians and Schwenckfelders, who then maintained an identity with the peace groups more than in subsequent decades.

Contemporary Mennonite, Amish, and Hutterite groups stem from the evangelicals of the Anabaptist wing of the Radical Reformation of the sixteenth century, the first congregation forming at Zurich in 1525. Anabaptist, which means literally "rebaptizer," has become a label easier to wear, since it is currently faddish in many circles. Radical movements in England erupted over a century later.

The nickname Quaker came from some of the alleged manifestations of the meetings associated with George Fox, who discovered the Light in 1647. Though bearing graciously and even proudly their nickname, most self-designations within Quakerism have preferred the name Friends.

The Brethren emerged with the baptism of eight in Schwarzenau in 1708, out of the radical Pietist ferment of a movement which was in reaction to the decadence of the period following the Thirty Years' War, as well as the rigid orthodoxy of German Lutheranism. That the Brethren felt a real affinity with the earlier Anabaptists is indicated by the fact they were often called *new Taufer* ("new Baptists") to distinguish them from the older Reformation movement. Because of the espousal of triple immersion, they have frequently needed to react to their nickname Dunker. Wearing out the name German Baptist Brethren, contemporary groups feature the name Brethren in titles of self-identity.

The appearance of the word *radical* to refer to all three movements historically can point to the strong sense of primitivism which has been present, namely, the desire to return to the spirit and stance of the early church. In addition to this use of radical in its meaning of getting to the root or source, it refers to a stance against the status quo—the spirit of nonconformity—the necessity because of obedience to Christ to sometimes stand over against fallen society. The practice of believers' baptism involved not simply a belief that faith should precede baptism but also represented a fundamental break with the concept of Christendom in which required membership in both state and church was assumed.

Emigrating and living side by side, the peace churches have known the agony of proselyting each other's flocks, of circulating polemical tracts against each other on issues such as baptism, and of attempting to ward off militant and materialistic inroads of the culture. In our schisms we have shared similar struggles. The traditionalist stance of the Quaker Wilburites to hold fast to what is good have their counterparts in the posture of the Old German Baptist Brethren as well as the spirit penetrating many Mennonite divisions. The growing feeling of identity with revivalistic and evangelical moods in American Protestantism can be easily illustrated by the pilgrimage of the Progressive (Ashland) Brethren, developments in the Evangelical Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren churches, and the impact of the holiness movement on evangelical Friends. Problems of dealing with the present pluralism, as well as the issues involved in ecumenical relationships with others, are similarly experienced in the larger denominations—Friends General Conference, Friends United Meeting, the Mennonite Church, the General Conference Mennonite Church, and the Church of the Brethren. The more liberal humanistic wing of Quakerism stemming from the Hicksites is reflected in many Brethren and Mennonites.

Though the differences within have sometimes appeared to be more major than the differences among the historic peace churches, there have been some obvious differences in understanding and practices. The more friendly environs of the early Quakers, as compared to the brutal and extensive persecution experienced by the sixteenth-century Anabaptists, has meant the Quakers have been more optimistic concerning the redeemability of society than have the more pessimistic Mennonites who have often formulated ethics for two kingdoms. Though suspicion of the world has resulted in a stronger stance of nonconformity, the Mennonites have nevertheless been more missionary, which along with their forced emigrations may account for their 600,000 world membership in contrast to the approximately 250,000 for the Brethren and some 200,000 for the Quakers.

The Brethren, with their twin historical rootage in Anabaptism and Pietism (a movement with Quaker experiential emphases), have found themselves moving in their relationship with the world from an Anabaptist to a Quaker position. This may have the advantage of a beautiful combination, but it has also probably meant that the Brethren have suffered more inferiority and identity crises. The Quakers are less churchly; the Mennonites are less cooperative; and the Brethren have been less articulate about their roots. Though all three traditions are not highly sacramental, Friends have feared the idolatry of outward forms, repudiating outward forms of baptism and communion. Outsiders, however, have observed the beautiful appropriation of symbols in public witness such as the sailing of a ship of medical supplies to Hanoi. Theologically, the greater emphasis on the inner life has made the Quakers both more mystical and humanitarian; the focus on biblical obedience to the way of the cross has meant that the Mennonites have a greater theology of suffering, as well as a more structured and disciplined life-style; and the desire to maintain relationships has made the Brethren more ecumenical and open to others.

Such traditional distinctions become blurred in actual life. Not enough has been done in attempting to articulate and proclaim what the peace churches have in common. The refusal to take an oath may point to the repudiation of civil religion in all three traditions.

In the *Nachfolge* theme of the Anabaptists and the Quaker accent on Christ as the present teacher, there has been a shared emphasis on discipleship. Such has placed the peace churches in the ethical or left wing of Christianity because of the insistence that one cannot separate one's relationship with God from relationships with brothers and sisters. Reacting against the one-sided Protestant emphasis on justification as forgiveness, the peace church tradition shares the optimism that the God who is good enough to forgive us is powerful enough to change us and enable us to become followers of the Master. This ethical focus on discipleship provides the foundation for the more unique pacifist stance, which John Howard Yoder believes is enough by itself to justify the separate existence of our traditions. If Christendom favored adultery, God would call forth people to testify to the sanctity of marriage. Thus, Yoder suggests, due to the near universal acceptance of war by Christendom, God has called forth a special peace witness.

Peace church theologians have liked to maintain that we are neither Catholic nor Protestant. They point to a strong theology of community which runs counter to Protestant individualism on the one hand and hierarchical Roman Catholic polity on the other. The Spirit comes as the community gathers itself around the Word; being the church is in itself a powerful act. We must point, in some ways in our own life together, to that sense of justice, brotherhood, peace, and righteousness which we are proclaiming to the world in the vision of the kingdom coming.

The peace churches are unique in historically proclaiming a realizing eschatology (a view of last things). Namely, because of the confidence that the kingdom will come and be victorious in God's time, we can begin to participate in its coming now—experience a foretaste; the firstfruits. This has led to the service posture and humanitarian programs in each of our traditions.

We need to extend this list of our commonalities. But we must also confess our sins. Our emphasis on community has often degenerated into a clannishness which has kept out the Spirit of Christ as we have built barriers against others. Our focus on discipleship has often been translated into a narrow legalism in which rules have been regarded as more important than souls. We have been tempted to conform our biblicism to American popular religion instead of being faithful to the call to suffering love. Though peace churches, we have too often fought around personalities and ethnic concerns rather than valid concerns of the gospel. Though we have often fought to retain our denominational identities, we have failed to witness to the biblical distinctives for which we have been called out.

But there are, praise God, new stirrings amongst us. Recently the Faith and Life movement among the Friends has constituted a fruitful dialogue between the major groups. While more liberal Friends, often located in the East, have been rediscovering the christological emphasis of Fox, evangelical or western Quakers have been looking anew at the historic and biblical peace witness. Some Mennonites are striving to add to their nonresistant stance a greater involvement in struggles for justice and peace. The last few years have seen a strong Brethren heritage mood emerge in the Church of the Brethren. This ferment in the peace churches may well mean that the time may be ripe for coming together for joint proclamations of our common heritage to Christendom and the world as well as for prophetic and servant ministries.

At the initiative of the Quakers, the historic peace churches are currently joining together in a New Call to Peacemaking. We have often come together in response to signs of militarization, threats to religious freedom, or to specific acts of government regarding military conscription. The present call may be a first, in that we are coming together at the initiative of the Spirit to explore together the biblical, historical, and theological bases for peacemaking and the possible implications for our present mission. Regional conferences are being held for members of our traditions, culminating in a major conference at Green Lake, Wisconsin, in October. An early working document of this effort expresses the wish that the new call "might combine the Mennonite insistence that we follow the way of Christ whatever the costs, with the Quaker enthusiasm concerning the possibilities of what the Spirit might do with such faithfulness, with the Brethren desire to share the witness with other Christians and pilgrims in the world."

At the 1972 Republican Party convention in Miami Beach, a Quaker antiwar protester, dressed in black to symbolize the specter of death, sat in the lobby of the hotel holding a baby, the symbol of new life and hope.

Dyckman – Unity

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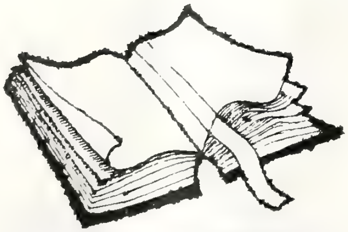
In the beginning

To many people the creation account in Genesis is a test. The question they want to ask immediately is, "Is it true or not?" Depending on how you answer, they then put you into a category, such as fundamentalist or modernist. I'd like, for a change, not to start there. Instead, let's simply start with the question, "What does it teach us about God as creator?" This is not a cop-out. It's just that this is the most important question that needs to be asked of the creation account. I hope to get to the other question in a later column.

If you ask people to describe what God did in creation, most would tell you that God made everything out of nothing, that he created not only the universe as we know it, but also the matter that makes up the universe. Let's take a fresh look at Genesis 1 and see what the Bible says.

The usual translation of the first verse of the Bible says something like this: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Actually, a better translation would be, "When God began to create the heavens and the earth." It is an introduction to verse two which tells what things were like when God began to create. Three things already existed when God began to create—chaos, darkness, and wind. The author is not so much interested in presenting God as the creator of matter, but as a God who, out of a chaotic mess, brought order. As we read on in Genesis 1, we can see that in each of the first three days of creation something already existed. The first day darkness is assumed to exist; the second day, water; the third day land is not created, but appears when the waters are collected.

If this is the case, then in what sense is God creating the world? Let's look at what he does. The first day he calls light into existence, then "divides" the light from the darkness. The second day he makes the "firmament" so as to divide the waters. On the third day he has the waters collected to one place, so that the dry ground appears—again an act of separation. And finally, on the fourth day, he calls into existence the "lights" in the heavens, again to divide—the day from the night, the seasons and the years. If we think about this, it appears that what God is creating is order. From the primal soup described in verse two, God brings about an orderly universe by systematically making the divisions and separations which are essential in life as we know it.



Open your Bible

That is all well and good, you might say, but what about life? Didn't God create the spark of life out of nothing at all? Again, if we look at the account carefully, we see something rather different from what we have come to expect. God does not directly order the living things into existence, but instead he addresses the earth and waters and tells *them* to bring forth life. On the third day he commands the earth to bring forth grasses and other plants; on the fifth day he commands the waters to "teem" with living things; and on the sixth day he commands the earth to bring forth living creatures. It is almost as if, after God has brought about an orderly universe out of the original chaos, he now commands it to bring forth the life that it is now capable of sustaining.

So why do we call this an account of creation? It sounds more like an account of division and multiplication! Perhaps our idea of what the word *create* means in the Bible needs to be revised. Actually, after the initial statement, "When God began to create," the word *bara,* 'create,' is used only two other times in the story. Usually the everyday word *casah,* 'make,' is used.

The two times when *bara* 'create' is used do seem to be significant, however. It is used in verse twenty-one with the creation of the sea monsters, and again in the creation of mankind in verse twenty-seven. In both cases the teller of the story wanted to emphasize God's direct activity in the bringing about of the creature. In the first case, it was to dispel any doubts about there being some primordial Loch Ness monster which was outside of God's creative providence. In the second case, it was to make clear the close connections which exist between God and human beings. They are created "in the image and likeness of God."

What can we learn about God and his activity in the universe from this story of creation? In the first place, we learn that God is not so much the originator as the one who orders the universe and causes its fertile flourishing. The story tells us that the natural order and the fertility that exist are for our good and are the result of God's will. In this way the activity of God the creator is not a once-for-all type of thing, but is something we can experience every day in the orderliness and fertility of the world about us. God is not some impersonal force which magically brought everything into existence and then stepped back from it. He is a personal God who acted and continues to act in the world so that we might exist and relate to him. *Perry Yoder, part-time faculty member, Bethel College, North Newton; and part-time staff, Commission on Home Ministries, Newton, Kansas*

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Mennonite World Conference
(the first three conferences)

Gerhard Ens

The idea of a Mennonite World Conference emerged from a session of the Conference of South German Mennonites on June 24, 1924. They suggested a twofold celebration of the four-hundredth anniversary of the first known believers' baptism on January 25, 1525. It was to consist first of a special commemorative service on January 25, 1925, in every Mennonite congregation in the world, and second, of a large-scale celebration to which the worldwide Mennonite community would send delegates. The suggested locale of such a celebration was Switzerland, the cradle of the Anabaptist movement.

The next official step took place at a Bible conference at Weierhof on March 7, 1925, where a provisional program for such a celebration was adopted and two weeks later mailed with an invitation to the Mennonite press and Mennonite congregations and conferences in Europe and North America.

First world conference

This celebration was to become the first Mennonite World Conference. By today's standards it was not a large gathering. The official publication lists about thirteen delegates (pages 4-5) and a few guest speakers. The frontispiece photograph, entitled *Gesamtteilnehmer der Weltkonferenz in Zurich* (total number of participants of the World Conference in Zurich), shows approximately eighty persons. There might, of course, have been a larger group at the sessions in Basel.

The contents of the program, appropriately, are reminiscent of the event which was celebrated. Jakob Kroeker, formerly from Russia then in Wernigerode in the Harz Mountains, brought what could be called the keynote address, the *Festansprache,* on Sunday morning. It was a renewal sermon based on Psalm 85. Speakers included Samuel Nussbaumer, Christian Schnedbele, T. O. Hylkema, and others. The only American delegate to be mentioned in the official publication was H. J. Krehbiel.

Sunday and Monday (June 14 and 15) were spent in Basel in the Vereinshaus Nadelberg. June 16 was spent in Zurich, partly on a pilgrimage through the Grossmuenster, the Zwingli museum, and the council chambers (Rathaus) where the famous debates of 1523 and 1524 were held, and partly as a commemorative celebration in which the conference delegates and representatives of the Reformed Church as well as members of the academic community of Zurich participated.

Perhaps the most interesting input to this first conference was made by representatives of two groups who could not be present. One was a letter from Elder Jakob Rempel, the delegate from the Mennonite churches in the Soviet Union. While Rempel had been able to secure permission to leave Russia, he was not permitted to enter Switzerland, the very place where he had spent a number of years before the war in university and seminary. He traveled to the German-Swiss boundary where he was met by a delegation from the conference. From here he sent a letter in which he pleaded for the formation of a permanent structure which would embrace all of the Mennonite churches around the world (*Mennonitischer Weltbund*) in order to further the cause of the kingdom of God in which "swords shall be fashioned into plowshares and spears into sickles" (pages 152-157 of the official report).

The other was a letter from the Central Immigrants' Committee in Canada where by this time some 8,700 immigrants from Russia had arrived. They had one special plea, which was to hasten the processing of those emigrants who were detained in Germany because of alleged trachoma infection. They urged the world body to insist on better medical care for the detainees and abolition of the detention camp at Lechfeld near Augsburg.

The idea of convening from time to time as a world body of Mennonites on a more or less regular basis was already expressed with general approval at the Basel conference in 1925. The original idea of a biennial or triennial meeting was, however, found to be quite impractical, and so the idea of a conference every six years was given tacit approval. As time went by, the likely year for the next conference became 1931 and the projected place either Marienburg or Elbing. But then events in Russia intervened. In 1929 there occurred the so-called flight to Moscow. Possibly up to 10,000 Mennonites from all over the Soviet Union converged on Moscow and besieged the officials for passports; 5,700 of these were able to enter Germany.

The second conference

It was the plight of these people that caused the hasty convening of what came to be called the *Welthilfskonferenz* (World Aid Conference) in the Free State of Danzig from August 31 to September 3, 1930. It was a conference which was to arouse consciences, provide information on needs, and coordinate efforts to help.

Again the thought was expressed at the close of the second world conference to continue the periodic worldwide meetings.

The third conference

Christian Neff of Weierhof was charged with the responsibility of initiating a third world convention of Mennonites. In view of the economic and political turmoil of the times it seems almost miraculous today that another world conference did take place before the war. The occasion for the third meeting in 1936 was another anniversary, this time the four-hundredth anniversary of the conversion and baptism of Menno Simons. Appropriately, Holland was chosen as the place of the gathering. The assemblies took place in Amsterdam, Elspeet, and Witmarsum. The emphasis this time was on the history of the northern wing of the Anabaptist movement, but a great deal of attention was also paid to the Mennonites in North America and the new Mennonite settlements in Latin America.

Toward Wichita

According to H. S. Bender at the sixth Mennonite World Conference at Kitchener, Ontario, the idea of ecumenism among many of the world's Mennonites was so new and in some circles so suspect (after all, we had spent four centuries separating from each other), that something like an "excuse" was needed for each of the three early conferences. It was an idea that caught on, however. Neither wars nor political upheavals have been able to halt the growth of a worldwide Mennonite organization. Harold Bender said at the Kitchener conference, "I have sometimes been accused of being a Mennonite 'ecumaniac.' All I can say is that I love all my brethren. If that is a sin, I must plead guilty."

The writer was in the interpreters' booth when these words were spoken. He will never forget the thrill that he experienced as he repeated these words in German for the German-speaking participants of the conference.

The tenth Mennonite World Conference will convene at Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30.

A Meetinghouse article

MCC to assist in Vietnam wheat shipment

Church World Service has launched a nationwide campaign in the United States to provide 10,000 metric tons of wheat to Vietnam. This is 110 railroad hopper cars. Mennonite Central Committee has committed about 120 tons of wheat to the shipment. The wheat will be solicited from farmers in Nebraska, North Dakota, Montana, Oklahoma, and Kansas.

Vietnam suffers from a food shortage of 1.2 million metric tons of grain—enough to feed over seven million people for one year. The immediate cause is unusual weather during 1976-77 which brought a cold, harsh winter to the northern part of the country and both drought and flooding to the south. The long-term causes of the shortage are war related. By the end of the war, field and forests were poisoned with chemical defoliants, irrigation systems were destroyed, and dikes keeping out seawater had been destroyed. More than a million children under seven years need special high-protein foods according to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.

In preparation for the shipment, Church World Service representative Doug Beane visited Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon, and confirmed that facilities for storage and milling, as well as transportation, were adequate. The wheat will be used largely in schools and hospitals in the form of bread and noodles, and will be received by the Viet My committee. It is the same group that has hosted all MCC delegations in the past two years.

India emergency continues

Relief, cleanup, and medical work continue to be the major focus of Mennonite assistance in Gunter district of cyclone-battered Andhra state in India. The area was devastated by a November 20 cyclone which left 15,000 dead in Gunter district alone.

Many of the fields in the district are still flooded, and fallen trees litter them as well as the roads. Rice was ready for harvesting when the storm struck. One of the dilemmas of the near future is how to employ the thousands of farmers who will not be able to begin again until planting season returns and, with their harvest destroyed, need a way to earn money to feed their families. Mennonite Central Committee worker Henry Fast has been assigned to planning alternatives for employment. Fast will also provide guidance on returning the land to productivity since land washed by tidal waves must be rid of salt residue.

Indian Mennonites and MCC are working together with Village Reconstruction Organization (VRO). With four Indian Mennonite doctors participating, VRO had six medical teams at work by November 28 and planned to field another four by early December. Clothing, blankets, medicine, and bandages have been distributed. Milk powder has also been provided. Eighty Indian Mennonite volunteers are active in cleanup, surveying, and coordination of tasks.

"It is apparent, as in the Bihar famine, that the voluntary agencies have a significant role," noted A. C. Lobe, MCC country representative. "There is love and caring in the responses of the voluntary agencies that is sometimes lacking in the government response."

Policeman disciples church

A one-day workshop on discipleship in the Mennonite Church in Rosemary, Alberta, was led by Henry Eckert, a Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer from Winnipeg, Manitoba.

During the November 19 session, Eckert shared some of his spiritual problems before finding the Christian help and fellowship he needed. He emphasized the need for the church to relate to new converts, and said that if the average Christian is weak in witness then the church cannot grow. The Navigator Series was cited as a teaching tool for new Christians.

Persons in the Rosemary Church were impressed with Eckert's biblical knowledge, and although there was disagreement on some doctrinal points, the workshop was deemed successful.

Frank Epp

Epp seeks federal Liberal nomination

Frank Epp, forty-eight-year-old president of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario, has joined the Liberal party of Canada, and has announced his intention to seek the Liberal nomination in the new federal riding (equivalent to U.S. district) of Waterloo in the next election. He is one of six persons interested in the nomination, but the first to formally declare himself in the race.

Epp said he decided to become actively involved in politics last spring mainly because of two issues—national unity and the economy. He picked the Liberals because he felt that party was the best equipped to deal with those issues. Until June 1977, he was a member of the New Democratic Party, being particularly drawn by their creativity in frontier issues such as medicare. But his nine-year membership in the federal advisory board on immigration gradually drew him to the Liberal Party.

Canada has three political parties which can claim some measure of national support—Liberals, Progressive Conservatives, and New Democrats. The present government is Liberal, led by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau.

Epp already has a team of workers seeking support for his nomination in all areas of the riding.

In an editorial commenting on his candidacy, the *Elmira Independent* (December 7) stated that Frank Epp is an "exceptional candidate for Canada's parliament," a person who "comprehends both global issues and local needs," and one who "is almost certain to be a creative force both within the Liberal caucus and in many public forums."

Frank's educational background includes studies in education, theology, social sciences, journalism, and history. He has taught, worked as editor of *The Canadian Mennonite,* and been a part-time pastor.

Manila crusade draws 400,000

In five days Billy Graham preached to 412,000 Filipinos during his metro-Manila crusade. The last meeting, Sunday afternoon, November 27, brought 150,000 Filipinos to the sweltering heat of Rizal Park. Graham described the crusade as "historic in my ministry."

Graham's first crusade in the Far East in two years caused 22,512 persons to come forward as inquirers. The crusade received full cooperation from the Filipino government of President Ferdinand Marcos.

Bishop Eugenio Filio, chairperson of the National Council of Churches of the Philippines, said, "In my fifty years as a Christian, and forty years as a minister, I have seen nothing like this. Asia is searching for something and many found it here tonight. I have never seen the upper echelon of government involved in a religious movement like this before, and it will mean something to the Filipino in the months and years to come."

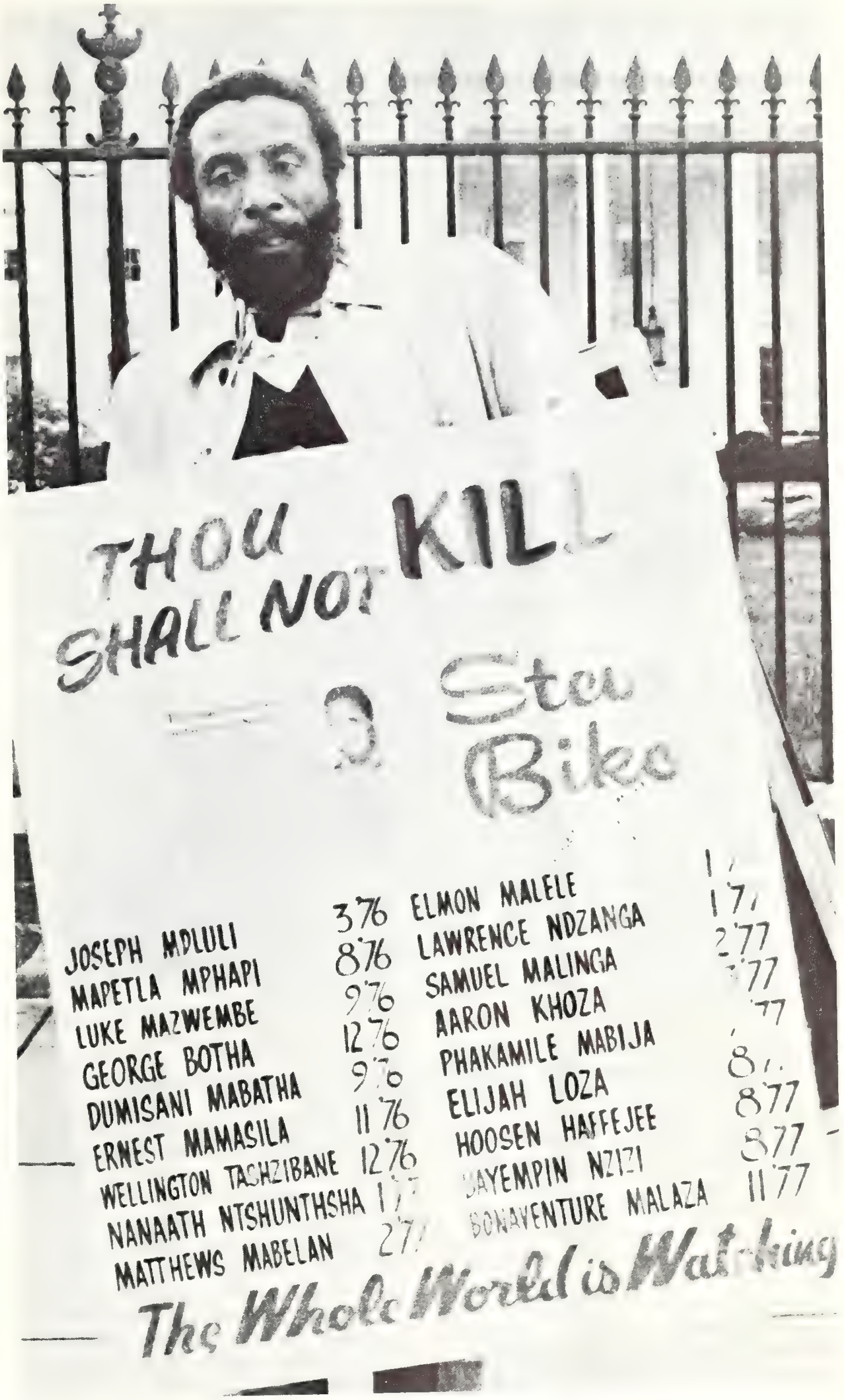
Elim has building plans

Well-worn buildings and an anticipated increase in enrollment have spurred Elim Bible Institute supporters to consider a new campus, as well as new buildings. The Altona school is supported by the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba. Thirty-four of the forty-two churches in the conference were represented at the December 3 meeting.

The school reopened three years ago and has experienced growing interest and support since then. The present enrollment is forty-two.

At the meeting the main question confronting delegates was whether the school should stay at its present location, move to a new six-acre campus in Altona, or move to a site at or near the conference's camp, Camp Assiniboia. If the school kept its present campus, renovations would be necessary. The main expenses in all options include a new student residence for about 100 students, a classroom-dining hall complex, and a combination auditorium-gymnasium, each costing about one-third million dollars.

The delegate body unanimously accepted a resolution asking the Manitoba conference executive and the Bible school board to appoint a joint commission which would plan the future location of Elim Bible Institute, the size of the buildings, work out a plan for financing the construction, and oversee the actual building. The proposal is to be brought to the annual meeting of the Manitoba conference before any construction begins.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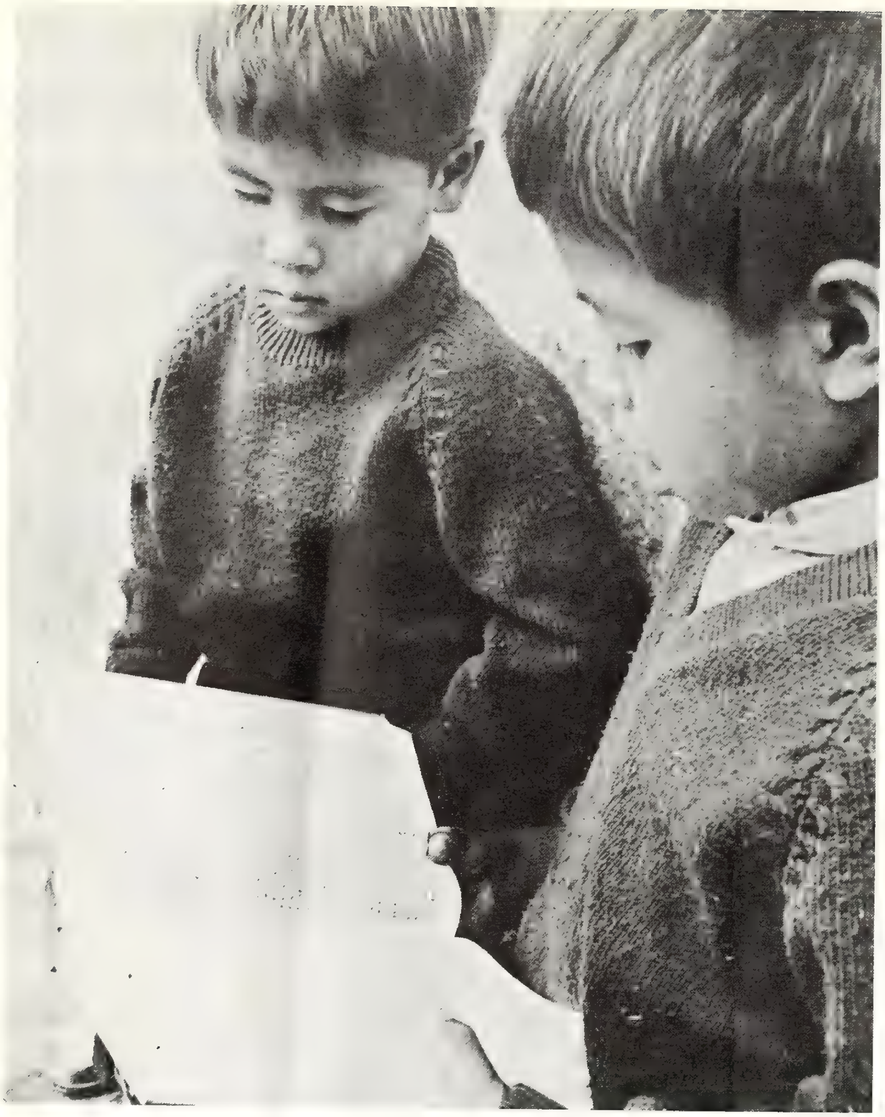
The Whole World is Watching

Dick Gregory leads human rights protest

Comedian Dick Gregory, shown in front of the White House, wears a sandwich board sign protesting killings in South Africa. After leading protesters at the Executive Mansion, Gregory was later arrested as the group demonstrated near the South African Embassy.



Two Nepali children take a look at the new Nepali Bible.

Nepali have new Bible

Aha! What a good Word the Lord has given.
When I read the Word, how greatly my desire grows.
When I read the Word, then my heart fills with joy.

This thanksgiving hymn summarizes the happiness a complete translation of the Bible is bringing to Christians in Nepal. Twenty years of work by the Bible Society of the United Mission to Nepal were celebrated at a Thanks-for-the-Bible service in Kathmandu, October 30. Three large boxes of Bibles were available to the Kathmandu congregation, and the occasion was "an experience of a lifetime—even rarer than that, and something very special" reflected Jonathon Lindell, a pioneer missionary to Nepal.

Although a Nepali New Testament has been in use since 1900 and was extensively revised in the 1960s, a 1914 translation of the Old Testament has been out of print for a generation, and in fact there have not been ten copies of that translation among the Christians in Nepal for the past thirty years.

"From different parts of the meeting hall, people thanked God for the steps along the way—careful deskwork, meetings, travel, delays, printing, binding, packing, transportation, for the money given, for the people who worked, and now for the Bible in their hands," writes Lindell.

Mennonite Central Committee, a member of the United Mission to Nepal, has been involved in health, economic, and technical development programs in the mountainous Himalayan kingdom since 1957. Presently thirty Protestant mission and church agencies from Australia, Europe, India, Japan, and North America cooperate in UMN.

Social workers evaluate themselves

Mennonite social workers, meeting November 18-20 at Goshen (Indiana) College, agreed that justice is the proper end of social service.

About ninety men and women participated in the workshop which centered about justice and social service. Is social work distinctly Christian, or is it a secularization of the Judeo-Christian ethic? Do professional social workers support a social and economic establishment of questionable value to the client, or are they able to individually emulate biblical justice and the service of Christ? These and other questions were discussed.

Lester Glick, professor of social work at the University of Mississippi, stated that in 1950 not one graduate holding a master of social work degree existed in the Mennonite constituency, but today between 1,100 and 1,500 social work graduates have joined the professional ranks.

Keynote speaker Alan Keith-Lucas, University of North Carolina, said that Christians have three options in relating to the institutionalism of service: (1) They can offer personal services to a selected group in need, such as the parents of abused children or victims of rape. (2) They can join the system and try to give it "a bit of Christian flavor or add a bit of evangelism to it." (3) They can be both critics of the system as well as being witnesses to something different.

During a session on justice, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries professor Millard Lind underscored two tenets of justice as required by the God of Israel—that attention should focus on the poor, the needy, the weak and the orphans; and that justice should be tied solely to Israelite monotheism, not the state law. "Don't let the structures of this world become your source of social justice," Lind warned.

The workshop represented dialogue across disciplines (theology and social work) and agencies (academic and service). Certain convictions did emerge. As well as agreeing that justice is the proper end of social service, there was consensus that Christian social servants must find their identification with the poor, and that the needy must be involved in the assessment of their own needs. But the unique contribution of the church in social service was not established.

Faith is first, says Risingsun

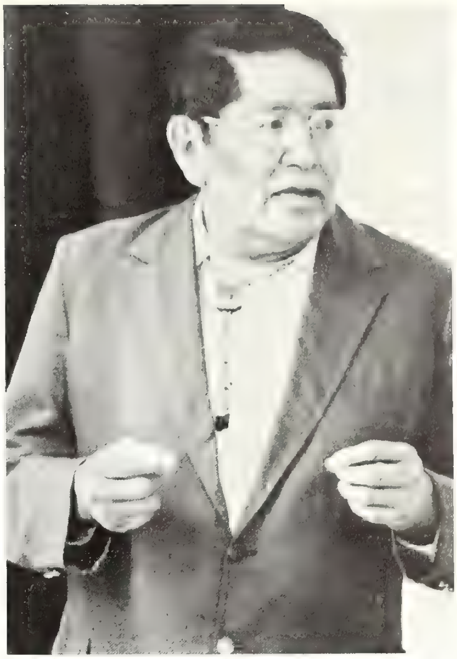
Ted Risingsun, a native American from Busby, Montana, was the recent Theological Center guest at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana.

In a forum address to the AMBS students and faculty, Ted Risingsun related some of his struggles before becoming a Christian and how his whole life and ministry to the needs of his people has been radically changed since his conversion. He shared of his vision of development among the Northern Cheyenne, who are marking the one-hundredth year since they surrendered to the U.S. Army. His plans call for "working from within" his people rather than "transplanting outside ways in."

The direction of his work was determined when he saw how all the outward needs of "proper clothes, proper education, and proper housing" were all being met by government aid programs. In light of all these programs to "westernize the Cheyenne," he soon grew painfully aware of the lack of "organized efforts to reach the inward man." This burden he bears most deeply in trying to bring to his people a change, first and foremost in their inward life; a real encounter with Jesus Christ. Internal change must come first before any external programs in employment or education will help the people. He has initiated a program which seeks greater cooperation among the churches already on the reservation. However, the struggle to unite these groups has been "a slow, yet growing process."

Ted has been an influential leader in the civic government of his tribal people. He has served in many capacities, such as the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council and more recently as a mission coordinator for the White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church. His involvement in community action has reached through all levels of local, state, and federal operations of tribal government, education, and mission work. He worked ceaselessly and successfully to place the local school system into the hands of his own people.

He currently serves as director of the Northern Cheyenne Christian Education Project which is involved in preparing a fresh translation of the New Testament into the Cheyenne language, and is a member of the Mennonite Indian Leaders Council. *Marlin Miller*



Ted Risingsun

Conscience upset?

Write a letter for WPTF

American taxpayers whose consciences rebel at buying neutron bombs and other nuclear weapons, and at military expenditures, are encouraged to join a nationwide write-in campaign calling for a law which would permit certain war taxes to be used for peace projects.

The campaign is sponsored by the National Council for a World Peace Tax Fund. The legislation is supported by national bodies of the United Church of Christ, the United Methodist Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and the historic peace churches—Brethren, Mennonite, and Quaker.

By writing to the National Council for a World Peace Tax Fund, taxpayers can obtain five cards, each of which has the text: "We need a *legal* alternative to paying war taxes. The World Peace Tax Fund bill (HR4897-S 880) would allow people who are morally opposed to war to have that portion of their taxes which would normally go for military purposes used instead for peace related purposes to benefit all." Addressees for the cards are the president, a representative, two senators, and the director of the Internal Revenue Service.

Estimates of the fund this legislation would create range from $200 million to $4 billion annually. The United States spends over 110 billion dollars annually to finance military projects and utilizes 53 percent of every citizen's federal income tax to do so.

Personal letters are encouraged because they are the most effective, but to encourage a large response the cards can be obtained from the National Council for a WPTF, 2111 Florida Avenue Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20008.

Mission administrators dialogue

Administrative staff persons from eight North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ mission agencies, together with administrators from Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Medical Association, Mennonite World Conference, and the Overseas Mission Training Center in Elkhart, Indiana, addressed themselves to a wide-ranging agenda November 29-30 in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Collectively the group is known as the Council of International Ministries (CIM).

Among the presentations was a discussion of the need for standardization of accounting principles and terminology among nonprofit organizations led by Ted Stuckey, General Conference business manager and treasurer of Newton, Kansas. He indicated that the Internal Revenue Service of the United States is beginning to look with distrust at the procedures used by some nonprofit agencies, including those which are religious in nature.

Peter Dyck and Walter Sawatzky briefed the group about MCC's ongoing effort to encourage East-West dialogue and to monitor information on the Christian community in the Soviet Union. They also updated the administrators on the rapidly growing Russian German immigrant community which is being received and helped by the West German Government. CIM decided to create a task force to coordinate information, discussion, and ministries of CIM agencies relating to eastern Europe.

In her report to the gathering Rosemary Wyse, administrative assistant to Paul Kraybill, executive secretary of the Mennonite World Conference, pointed out that in the overall budgeting of MWC costs the CIM agencies are being asked to contribute $25,000 toward the travel costs of an estimated 100 Third-World delegates.

Major time was given to dialogue with Paul M. Miller who was sponsored by CIM in a teaching-counseling tour of Lesotho, Botswana, and Swaziland during the first half of 1977. Particular attention was given to his concern for the standards of candidate screening and training called for by the complexity, difficulty, and turmoil which characterizes the southern Africa scene.

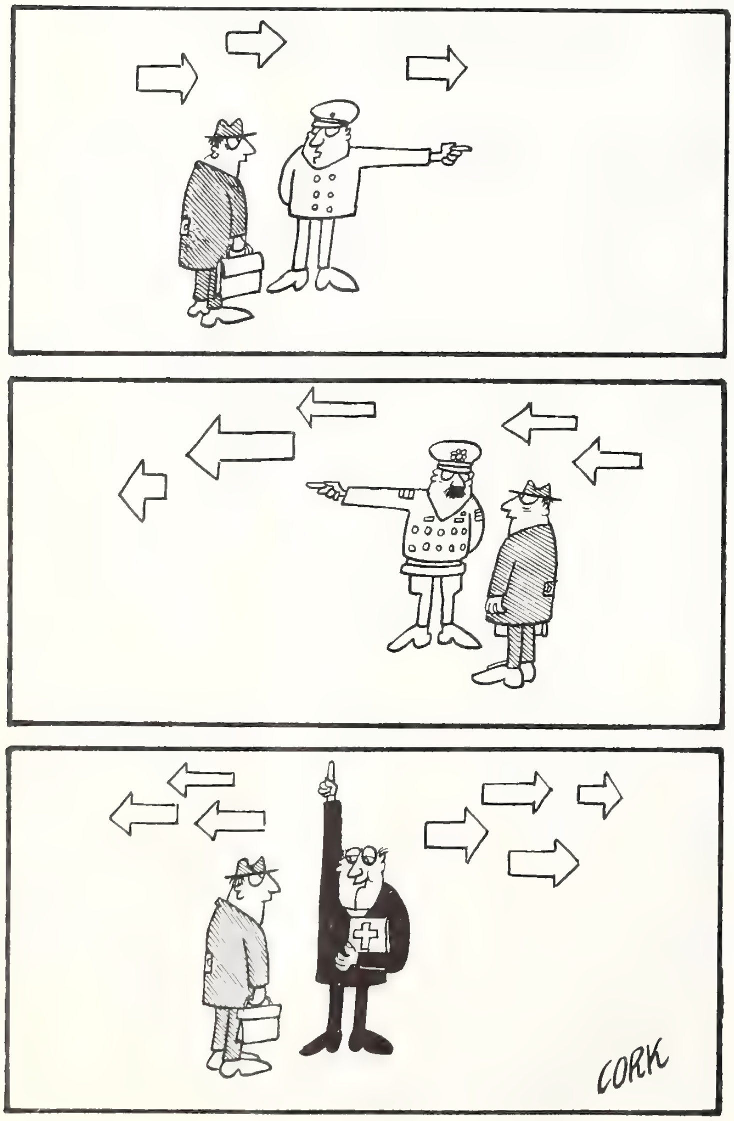
Words & deeds

Eleven churches in Oklahoma from five conferences are cooperating in running a Self-Help outlet and thrift shop which opened November 17. Located at 109 East Main Street in Weatherford, the shop becomes the third to be named Et cetera in the central states region of the United States. The other two are located in Newton and Hillsboro, Kansas. Another shop is planned for Liberal, Kansas, in January.

Beef chunks. Food for relief. In the name of Christ. Not for resale. These are phrases found on the bright yellow labels that mark the cans of beef chunks donated and processed by Mennonite, Brethren in Christ, and other churches in the communities of Moundridge, Pretty Prairie, Buhler, Inman, Hutchinson, and Hillsboro, Kansas, during October and November. Combined with churches in Milford, Nebraska, 43,970 cans of beef and 8,870 cans of broth were prepared in a portable canner for Mennonite Central Committee relief work.

The National Association of Evangelicals has announced plans to sponsor two major gatherings on Christian education—a national congress November 7-9 in Chicago, and in 1980 a commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Sunday school movement. The 1978 congress will focus on the role of the church and home in Christian education with special emphasis on local Sunday school leadership, writers, Christian education directors, pastors, and students aspiring to careers in Christian education.

Mexican churches organized a traditional *Erntedank und Mission Fest* (Thanksgiving and mission festival) November 13 at Cuauhtemoc. The three cooperating General Conference churches held services in the forenoon and afternoon in Steinreich Church. The emphasis in the morning was thanksgiving, and the afternoon gathering featured testimonies and the message "The Church in the World" by Edwin Brandt. Offerings for the day totaled 37,422 pesos (about $1,600). Half of the offering was designated for the Commission on Overseas Mission, and the remainder is to be used in local outreach ministries such as summer Bible school and for the poor.



Canadian churches have chosen the theme, "You . . . Me . . . Strangers?" (Ephesians 2:13-22) for the annual interdenominational week of prayer, January 22-29. The theme is thought to be particularly appropriate to Canada today, with its racial, cultural, and language tensions. The booklet, which outlines the week of prayer, states: "We claim to love unity, but we seem to thrive on division. We get our identity by *dissociating* ourselves from others—the developed nations from the developing ones; the whites from the blacks; the industrial societies from the agrarian; the English-speaking Canadians from the French-speaking ones."

What does it mean to be the salt of the earth? Young people, ages seventeen to twenty, who want to examine this for themselves are participating in a new Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) pilot program called SALT (Salt and Light Training). SALT units have been set up in Toronto and Winnipeg. A local Mennonite church is sponsoring each unit, providing service training and spiritual support. Training for the participants includes community or church service, Bible study and devotional life, group living, and may include formal studies at an educational institution. A leader offers guidance. The project will be evaluated in a year's time.

Your Time, the five-minute daily radio program, has begun appearing on forty-eight new stations for a total of 203 stations in early November, according to Lois Hertzler, media distribution coordinator for Mennonite Broadcasts. A schedule of these stations is available from Mennonite Broadcasts, Box 1252, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801.

Wilbert Shenk, overseas secretary for the Mennonite Church, has noted an apparent long-term worldwide trend toward higher costs. Economic conditions marked by double digit inflation have limited the scope for rapid or major new program development.

Record

Calendar

January 26-28—MCC annual meeting, Rockway Mennonite School, Kitchener

Canadian

February 17-18—Conference of the United Mennonite Churches of Ontario annual sessions, Leamington

Central

January 7—MCC hunger seminar, Carlock (Illinois) Church; theme, "Hunger in the United States"; speaker, Leamon Sowell

Workers

Dorothy Reimer, Taber (Alberta) Church, has begun a two-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) at God's Lake, Manitoba, in community health nursing. Dorothy is a graduate of the Kelsey Institute of Applied Arts and Science, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and has received the RN license in nursing. She was formerly employed at Taber General Hospital. Dorothy is the daughter of Jacob and Lena Reimer of Taber.

Reimer

Welty

Tim Welty, Bethel Church, Fortuna, Missouri, has begun a one-year term of voluntary service with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana. He is working as a youth worker at Lathrop Youth Camp, Walsenburg, Colorado. Tim attended Hesston College, Hesston, Kansas, for two years. Before entering service he worked at American Trio in Bloomington, Illinois, as a warehouse comanager. He is the son of Ellen and Russell Welty of Fairview, Michigan.

Audiovisuals

MCC Bolivia: Quest for the Abundant Life, an eighteen-minute color filmstrip with cassette tape soundtrack, has been produced by Ron Sawatsky. The filmstrip looks at MCC efforts in Bolivia, focusing on agriculture, education, health services, colonization, and involvement in church growth. It is available in Canada from the MCC Audiovisual Library, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501, MCC regional offices, and church conference film libraries.

Team pastor needed

Community church in urban area needs pastor to become part of a three-person team ministry. Primary responsibilities in community outreach, Christian education, and pastoral care. Minimal preaching responsibilities. Contact: David Suter, c/o Community Mennonite Church, 16200 South Kedzie Avenue, Markham, Illinois 60426.

wanted

Industrial arts teachers: Shortages exist in three-fourths of the fifty states, including the whole Midwest. Also, a need exists for persons with trades and industrial skills for voluntary service projects.

Bethel College Department of Industrial Arts Education offers instruction in construction, manufacturing, woodwork, metalwork, drafting, plastics, graphic arts, photography, and energy.

Features: (1) Only Mennonite four-year college preparing industrial arts teachers. (2) One of the best-equipped color photography labs in the Midwest. (3) Construction and testing of solar collectors.

Vocational agriculture instructors: Currently 188 of Kansas' 225 teachers are from out of state. There were five openings for every four graduates in the state last spring, and a similar situation exists across the nation. Also, opportunities are many to serve with MCC and apply skills in developing countries.

Bethel College Department of Agriculture program offers a broad worldview with Third World development studies.

Options: (1) Vocational agriculture, agronomy, and animal science emphases within the agriculture major. (2) A comajor in rural development and another field, such as agriculture, industrial arts, business administration, peace studies. (3) A dual-degree with Kansas State University.

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Review

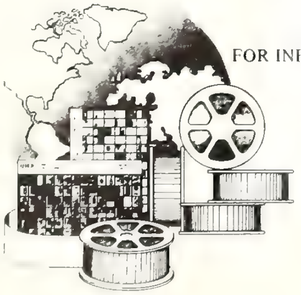
An interview with Charles Templeton

Editor's note: David Virtue, religion editor for The Province, *Vancouver, British Columbia, recently spoke with Charles Templeton, former close friend and associate of Billy Graham. This article is based on that conversation.*

Malcolm Muggeridge and Charles Templeton have a lot in common. Both men are highvisibility media personalities. Both have written and talked extensively about the human condition and pronounced wisely or otherwise on nearly every conceivable moral dilemma of humankind. But that's where the similarities end. Muggeridge started out in life a convinced agnostic and avowed Fabian and wound up in later years a confirmed Christian. Templeton, on the other hand, started out a confirmed evangelical believer and has wound up a convinced agnostic.

In a recent interview, Templeton talked about himself, his beliefs, and his successfully selling new book *Act of God* (McClelland and Stewart). The book is built around the discovery of the bones of Jesus of Nazareth by an archaeologist. He smuggles them out of Palestine and they wind up in the basement of the official residence of the Roman Catholic cardinal in New York.

This Publication is Available in MICROFORM



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The book tantalizes you with the thought that maybe, just maybe, the resurrection—one of the central tenets of the Christian faith—is a myth. The ending is left ambiguous deliberately, says Templeton, to make it credible to the readers. They can make up their own minds.

Depending on who you talk to, the book is a raving success, a reflection on Templeton's dissolved faith, weak, or just plain blasphemous. One reviewer, commenting on the publisher's expectation that the book would sell ten million copies worldwide, observed, "Now that would be an act of God." Questioned about this, Templeton remains unruffled. He's at ease with himself, his success, and the six-figure royalties the book is bringing in. It's in its fifth edition with 47,000 copies printed—almost up there with *Anne of Green Gables.*

Templeton has found God and lost him. He's been married twice and divorced twice. He's had a dose of psychiatrists, a crack at politics, been a newspaper editor, magazine editor, and now he's a novelist. The sweet smell of success exudes from his presence. But Templeton doesn't want to talk about himself.

Templeton can't leave God alone. He's obsessed with him. Not for religious reasons but for the human reason that he knows people want to hear and read about Jesus. Jesus is big news again and Charles is making a lot of money out of selling Jesus. His early book *Jesus* has done well. It's a compilation of the sayings of Jesus without comment; a synthesis of the four Gospels. Templeton gets upset at the suggestion that the book is a regurgitation of his Princeton seminary notes.

He lashes out at Barbara Amiel's article on him in *Maclean's* magazine. "It's a snide, libelous, and utterly inaccurate article." He threatens to sue, but withdraws. Clearly he can live with charges that he's a dilettante and that the only thing he ever researched deeply in life was religion, which he later abandoned. He shrugs off the charge that he is one of T. S. Eliot's "hollow men."

Templeton still counts Billy Graham (they founded Youth for Christ together) as one of his friends, even though they don't see eye to eye. "Graham is one of the good guys," he admits, though he calls Graham's beliefs "puerile." Templeton repudiates the notion that he never was a believer in such things as the atonement or the resurrection, that he just went along for the glamour. He talks about his fasting at Princeton, "to improve his spiritual perceptions," and the powerful religious experience he had on a golf course "trying to contact the Infinite."

But it never held. His faith began to fade when he contemplated evil in the world, the fatherhood of God, and "problems of Christology."

Today at sixty-two, his adamant unbelief is muted a little. Charles has replaced belief in God with belief in himself. He's the ultimate humanist. "I'm not an atheist. I never close my mind on anything. I'm agnostic in the sense that I say we can never know God exists." Charles loves playing with words. It's his stock-in-trade now. He has no patience with atheism. "Atheists are the ultimate egotists," he says grandly. "To say there is no God is a horrifying presumption that one has examined all the evidence." He wants to talk about the resurrection; after all that's the doctrine his book questions.

Templeton says we are living in a post-Christian era and blames liberal Protestant clergy who deny the resurrection or claim that the spirit of Jesus lives on without his body. "You can't have it both ways—either he rose or he didn't." He accuses them of giving everything away and calls the liberal main-line denominations "sanctified Rotary clubs."

Letter

Bible article helps

Dear Editor: I read with deep appreciation the article by David Ewert in which he discusses what is a sound approach to the Bible and defines the limitation of the Bible. This kind of writing should do much to help us in the church to pursue realistic goals in our Bible reading. The article is well written and shows people not only that it is important to read the Bible, but that it is important to read it correctly. I am also pleased that it comes from a Mennonite of a different group than ours. It shows us how deeply we share each other's values. *William Klassen, Department of Religion, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg R3T 2N2*

November 29

PORTRAITS
IN LIVING 5

Mothers without wedding rings

La Vernae J. Dick

Of six babies born in a small, rural hospital in one weekend, four were born to unwed teenagers and one to a teenager who had been married less than three months.

Pregnancies without the benefit of wedlock have been around as long as the human race has existed, but the number is increasing. In 1976, 15 percent of all the births in the above-mentioned hospital were illegitimate. This was a 4 percent increase over 1975.

The number of unwed women keeping and rearing their children in a single-parent family is also increasing. About ten million children in the United States live in a single-parent home. One in every ten families has a female head. The head of many such families has never been married.

Our more sexually lenient society is making it socially acceptable for unwed mothers to keep their children. Women are not easily convinced or pressured into giving up their babies because it is best for them, or that they can't care for babies properly, or from the fear of the illegitimacy stigma.

Yet, the girl who becomes an unwed mother as a teenager and keeps her baby is often doomed to a life of poverty. Not only has her education been interrupted so that she has only minimal skills with which to earn a living, her social development has also been hampered. As a result, she may lack the skills and initiative to develop her potential.

Unwed mothers are found in all strata of society. Wealth, or the lack of it, does not prevent pregnancies out of wedlock. Unwed mothers come from families with strong moral principles, and those who show few principles. They also come from families with strong religious principles and are girls who have strong religious convictions. In the Mennonite church there now are unwed mothers.

Some of the unwed mothers are teenagers as young as twelve years old. The majority of teenagers who become pregnant are between the ages of fifteen and seventeen. Other unwed mothers are women in their twenties and a few are even in their thirties or early forties. Among the older groups it may happen after a divorce and between marriages as well as to women never married.

The reasons for the increase in out-of-wedlock pregnancies are many. After children reach the age of puberty, the condition of first becoming capable of reproducing sexually (which generally happens between the ages of twelve and fourteen), they are ready for sex and physically capable. However, some of these young people become pregnant, or cause pregnancies, because they lack good judgment in combining information, capability, and behavior in the right way at the right time.

Our society is sexually oriented and standards are becoming more lenient. It would be a rare teenager whose sexual feelings are never aroused in such a society. In a society, and this also includes the church, which prizes popularity and sexual beauty more than virtue, there is little satisfaction in being a lonely virgin. A Mennonite college senior estimates that as high as 50 percent of unmarried Mennonite young people are sexually active.

Even with the increase in sex education, there are many young people who are misinformed about sex or not informed at all. One mother told her teenage daughter, "I'll tell you about getting pregnant and how to prevent pregnancy on the eve of your wedding." This mother evidently thought that to give no knowledge on the subject would prevent the girl from getting pregnant. However, teenagers can handle sex best if they learn what they need to know when they want the information.

Other problems include the rise of the counterculture, which is a rebellion against the existing patterns of society; the desire to achieve adult status and recognition; and feeling lonely in a society that seems to be growing increasingly impersonal. All of these also have their effect on unmarried Mennonite people. Even with all of the Christian teachings on what it means to be a disciple of Christ, to which many commit themselves, the rise in unwed pregnancies among Mennonites will continue.

Hardly a more poignant crisis arises for a young Mennonite woman, her family, and the church family that she is part of, than a pregnancy out of wedlock. The alternatives available to her are abortion, a quick marriage, or becoming an unwed mother—either keeping her child or placing it for adoption. The alternatives of a quick marriage or placing the child for adoption are often the only ones the church will consider.

The church community views unwed pregnancy as a transgression of their moral and social standards and an act which hurts the reputation of all of them. There was a time when the only way such a girl could retain her church membership was to make a public confession before the congregation. Virginity was so highly prized that it was almost the unpardonable sin to become pregnant out of wedlock.

No longer do most churches require this type of confession. Yet unwed mothers find it difficult to fit into a church family. They are afraid, emotionally scarred from shame, remorse, and guilt, and probably have already been subjected to numerous unkind remarks.

Women who have babies out of wedlock do not need to be judged. They usually judge themselves, and often severely. They do need to find forgiveness. Some churches do profess to forgive but are unable to help such mothers to feel forgiven.

One young unwed mother, who wanted to rear her child in the church, asked the chaplain of the hospital where her baby was born for a suggestion of a church that would be willing to have them attend, and that would have a dedication service for the baby. It was a difficult request. Would your congregation be willing to accept this girl and her child? Would you be willing to be part of the dedication service, either by performing it or standing with her at the altar during the dedication?

Wars and rumors of war

Elijah McKay

Last winter
in the far reaches of northern Ontario
it came in a dream
to Elijah McKay
Elijah serving the church
among his own Ojibwa people at Sachigo Lake

The dream was about the tribulations of war
It went like this:
The bullets were flying in the city
and I was running
outrunning the bullets
none could hit me in my flight

My speed took me away from the lights
away from the hard streets
into the woods
into the evening

Under the trees
by the clear streams
I was welcomed by the birds
the moon greeted me from an unmolested sky
I was where I knew I must be

Except for a thought
my father was still in the city
in an old folks home
unable to run

In the night I returned
to circle the city
sneaking a look here and there
to find my father
to bring him back
to the land of all my fathers

The approaching noise of the machines
forced me back to the stream
but the stream had yellowed
no birds were there to sing
and the moon
it was blurred
by the polluted clouds of war.

I woke
to recall, yesterday's meeting at the band hall,
they were talking seriously
discussing Reed Paper Company
its permit to cut our forests
its poisoning of our water
which kills the fish of the river
and the people of the land.

Recorded by Menno Wiebe

Resolution

Fern Pankratz Ruth

This year
May my love grow.
In spite of growing pains;
The pain of emptiness hurts more
Than love.

We have seen him

Lauren Friesen

We have all seen him.
His knock on a front door
echoes in the hall
and calls from memory's closet
things folded beside the broom.

We all have that chamber
hiding cracked shoes
under tattered winter coats.
We turn from his face
and conceal our attic
with a galvanized smile.

In a Chicago alley he is
shuffling under the El.
Scars line the age on his back.
He coughs soot from a coal mine
and stumbles between two thieves
To Golgotha.

Meditation

Witnessing

Every walk in life has its own unique opportunities to witness. Each also has its difficulties.

Opportunities. I serve as director of the National Institute on Mental Retardation, a nonprofit professional-technical group. We relate to leaders of government concerned about mental retardation, to many service providers, universities, teachers, front-line workers, and above all, to parents and handicapped persons. In the course of a month I come in contact with many people in many different situations. Witnessing often is far from my mind, but the opportunities are there.

The kinds of witness I do with ease. One form of witness is that "actions are louder than words." This is so true in working on behalf of people who often have difficulty speaking for themselves or being heard. There are so many prejudices against being "poor at book learning." So, the values one brings to this job are most important. It must quickly be added that values are not a unitary dimension. I know many Christians who, in practice with handicapped people, end up dehumanizing them rather than helping. This form of witness, then, takes place both in the way that I myself relate to the issues of mental retardation, as well as how I confront those about me who by word and action "put down" handicapped persons—often unconsciously.

Let me quickly challenge you, the reader, to be ready for this same opportunity. People described as "the aged," "Pakis," "criminals," and others receive the same kind of treatment—often in loose talk. This is an opportunity for witness by *your* attitudes, words, and actions.

A second form of witnessing relates to how I deal with my staff. How do you fire, reprimand, or admonish someone? Here my early training in nonresistance and love and respect for others has been helpful. There are ways of asking someone to leave without having the person lose self-respect.

A third opportunity affords itself when I enter into conversation about how different forms of service might be provided. I'm able to draw on various Mennonite-operated programs across North America. I'm fortunate to have been involved for eight years with the Mennonite Central Committee-related Mennonite Mental Health Services. Because of the high quality of many of these programs, I have no hesitation in admitting my "Mennonite connection"—indeed I have to guard against the sin of pride. These conversations have presented many opportunities to share with others the Anabaptist story and stance with respect to the issues of today. People invariably are interested.

The fact that our building stands on land once owned by Mennonites, and I look through my office window on a barn and houses at which the mother of an older and distant relative of mine served as a maid in her youth, doesn't hurt either. By reflecting on the past of the buildings we look out on, I can identify to others who I am and what I represent.

Where I have difficulty. I must confess to difficulty in an area that probably is the most important of all—challenging people to consider their own faith in Christ. Being reasonably experienced in matters of negotiation, I have relatively little difficulty through personal conversation to move people through the stages of becoming aware of who Christ is and what the "Mennonite" interpretation means. Nor is there a problem in creating interest in the sorts of practices and beliefs we have.

Moving beyond these to the stages of trial and adoption of Christ as Lord doesn't come as easily. I suspect this is because I haven't found a natural way of doing it. But, then, I'm not challenged much to find such a way either. It may well be a matter of training. I do know that many years ago I felt too apologetic about being Christian and Mennonite to even venture to bring people into a state of awareness. I have grown some. I have more growing to do. *Aldred H. Neufeldt*

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CONTRIBUTORS

Dale W. Brown is professor of Christian theology at Bethany Theological Seminary. For the current school year he is serving as visiting theologian at Berea College, Berea, Kentucky 40403. His article is one in a series on what Protestants believe.

Gerhard Ens, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4, is the new editor of Der Bote, German-language paper of the General Conference.

La Vernae J. Dick, secretary of the General Conference, is also a free-lance writer, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338.

Fern Pankratz Ruth is a free-lance poet, 704 South Estelle, Wichita, Kansas 67211.

Aldred H. Neufeldt, 92 Westwood Lane, Thornhill, Ontario L4J 1P9 originally wrote his article for placeofmeeting, the newsletter for the Toronto United Mennonite Church. It is reprinted by permission.

CREDITS

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The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Making peace

Two stories, one from California told in *Sojourners* (February 1977, pages 29-31), and one from the Middle East told in *Time* (November 28, 1977, pages 26-39) and *Maclean's* (November 28, 1977, pages 58-59), demonstrate that the dream for "peace on earth" is not dead. There still are peacemakers around. And Jesus pronounces such people "blessed . . ." (Matthew 5:9).

* * *

Egyptian president Anwar Sadat made what *Time* declared a "sacred mission" to Israel last November. It was the "first ever" visit of an Arab leader to the Jewish state. Cairo's leading newspaper *al-Ahram* judged the meeting of Sadat with Israeli premier Menachem Begin—one a devout Muslim, the other a deeply religious Jew—to be the most important meeting of its kind since the Prophet Mohammed made a covenant with the Jews of Medina 1,355 years ago. Some religious Jews saw the Sadat-Begin meeting as similar to that of Jacob and Esau. Genesis 33:1 reads, "And Jacob lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, Esau was coming. . . ."

Against pressure in his own government and from many Arab states, Sadat went to Israel's heart and addressed the Knesset—hoping that his step might be the start of a major breakthrough toward a Middle East peace. Begin welcomed Sadat and declared that "everything is negotiable."

It was a small step and, at this writing, it is not clear what all the motives were nor what the outcome may yet be. If the meeting was akin to that of Jacob and Esau, it fell short of Genesis 33:4, "But Esau ran to meet him (Jacob), and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept."

But, *Maclean's* described the meeting as "days of the dove" and *Time* said that it "raises new hope for peace." Pope Paul said to a crowd in St. Peter's Square, "The event is great, the hope revives."

* * *

The *Sojourners* story out of California tells of the Robert and Janet Aldridge family—they have ten children. Robert Aldridge worked as a design engineer for Lockheed Missiles and Space Company for sixteen years. In his first years, he helped design three generations of Polaris missiles. He was convinced that God had called him to help protect the United States.

In 1965, Robert was transferred to help with the MIRV (multiple individually-targeted reentry vehicles). It began to bother him to realize that the Poseidon missile submarine had an "effectiveness" to kill one-quarter of Russia's population. He tried to dismiss his qualms by thinking only of doing a job. But slowly his interior attitude shifted from a "thing-relationship" to concern for people.

One evening after dinner, their oldest daughter, Janie, expressed concern about the use of napalm in Vietnam and the danger of nuclear weapons. She urged that people must choose to change destructive behavior.

It challenged the Aldridges' life-style (affluent income and possessions), their future (few other jobs available in the area), and their social circles (few friends understood or were willing to ask similar questions).

By 1972, the Aldridges agreed to follow their consciences and escape the grip of a military-industrial mania. The Christian Family Movement and a three-day intensive Cursillo (a course in Christianity) had helped them to develop a deep spiritual concern for all people.

Today, Robert Aldridge is working with others in resistance activities against nuclear arms. Janet Aldridge works with the educationally handicapped. They confess that (page 31) ". . . the overall effort of trying to live a nonviolent life—wife, husband, and children together—is difficult, because affluence has become so deeply ingrained. But the main thing as we see it is that our family is feeling its way. To us that means really believing Jesus' teachings—saying we are Christians and trying to live it, saying we are nonviolent and trying to act nonviolently. . . . Life is still scary, but we attempt to follow our consciences and rely on faith."

* * *

Two vastly different stories, by people from opposite sides of the globe, both speak of making peace. A new year is ours. A new chapter—perhaps a small step with mixed motives and unpredictable results, perhaps a complete change of life-style—is our opportunity. Could that be our New Year's resolution?

* * *

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."—*Jesus* BW

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The Mennonite, WM Edition

JANUARY-
FEBRUARY 1978

Window to Mission

the open window

Reading has always been a very important part of my life. When I was a very young child, Mother began reading to me and continued to do so frequently until I could read on my own. We shared many warm, close moments sharing books and stories we loved. Mother even wrote and illustrated some "just for Jeannie" about my activities, toys, and friends. Books were so important in our family that for several years I got a new book each month. No Christmas was complete without a new book. We made frequent visits to the library. I even had a childhood dream of someday writing a book!

When I married and we had our first child, I remember sitting in the rocker holding my small son, and as we rocked I read to him. Many special moments have been spent reading aloud to my children. This past year my eleven-year-old and I signed up at church to read the New Testament through in 1977. This was one of the most exciting "reading together" times I've shared as we took turns reading paragraphs. So many things came up for very natural discussion because of what we were reading—everything from how to become a Christian to sex education to living out the Christian life.

Reading can help form thought for one's whole life, as we see in the first article in this issue. What one thinks, one becomes. Therefore wise selection is important. The desire to read is often formed early in life, so we need to encourage and share books with children around us.

—Jeannie Zehr

COVER

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15, KJV.

WM

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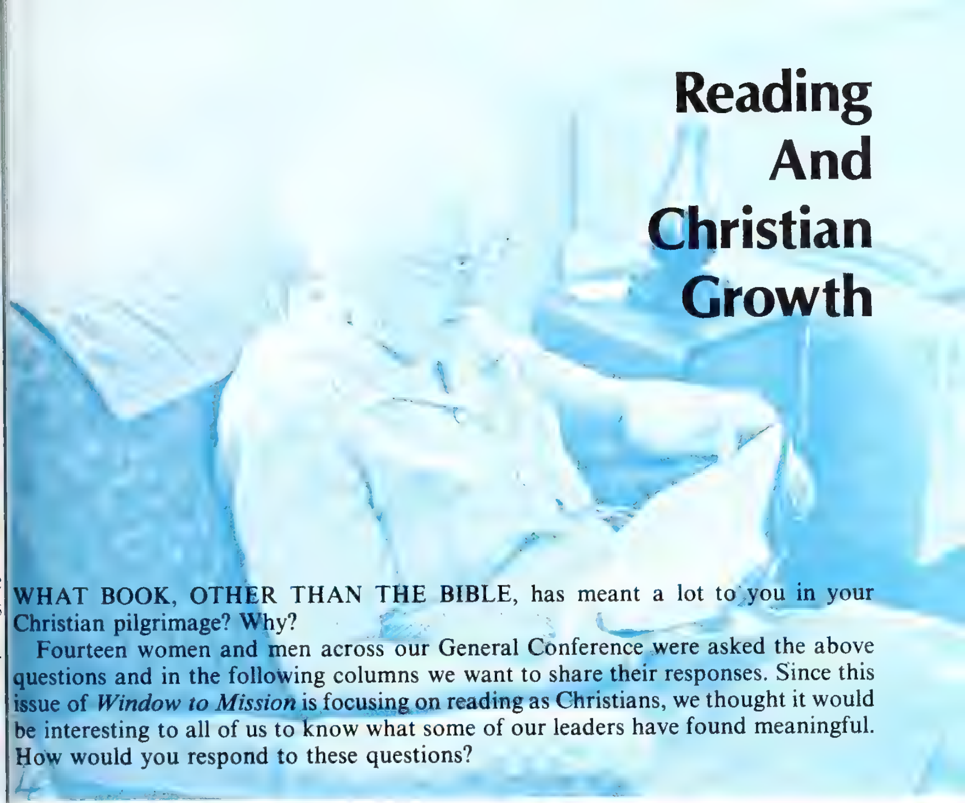


Reading And Christian Growth

WHAT BOOK, OTHER THAN THE BIBLE, has meant a lot to you in your Christian pilgrimage? Why?

Fourteen women and men across our General Conference were asked the above questions and in the following columns we want to share their responses. Since this issue of *Window to Mission* is focusing on reading as Christians, we thought it would be interesting to all of us to know what some of our leaders have found meaningful. How would you respond to these questions?

—*Dotty Janzen*

One book that has been especially meaningful to me is *A Testament of Devotion,* by Thomas Kelly. I read it each fall before I get swept into a whirl of activity—especially the last essay, "The Simplification of Life." Kelly, a Quaker, emphasizes the need to center in and find a focus for one's life. I find the beautiful blend of mysticism and practical Christianity in this book a real strength for my own life.

—*Harris Waltner*

Next to the Bible, the book that has been most important to me is the hymnal. I grew up on *The Mennonite Hymnary* and, more recently, am getting acquainted with *The Mennonite Hymnal.* Since I play the piano, I have often found a creative challenge in playing hymns. (Many in the new *Hymnal* are especially challenging because they are new and difficult for me.) But, more than the music, I have been inspired by the thought in the words. They often become the vehicle for my worship and praise of God. They express thoughts that I feel but find it difficult to put into words. Some hymns I have committed to memory and bring to mind when I go to bed at night, or at other appropriate times.

The hymnbook is an indispensable aid for personal devotions. It may be used with profit by anyone—even one who does not sing at all.

—*Carolyn Schultz*

I discovered Dietrich Bonhoeffer when I was a college student, and in many ways he has influenced my thinking profoundly, especially his books *The Cost of Discipleship* and *Letters and Papers from*

Prison. He caused me to examine my faith and the direction for my life. I became completely absorbed with his writings and read everything he had written.

This year John de Gruchy, a professor from Capetown, South Africa, was on the Bethel campus teaching a course on the life and thought of Bonhoeffer. I enrolled in the class and found new and exciting avenues of Bonhoeffer's thought, especially with the question, What does Christ mean for me today?

—Elmer Neufeld

One book that has spoken forcefully to my life, though already over 200 years old, is *The Journal of John Woolman.* Woolman, a young Quaker minister in colonial America, wrote in a simple, frugal style, characteristic of his life. The journal is a powerful testimony because it so beautifully combines deep personal devotion to the Scriptures and spiritual leading on the one hand, and deep sensitivity to human need on the other.

The deep faith, simple life, and unyielding convictions of a John Woolman are as relevant today as they were in colonial America.

—Herta Funk

Death in the Secular City: Life After Death in Contemporary Theology and Philosophy, by Aldwinckle, was a title I discovered in the book review section of the *Christian Century.* I dashed for it like a thirsty person about to perish. During the year I had been with a group in which we discussed the Easter accounts, and it became clear to me that a number of people held theologies of radical worldliness. I felt rather alone in my belief that this life is not all there is to existence. Aldwinckle was like fresh water to my thirsty soul with his reasoned defense of immortality.

—Lora Oyer

Selecting a single book is difficult. One's growth comes from choice nuggets discovered in many books and from many writers. Perhaps for this very reason I found my thoughts turning to *Daily Celebration* by William Barclay. In these meditations this minister-teacher has included quotes from the Bible and many other sources.

In his two volumes Barclay has used a very direct, simple way to help the Bible come alive for ordinary people. His down-to-earth language makes his meditations thought provoking and inspiring. As a New Testament scholar he makes it relevant today. His broad scope of topics touches life at so many points. Dr. Barclay suggests that as we are led to discover truth for ourselves, it becomes an integral part of us and we never forget it. Such discoveries help me stretch and grow.

—Liz Yoder

The first book that pops into my head is *The Feminine Crisis in Christian Faith,* by Elizabeth Achtemeir. It was published before most of us ever heard of anything called women's liberation, but it challenged women to take responsibility for themselves as persons, particularly in the area of their theology and their own calling. In a sense she was calling for women not to use their femininity as a "cop out" to avoid hard study and careful thinking. She also has an excellent chapter on the need for real Christian community and its relationship to the family which sounds just as fresh and contemporary today as it did ten years ago.

—Bernie Wiebe

Twenty years ago I had begun my studies at Bible College. I had been introduced to the strange new world of Greek, Hebrew, systematic theology, archaeology, hermeneutics, and ancient thought. At times, I felt as if I would drown in this sea of archaisms, and be swallowed by the world of the past. What did all this have to do with today, with me and my people in the southern Manitoba wall-to-wall

Mennonite community?

When I first picked up Robert McAfee Brown's *The Bible Speaks to You,* I expected it to be a further journey over ancient ideas. But it was strikingly different. It is not a book of interesting information but a book which presents the Bible as a place where people find God "coming alive."

Brown presents the current issues addressed by the Bible in such a living, refreshing way, that suddenly I saw what all my background studies were for. I've never been able to forget my first experience with this book, and its cover-worn presence on my shelf reflects the fact that I still refer to it quite often.

—La Vernae J. Dick

I have always loved to read. I can still vividly remember the first book I read, *Heidi.* Undoubtedly the many books I have read since then have influenced my life. One that I have treasured most is Myron Augsburger's *The Expanded Life.* Who of us shouldn't have our Christian life expanded? We need to be tugged at and stretched, even though it is not always comfortable. This study on the Sermon on the Mount is both practical and easy to read.

While many of the books I read are nonfiction, I also enjoy fiction. One of the more recent ones I thoroughly enjoyed and reread several times is *I Heard an Owl Call My Name,* by Margaret Craven. This is a story of a dying Catholic priest in a dying fishing village in British Columbia.

—Henry Poettcker

A book to which I have often turned both for information and inspiration is William Barclay's book on the Apostle Paul, *The Mind of St. Paul.* Written lucidly, with conviction, and with the author's interesting style, it has proven its worth over and over.

Paul has always been one of my biblical favorites, and so I have particularly appreciated treatments that have helped me to get "into the mind" of that great servant of Christ.

The book can be read for intellectual and for spiritual stimulus. It can be read devotionally. It has been all these for me. It is a thrill to walk with Paul in the pages of this book. I marvel all over again at God's grace and undying love. I'm challenged to emulate Paul in some of his aspirations. I too want to continue to live "in Christ"!

—Joyce Shutt

About six years ago I went through a very painful period in which I found myself reevaluating everything in my life, including my faith in God and whether I wanted to remain married. I read copiously, hoping to find answers to my questions about the meaning of life and relief for my depression. I found few answers, but did learn how to ask the right kinds of questions—and that became an answer in and of itself.

One book which helped put many things into perspective and enabled me to gain hope was a little book entitled *The Art of Loving.* The author, Erich Fromm, is a Jewish psychiatrist who views psychiatry as a tool we can use to gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of the awesome mystery of life. He opened my eyes to new ways of understanding and interpreting the Bible, faith, God, and what it means to love.

—Patty Shelly

I read the book *Gods and Games: Toward a Theology of Play,* by David Miller, when I was trapped in the seriousness of religion, trying desperately to prepare my own explanations and rationalizations for faith in God. There was so much anxiety in my search. In my seriousness I found myself feeling more and more lost.

This book joyfully and deeply reminded me that there was as much childlike play in faith as seriousness; that I didn't have to explain grace, but could simply accept it—with great joy! It was a critical instrument of God's grace in my life, allowing me to experience the serious playfulnees of a faith pilgrimage. I now am more able to trust and believe in God's love and care for me and for the world.

I wrote the song "Unto Us a Child Is Born" in response to this experience. It expresses my conviction that we often lose the "play" dimension of faith.

—Peter Dyck

Years ago in a Mennonite history exam H. S. Bender asked which three books one was most likely to find in a Conestoga wagon carrying Mennonites around 1800 from Pennsylvania to Ontario. We knew one book had to be the Bible and another a hymnbook. What some of us did not know was that the third book was *The Martyrs Mirror.*

Nowadays everybody's talking about roots. As an Anabaptist-Mennonite my roots are in sixteenth-century Europe with a people who attempted to live their faith regardless of consequences. *The Martyrs Mirror* names 803 martyrs who were cruelly killed because of their faith in Jesus Christ and because they were nonresistant.

I may not be called to martyrdom, but I do know I am a direct descendant, both spiritually and ethnically, of martyrs. That's where my roots are. That's why our house like a Conestoga wagon, has a Bible, hymnbook, and *The Martyrs Mirror.*

—Naomi Lehman

As I reflect on my spiritual pilgrimage, I recall my first public commitment to Christ at about age eleven, and a couple of years later I was baptized and joined church. Through the years I never doubted that I was a Christian, although there were times when I needed to rededicate myself to Christ. Always I "believed the right doctrines and said the right words," yet I did not feel the vitality and freedom that should be part of the Christian experience.

The sixties brought in many books on renewal. My first encounter with such a book was Eugenia Price's *Woman to Woman.* It helped me evaluate my relationship to Christ in a new way. I saw that when Christ controls my life there will be a difference. For me this difference was felt particularly in the area of relationships. Books by Bruce Larson, Keith Miller, and Myron and David Augsburger are helping me to continue to grow in this area.

Marriage

Two people
Male and female
Together
Companions
Helpers
United in love
Together
Man and woman
Him and her
Two are one
Together

—Donna Lehman

PROGRAM 4

Reading: A Lesson On Insight

Gladys Goering

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE: Acts 17:10-12 and 2 Timothy 2:14, 15. These verses are examples of how to listen or read.

In some homes in America the only reading material is found on the cereal box. The situation in most homes is quite different, as we subscribe to more papers and magazines than we read, and there are books available everywhere.

Perhaps that is one reason we often don't think through what we read. We are bombarded with so many words that there is no way we can read them all. Therefore we read a few, and upon that basis we form our opinions. Some people instantly argue against everything they read, and others immediately accept as doctrine anything that is published. Another category into which people fall is the wishy-washy person whose opinions vary from one week to another depending on what she or he heard or read that week.

How do you know what to believe? Every writer tries to communicate to the reader what she or he feels is important. That is the author's right. However, even a brief encounter with a few writers reveals a wide range of opinion and disagreement, and quite obviously not all points of view are justifiable.

For example: Author *A* says women should always obey their husbands, right or wrong, and adore them as kings; she quotes Scripture to prove her point. Author *B* says wives and husbands should be subject to one another, each giving in as often as the other; she quotes Scripture in defense of her opinion.

Checkpoint:
_____ 1. Author *A* is right.
_____ 2. Author *B* is right.
_____ 3. Author *A* is partially correct.
_____ 4. Author *B* is partially correct.
_____ 5. Neither view is adequate.

Both authors have written best-sellers

which have been read by thousands of people. How shall we assess what we read?

Reading skills

We acquire skills in reading by doing. Our reading muscles need to be exercised, and as we read, our skills in discernment improve. Read books that are on recommended lists. Read the best of magazines and periodicals. Read a book that is required reading for your schoolchild. Read the news.

In our hurried, preoccupied world, reading becomes the thing set aside for a more leisurely day. All too often we allow television to provide all the mental input for our day, and we rob ourselves in the process.

Would you believe the true incident of a young man who collected thousands of dollars for the mother of the unknown soldier? Words are powerful tools to deceive or to inform. Paul's words in 2 Timothy 2:15 are as appropriate today as they were when written centuries ago: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (KJV).

Jesus was severe in his opinion of the Sadducees when he charged them with deliberate ignorance of the Word by saying, "It is because you don't know the Scriptures or God's power" (Mt. 22:29, TEV).

Checkpoint:
1. What is the most recent book you have read?
2. What is your favorite periodical?
3. What is your best source of news events?
4. Do you have a favorite book in the Bible?

The rules of good writing are common to many forms of literature. If you have limited time to read, begin by choosing a reputable author.

Look for the author's purpose in writing. It should be clearly stated and defined. Avoid writers who hide behind fuzzy reasoning and generalizations. Be cautious about the writer who oversimplifies the issues or spends too much space on trivial points.

Does the author offer proof of his or her position or merely make statements which are not proven? The author should offer illustrations and examples to make the position clear. As you read, be open to new ideas. It should also be pointed out that one need not agree with the writer to make reading worthwhile; in fact, frequently one learns more from the author who challenges one's thinking and preconceptions.

Checkpoint:
1. Would you be interested in a recommended reading list to be published by Women in Mission?
2. Recommend to your group something you have read.
3. Share you children's favorite books.
4. Do you have a favorite author? What is special about her or him?

Reading the Bible

Most of us approach Bible study with our minds already made up. We are influenced by our heritage, by our congregations, by our schooling, by cultural conditions surrounding us, and last but not least, by our own stubbornness.

We are often guilty of making the Bible say what we want it to say. We insist that the only correct interpretation is ours. Consequently we may miss the truths there, even with the best of intentions.

This lesson does not attempt to deal with specific methods of studying the Bible; many good ones are available. The focus of this article is that one needs to examine what one reads or hears—that to accept everything at face value is not enough.

Paul praised the Bereans because after listening to him they went home and checked to see if he was telling them the

"A surprising number of good, current religious books are found on public library shelves, especially in some areas of the country. Little other than works by well-known authors such as Catherine Marshall, Paul Tournier, C. S. Lewis, and others, are found there, but many Christians mistakenly assume the public libraries are completely given over to secularism. If religious books received more circulation in our public libraries, librarians might be willing to request more for the shelves."—Wanda Moseley Trawick

facts. He was not offended because his words didn't find instant acceptance; in fact, he was pleased that they thought for themselves.

Modern writers may find an interesting literary title by plucking short poetic phrases from the Bible, but learning the meaning of the Bible demands more than quoting isolated phrases.

Use available tools to help you comprehend more fully what is read—dictionaries, commentaries, atlases, various translations. By all means we need to read what is being written by women and men better qualified than we to interpret. But what we accept as truth must fit into our own understanding, our own set of values which govern our lives.

To have a steel-trap mind which admits nothing new is rank conceit. To have a weather vane mind which changes direction with every wind that blows is equally offensive.

The Bible is still God's Word, our guidebook to daily living in this generation, but each generation must find the truths for its day. There is no way to inherit a previous generation's strengths and meanings.

Teaching tools

In a recent issue of *U.S. News and World Report,* writer James Michener predicted that in the future 70 percent of the population will receive most of their training by television, and that only 30 percent will be influenced by books. He further prophesies that it will be the politicians and business people who will be television educated, and that the real thinkers and solid planners will come from the ranks of those who read. Granted, this is only one man's opinion, but it should make the Christian parent pause to think of its possible meaning for the family.

The battle for children's minds will be a continuing one, and the ability to weigh words will not be an option but an essential. Surely it isn't wrong to say that everyone likes to "read" a picture, nor is it an evil. In the disciplining of ourselves and our children, we need to look beyond the obvious to deeper meanings.

We have drifted into making our public schools responsible for the teaching of our children, and as twisted moral values and juvenile delinquency have erupted, we have blamed the schools. Carolyn Warner, superintendent of public instruction in Arizona, says parents are the key to the child's learning, and she urges cooperation of parents and teachers.

Although Ms. Warner is talking about the public school system, her advice is equally appropriate for Christian families who are concerned about future directions.

A boy was caught shoplifting comic books, and his father was called to the store where the thievery had taken place. The distraught parent complained, "I might have understood if he'd have tried to steal something valuable, but comic books!" What the father failed to comprehend was that the son did steal something of value to him.

There are decent comic books on the market, but there are others that are trashy literature encouraging violence, sexual deviancy, and evil interests. In few areas is there greater need of the adult to read with discernment. Do you know what your children are reading?

Using your values

Ultimately we must decide what is of value in our life. What we value affects the way we live, how we relate to friends and neighbors, how we budget and spend our money. It should also determine what we read and how we interpret it.

Does what I read point me to God? Does it uplift or degrade womankind or mankind? Is it clean and decent or covertly suggestive? Would it bother me to have someone I respect see me reading this? Does it add to my knowledge? my enjoyment? Are my horizons enlarged because of my reading it?

The ability to read is a gift we take lightly, but it is a tremendous gift. In our reading, we as Christians must search for that which draws us closer to God and which helps us relate to sisters and brothers. The opinions of others may be a help, but the final judgment of what is good for us, or better or best, belongs to us.

Practice Exercise

Statements similar to the following have appeared in various church publications. Evaluate them.

1. If the Mennonite church is honest in its emphasis on the family, then in addition to publishing births, marriages, and deaths, it should also publish divorces.
2. The song "God of Our Fathers" should be reworded "God of Our Parents."
3. It is a myth that more arms are needed to keep the peace.
4. Adulthood begins in the eleventh grade.
5. An individual says he was instantly healed upon reading a tract.
6. "Our purpose is to save souls" is the stated message on many appeals for financial help which arrive continually via mail, television, or radio. How do you assess whether they're worth supporting, or whether they are an appeal to the gullible? Is it true that you should do all your giving through your own church and conference?
7. "Be fruitful and multiply" is the will of God for Christians.
8. If you're a Christian, you have no business being sick.

Resources

Some helpful books and reading material which you may want to check into are the following:

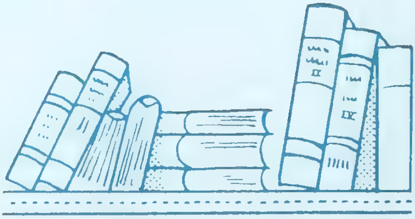
—*Learning to Know the Bible,* by David Schroeder, paperback, $2.00.

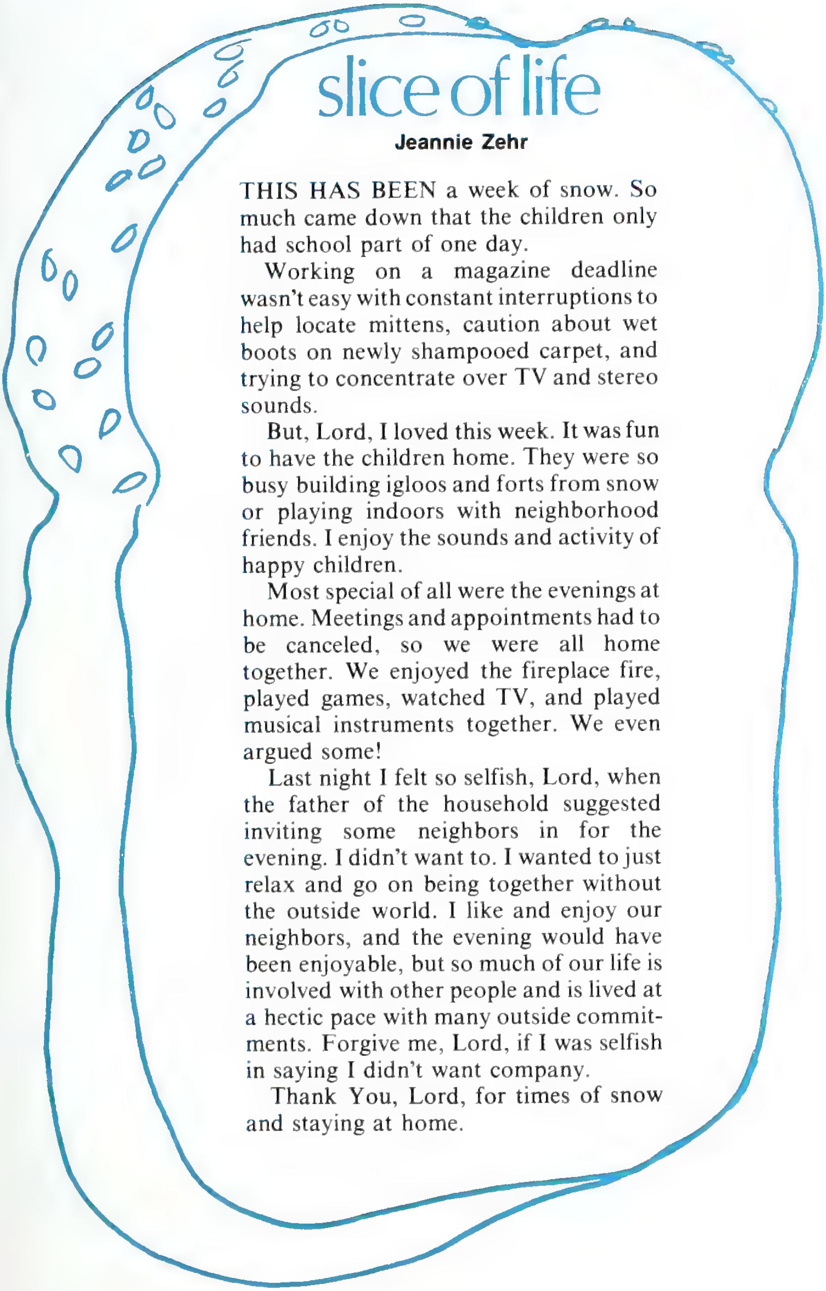
—*Better Bible Study,* by Mickelson, paperback, $3.50.

—"Bible Study Methods," article by Helen Kruger, *Window to Mission,* July, 1974.

—Book reviews and Bible study in *The Mennonite, Canadian Reporter, Der Bote.*

—Occasional book reviews and book suggestions by lesson writers in *Window to Mission.*





slice of life

Jeannie Zehr

THIS HAS BEEN a week of snow. So much came down that the children only had school part of one day.

Working on a magazine deadline wasn't easy with constant interruptions to help locate mittens, caution about wet boots on newly shampooed carpet, and trying to concentrate over TV and stereo sounds.

But, Lord, I loved this week. It was fun to have the children home. They were so busy building igloos and forts from snow or playing indoors with neighborhood friends. I enjoy the sounds and activity of happy children.

Most special of all were the evenings at home. Meetings and appointments had to be canceled, so we were all home together. We enjoyed the fireplace fire, played games, watched TV, and played musical instruments together. We even argued some!

Last night I felt so selfish, Lord, when the father of the household suggested inviting some neighbors in for the evening. I didn't want to. I wanted to just relax and go on being together without the outside world. I like and enjoy our neighbors, and the evening would have been enjoyable, but so much of our life is involved with other people and is lived at a hectic pace with many outside commitments. Forgive me, Lord, if I was selfish in saying I didn't want company.

Thank You, Lord, for times of snow and staying at home.

ON BEING A MENNONITE AUTHOR

Barbara C. Smucker

AN INVITATION by the editor of this publication to write an article about myself as a Mennonite author was, in a way like offering me a large empty plate and saying, "Fill this with delectable morsels that will refresh, nourish, and entice those who partake of it."

I will do my best, but those who read this must realize that the *oven* in my life is somewhat worn, a bit rusted, and not perfectly accurate on temperatures anymore, for I have reached the gray-haired years of my life. However, there is still a great deal that I want to write; and age, I believe, should add the seasoning of wisdom to one's life and writings.

First of all, I want to come to grips with the term *Mennonite author*. I suppose this could be passed off quickly by saying, "I am an author who just happens to be a Mennonite," and let it go at that.

But only recently I have realized that this is not possible. My most recent book for children, *Underground to Canada*, published last year by Clark-Irwin of Toronto, says of me on the cover, "The auther is a Mennonite." When I saw this the first time, I realized that the publisher evidently felt I represented something. Without even knowing me the reader of this book might expect certain things from me. Would the reader think the author is a Christian, a nonconformist, a nonresistant pacifist, one who cherishes the simple life, a disciple of Christ, a good Samaritan to her neighbors, or a person who wears plain clothes and rides in a buggy?

The list could be longer. Those of us who are Mennonites by inheritance carry the joy as well as the burden of martyrs, missionaries, and great spiritual leaders in our past. I constantly wonder if I am at all worthy of claiming such an affiliation. Do I really practice what the word *Mennonite* signifies to those who read about me? It is a hollow thing indeed to wear the label *Mennonite* and to be proud just to list one's Mennonite ancestors. Being the great-nephew of Abraham Lincoln, for example, does not make one an Abraham Lincoln.

I can only accept this name on the book cover humbly and try with God's grace and love to be worthy of it, realizing that being Mennonite is only one of many ways to be a Christian. God's love includes all humankind.

Now how do I write fiction with the burden and joy of this faith attached to me? Frankly, I don't think I dwell on it consciously. I like the way Elizabeth Goudge, an English fiction writer, says it in her book *The Joy of the Snow:* "I think it is a part of our gratitude that, perhaps unconsciously, and without knowing it, we want to share our faith and what it has done for us and to make contact with those who think as we do. I say unconsciously because in my case when a book comes into mind it comes simply as a story: personal belief is something that comes in apparently without my knowledge or contriving. But I think it is this latter unintended thing that makes the strongest link between reader and writer. We all hold our faith with a certain amount of fear and trembling and to find that others share our faith has a steadying influence."

I also like the way C. S. Lewis handles his beliefs. In his book of fantasy for children, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe,* Aslan, the kind and loving lion, is introduced. Many readers immediately associate the lion with Christ. When asked why he did not come right out and say Aslan was Christ, Lewis said: "Why did one find it so hard to feel as one was told he ought to feel about God or about the sufferings of Christ? I thought the chief reason was that one was told one ought to. An obligation to feel can freeze feelings. . . .But supposing that by casting all these things into an imaginary world, stripping them of their stained-glass and Sunday school associations, one could make them for the first time appear in their real potency? Could one not thus steal past those watchful dragons? I thought one could."

When I write fiction for children, I cannot be a propagandist for any religious beliefs. I must find my own media or expression and then my inner beliefs and convictions will come through.

Ideas for stories come in many ways, but when they come it is with a pinch of magic, a drop of inspiration, and a measure of excitement. I write for youth because I like their fresh response, buoyant enthusiasm, and honest frankness. I like my story heroes to have difficult goals to win and to strive for values that are the very best in our society. These could be Mennonite values and beliefs.

In 1980 my first book, *Henry's Red Sea,* will celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary. Over twenty years ago our family lived and worked at Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago. One evening our neighbors Peter and Elfrieda Dyck began to tell about Russian Mennonite refugees who fled to Germany and were helped by MCC. Peter and Elfrieda were the MCC directors. Finally a way was found for these refugees to sail on the *Volendam* for Paraguay, but they could not get permission to cross the Russian-held sector. Only a miracle could save them, and it did!

Our family listened spellbound to this gripping, true story that had happened to our own people. This story had to be written, and I just happened to be there at the right time to do it.

I doubt if ever again a story will present itself to me like this one did. All I had to imagine was how this moving tale would affect one small boy named Henry Bergen and his family. I have since met a real Henry Bergen who experienced the story almost like I wrote it.

During the weeks I put the book together, both the Dycks described for me in detail the events, the people, and their personal beliefs and feelings about the experience. A teacher in a school in Paraguay asked his pupils to write letters telling me what they remembered about their days in the Berlin Refugee Centre and their voyage. I received not only the letters but also photographs of the refugee center and the people who lived there. The teacher who started the school in Berlin was found in Kansas and interviewed by my husband. My editors in Scottdale helped immeasurably with characters and plot.

And so my first book was published, and for me it was another miracle.

WM office jottings from Joan

RECENTLY WE RECEIVED an inspiring letter from one of our mission workers. Selma Unruh, who runs a guest house in Nepal, writes: "Last week Willard and I took an eight-hour walk to a village to spend a special holiday at the home of Willard's shop worker. . . . It was a relaxing and invigorating kind of experience. . . . Walking back was a day of beauty as the snow mountains were out all day, and at 5:30, the payoff for sore feet was the gold sunset turning pink . . . but beauty doesn't feed people's stomachs, and making a living along the hillsides is hard work. Willard is interested in developing farm tools which help the small farmer."

How many of us would take an eight-hour walk to visit someone?

The Council of Commissions will be meeting February 9-14 at Newton. The WM Advisory Council will also be meeting. Your prayers will be appreciated.

Undoubtedly some of you have already read the news release concerning the termination of sending layettes to Zaire, beginning in 1979. This consensus decision was made at the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission Auxiliary meeting last fall. Due to an excessive increase in transportation cost, plus other reasons, 1978 will be our last year for this project.

This does not mean a cessation of making *all* layettes. MCC still needs tropical layettes in ten countries. Groups wanting to make these should contact the provincial or regional offices of MCC for the project book which gives directions for contents of layettes.

This change in policy is an indication that patterns in mission are changing.

Lois Deckert and Martha Nickel report a rewarding experience at the recent India Women's Conference. Contact the WM office if you are interested in having them speak in your area.

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to help you serve

In this issue, we're promoting projects which relate to reading, learning, and teaching. Money in any amount is needed for the following:

- Books, materials, and a teacher for theological education in Zaire.
- A Christian bookstore and mobile van in Bogota, Colombia.
- Tuition for children in the Oraibi, Arizona, Hopi Mission School which includes Christian training in their elementary education.
- Literature and teaching materials in Botswana.
- Publishing costs of a paper called *Mana* which is published in Mandarin by the Mennonite Church in Taiwan.
- Foundation Series, the new Sunday school materials now being used in our churches.
- *Window to Mission,* WM magazine which by now has a readership of men also. Make 1978 a year of good reading and sharing of resources.

response

"*Window to Mission* is excellent reading for men, and for women also. I have been totally absorbed by the September-October 1977 issue. It seems impossible that so much can be packed into sixteen pages. Of course one cannot read articles like these without feeling guilty and wondering what is the best way to respond. But, again there are helpful suggestions. I hope that in my church we will be able to put some of them to good use." Louis Goertz, Beatrice, Nebraska.

contributors

Dotty Janzen (Reading. . .) is involved on the pastoral team of Faith Church, Newton, Kansas, and teaches at Hesston College.

Harris Waltner (Reading. . .) pastors the Bethel Church at Mountain Lake, Minnesota. He also serves on the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Carolyn Schultz (Reading. . .) takes seriously her role as wife of the president of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas. She is deeply involved in many areas of the college life.

Elmer Neufeld (Reading. . .) recently became the president of Bluffton (Ohio) College. He presently serves as president of the General Conference.

Herta Funk (Reading. . .) works for us under the Commission on Education in the area of adult education and the role of women in the church.

Lora Oyer (Reading. . .) lives in Chenoa, Illinois, and is president-elect of the Women in Mission organization of the General Conference.

Liz Yoder (Reading. . .) and her husband, Perry, have traveled many miles across our conference as Bible teachers. Now she works as general editor for COE.

Bernie Wiebe (Reading. . .) edits *The Mennonite* out of his Winnipeg, Manitoba, office. He also leads many family life workshops across our conference.

La Vernae J. Dick (Reading. . .) serves as secretary of our General Conference. She edits the Pacific District edition of *The Mennonite,* plus keeps very busy with numerous writing projects.

Henry Poettcker (Reading. . .) is president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba. In July he will become the new president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana.

Joyce Shutt (Reading. . .) is chairperson of the WM literature committee and serves on the Commission on Home ministries. Her home is Orrtanna, Pennsylvania.

Patty Shelly (Reading. . .) lives in Arvada, Colorado, and attends seminary, plus works in a bookstore. Last year she had a booklet of her songs published, titled *Many Gifts.*

Peter Dyck (Reading. . .) lives in Akron, Pennsylvania, where he serves as Europe and North Africa secretary for the Mennonite Central Committee.

Naomi Lehman (Reading. . .) is president of the General Conference WM. She is deeply involved in her church in Berne, Indiana.

Donna Lehman (Marriage), her husband, Mike, and their three children live at 5111 East State Boulevard, Fort Wayne, Indiana. She does free-lance writing.

Gladys Goering (Reading: A Lesson on Insight) is the former WM coordinator. She lives in Moundridge, Kansas.

Jeannie Zehr (Slice of Life) edits *Window to Mission* from her home in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Barbara Smucker (On Being a Mennonite Author) is the author and children's librarian living at 57 McDougall, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. She is a member of the Sterling Avenue Church in Kitchener.

Joan Wiebe (WM Office Jottings) is our WM coordinator. She lives in Newton, Kansas, with her husband and three children.

credits

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Donna Lehman

Gladys Goering

Barbara Smucker

forecast

The March-April issue of *Window to Mission* will focus on the program "Who Really Helps Whom, or It's Easier to Give Than Receive." We'll think together about the implications of being a cheerful receiver as well as a cheerful giver.

Printed in U.S.A.

WOMEN IN MISSION: NEWS AND IDEAS

OFFICERS, PROGRAM and project chairpersons of Western District WM groups met for a workshop in November. Such times are great for exchanging ideas and becoming enthused for the work to be done.

Mobile Meals is a special project of the Normal, Illinois, women's fellowship group. Women transport meals to elderly persons who cannot or do not wish to provide for themselves.

Why not become better informed about your church's Christian education program at your WM meeting? Invite teachers to suggest a couple of items needed in each classroom. Make this list available prior to the meeting for members to sign up and purchase. On meeting day or night, arrange to visit each Sunday school room, have the teacher in that room briefly share what the class is doing, then leave your gifts in each room. Gifts may include items needed such as flannelgraph stories, books, records, paperback concordances, puzzles, toys, pictures, easels, etc.

"Now it came to pass that a certain parishioner invited his pastor to lunch at a popular restaurant. The waiter was efficient, and the food was good. As they rose to depart, the pastor observed that his host laid some coins under the edge of the plate, and the waiter who stood by smiled happily, which meant that the tip was satisfactory. Now with such customs all are familiar, and this parable enters not into the merits and demerits of tipping.

"But the pastor began to meditate. He knew that the usual tip must be at least ten percent, lest the waiter turn against you. And it came to him that few people so honor their God as they do their waiter. For they give unto their God whatsoever they can spare.

"Verily, does man fear his waiter more than he fears his God? And does he love God less than he loves the waiter? Truly, a man and his money are beyond understanding."

For your group's project night why not make some new banners for your church. Plan ahead so you have supplies on hand. You'll be amazed at what a group of women can come up with in an hour or so when everyone helps cut, glue, and arrange.

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARIES
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The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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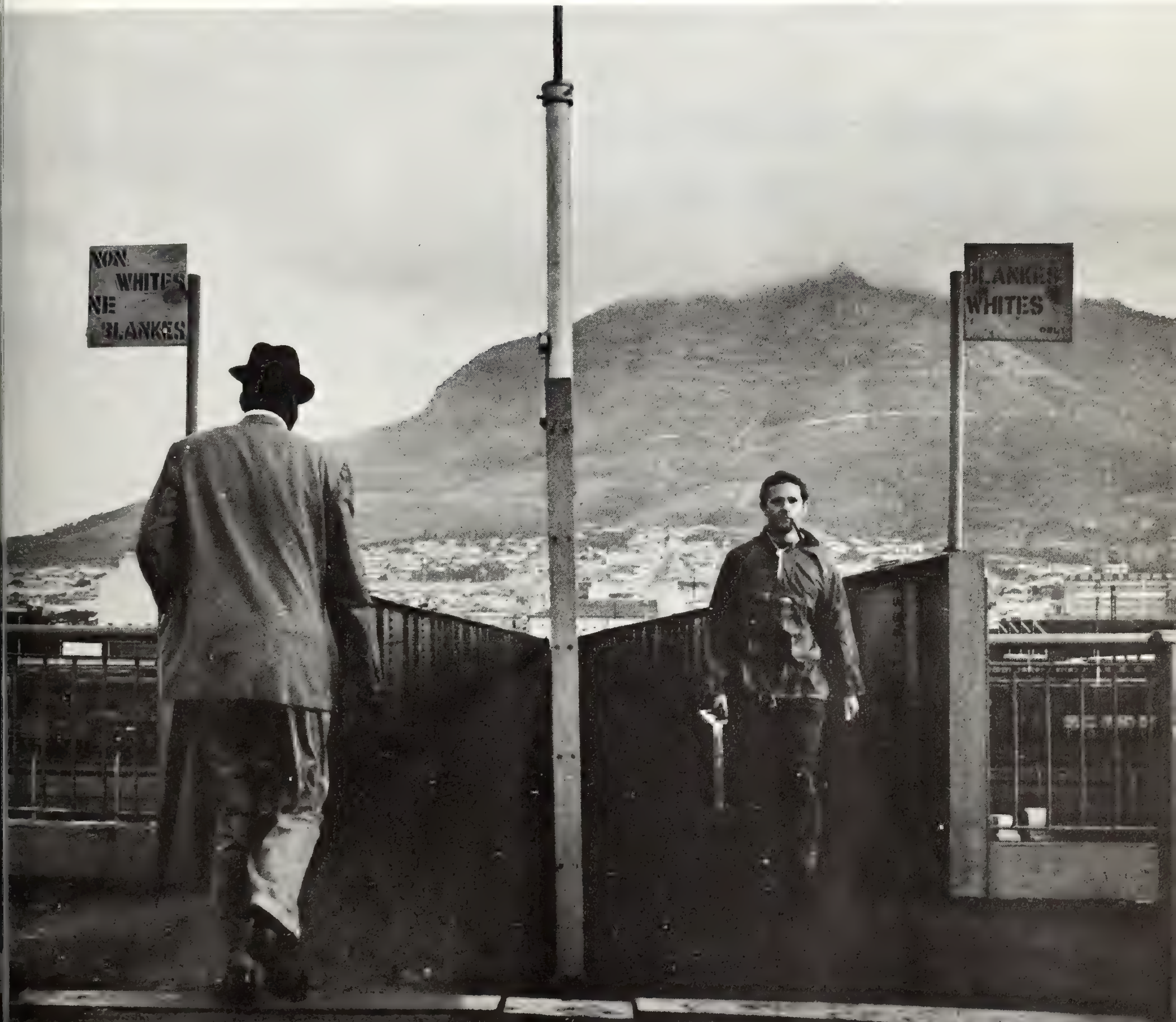
NON WHITES
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Signs in English and Afrikaans direct the separation of races on a Cape Town footbridge. The people don't look at each other as they pass.

Apartheid signs are everywhere

J. D. Hillson

I stopped in front of a washroom in downtown Cape Town to take a picture of a particularly large Whites Only sign. The attendant ran out. "Not here, please. Go across the street. The signs are there. Go to the railway station, the city hall, the signs are there. In fact," he said, waving his arms, "go anywhere in South Africa. The signs are everywhere."

He was right. The signs are everywhere. We were reminded with every breath we took and every scene we saw on our visit that this is the land which added the word *apartheid* to the English language. At times frightening, at times sickening, and at times even funny, "separate development" (as South Africans now prefer to call it) is a cradle-to-grave fact of South African existence. They are born in segregated hospitals; they are buried in segregated cemeteries.

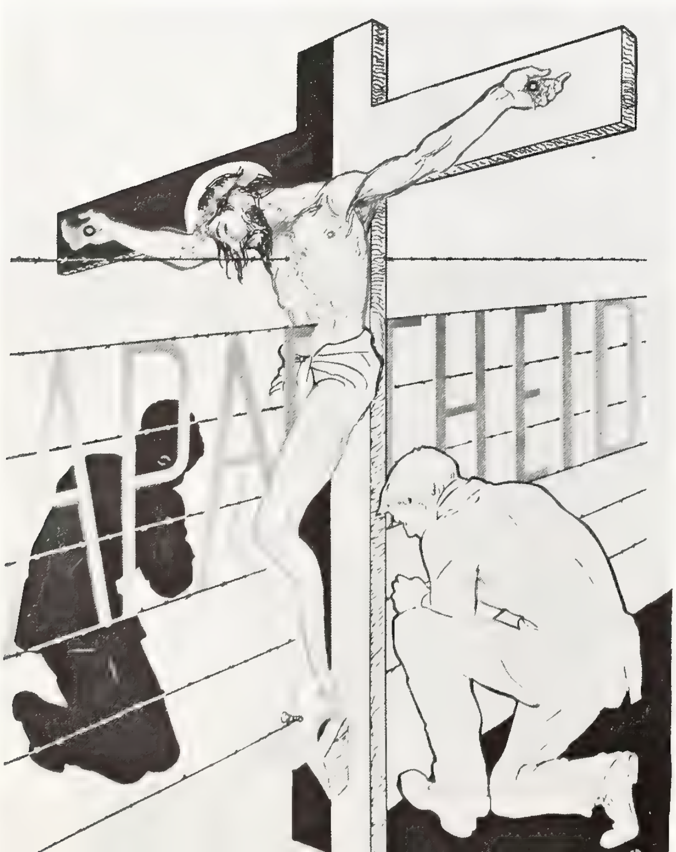
Not all South Africans, however, are as blind or as bigoted as they usually appear in our press. We did meet some who would explain with a straight face that God gave South Africa to the whites and later created the blacks so that they would have someone to scrub their floors. (It's all in the Book of Genesis in case you're interested.) That such South Africans form a large percentage of the white population must be assumed in view of the fact that this is the group from which the government draws its chief support. But we talked to many South Africans who were well aware that apartheid was based on greed and not on divine decree.

Conservatives and liberals in South Africa have been given the colorful terms *Verligte* ("the enlightened ones") and *Verkrampte* ("the cramped ones"). The *Verkrampte* are convinced that whites arrived in South Africa first and the blacks are the foreign invaders. The *Verligte* are opposed to petty apartheid and realize that any national settlement must be based on the claims of all racial groups within South Africa's borders.

For the people we met who could be described as *Verkrampte* there have already been enough changes in South African society to do them several generations. Moderates, on the other hand, were proud that last year in a liberalization move the government had declared the country's Chinese minority to be Europeans.

At least in terms of the white population, South Africa is more or less a democracy. But the government is almost totally under the control of the Afrikaner majority. The ranks of government and civil service are virtually closed to the 40 percent of the white population which is English speaking. The lack of integration between English and Afrikaans in government is surprising in view of the fact that the two language groups appear perfectly integrated otherwise. There is virtually no regional division, as there is in Canada, and everyone we met was bilingual.

We were surprised at the vocalness of dissent. The English newspapers are the most obvious outward sign that not all South Africans are duped by their society. An editorial in the leading Cape Town newspaper sneered at Prime Minister Vorster's New Year's message in which he dedicated himself to the preservation of western Christian civilization in South Africa. The editorialist pointed out that



South African Government "bans" against apartheid critics restrict them even from speaking in small groups. This controversial placard symbolizes the plight of the Christian Institute of Southern Africa, which has been silenced by government decree. The institute has been an arch critic of the government's racist policies and was considered one of the country's most effective Christian voices.

NON WHITES
NIE BLANKES

South Africa by its actions had long since forfeited the right to apply any of those three terms to its society.

Two things unite all white South Africans. They all fear majority rule, and they all feel isolated. I had determined not to waste my holiday in pointless arguments with people convinced that blacks are the descendants of Ham (the evil son of Noah condemned to be a hewer of wood and a drawer of water). But no one asked my opinion. Everyone assumed that being a foreigner I would disapprove. Some expressed the hope that after being in South Africa I could see how well treated the blacks are.

A few years ago South Africans were boastful, even belligerent, about their relations with the rest of the Western World. Today the boastfulness has been replaced with bitterness. South Africans see themselves on the front line, defending western Christianity against the communist onslaught. The Western World, instead of being grateful, eagerly anticipates the collapse of white rule in South Africa. One man, on hearing my accent, began to lecture me. "We are fighting for all whites. If we lose, the coloreds will take over your country as well."

But don't expect a revolution tomorrow. South Africa is likely to be around for quite a while. Blacks are still "boys" regardless of age, and my wife and I were addressed by them as "madam" and "master," as are all whites. Several people told us that the blacks do not want revolution. They know this because they had questioned their maid, and the maid had told them, "No, madam, you run the country; we don't know how to run the country."

At the New Year's church service the minister reminded the congregation, "Who among us has not looked at the sleeping forms of our children in the past year and asked ourselves what lies ahead of them in this country." His solution of course was for us all to pray more. And we did. We prayed for "our boys fighting at the border" at every service. Blacks of course could not enter the church.

We were impressed with the number of South Africans who said they wanted to live in South Africa even under a black government. We were told time and again that "all thinking people know there must be change." The question is how can the country change and still have room for the whites. Many South Africans feel there will never be a multiracial society in their country. They also fear that majority rule will bring to power a bloodthirsty tyrant of the stripe of Idi Amin. One South African who had spent considerable time in Malawi told me that many blacks there had assured him they would move to South Africa if they could—wages are higher, and the lack of voting and civil rights would hardly affect them as they had no rights in Malawi either. Malawi is a black police state where opponents of the government are in danger of disappearing in the night.

In an attempt to arrive at a racial settlement without sharing power, the government has invented the "homelands policy." The inspired malevolence of this policy underlines what a unique country South Africa is. Areas of the country have been discovered to be the true homelands of each of the various black tribes. These areas are being declared independent states, and all blacks, depending on their tribe, have been granted citizenship in one or the other. One cabinet minister recently boasted he had redrawn the map of South Africa. He has also rewritten its history.

My wife was reared in a small town on the Indian Ocean coast called Knysna. School textbooks and histories at that time recorded that Knysna was populated by blacks when the whites arrived. Today, according to the government, whites arrived in Knysna first and blacks later. The blacks are now officially foreigners. Meanwhile the homelands government of Transkei has conferred its citizenship on every Xhosa living in South Africa. The Xhosa of Knysna are now citizens of another country which many of them have never seen.

The black leaders of the homelands who are willing to cooperate are well paid for their trouble. Seventy-five percent of the Transkei budget comes from South Africa. Consuls, ambassadors, and commissioners of the new homelands government may be seen driving around Cape Town and Johannesburg in chauffeured limousines at the expense of South African taxpayers. In the ultimate irony, the representatives of the new republics may live in the white areas of South Africa, because of their diplomatic status, and send their children to white schools.

For many other natives the policy is less of a blessing. Because Transkei is the Xhosa homeland, all non-Xhosas have been expelled. This has resulted in 10,000 homeless refugees, and news filtering from refugee camps indicates they are dying of disease and hunger by the hundreds. Meanwhile, South Africans think it is hypocritical of the world on the one hand to demand self-government for her blacks, and on the other hand to condemn the homelands policy which is doing just that.

The big question is whether South Africa can reform peacefully. That can happen only if South Africans are convinced that the future of the whites can best be guaranteed by an accommodation with the blacks, rather than by increasing the already bloated defense budget. In a perverse way I came to admire the *Verkrampte*. They have no doubts, and they have no fears. It is the moderates who are more to be pitied, and perhaps condemned. They have benefited from a system which they know to be evil but which they have taken precious few steps to correct. Even now one is left with the uneasy feeling that their misgivings about their society are based not so much on high moral principle as on the realization that it simply cannot continue.

If only a leader of the caliber of Martin Luther King or Mahatma Gandhi (who began his career of civil disobedience in South Africa after being kicked off a moving train by a white) could emerge to prick the conscience of the whites and at the same time mobilize the will of the blacks, then perhaps what seems the awful inevitability of South Africa might yet be turned around. A substantial group is open and aware of the need for change. Until now they have been on the sidelines of public life. Today some are being convinced that it is time to come forward before the *Verkrampte* lead them all to destruction.

Towards the end of our stay we took our children to an amusement park in Cape Town. As my son was steering a little boat in an artificial pond, I saw the longing faces of the black and Indian children watching the white children at play. There was a large Whites Only sign over the ticket booth. It was my saddest moment in South Africa.

On the first Sunday home in Saskatchewan I took my son out again. This time we went skiing, along with the son of my partner who is a South African Indian. As I was muttering about my fate at having been born in such a cold country, I suddenly realized as I looked at Selven that if I were in South Africa I would be breaking the law to have him with me. Snow and all, it was good to be home.

God the creator

When we hear the phrase "God the creator" we usually think of God who made the universe in six days. Would it surprise you to know that there is much more implied in the term *creator* in the Bible than the creation of the physical universe? It shouldn't, if you think about it. Think of a familiar verse like Psalm 51:10—"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." The writer is thinking about the radical transformation of someone's heart (we would say "mind") by an act of God, but uses the same Hebrew verb *bara,* 'create', which was used in Genesis.

The idea that God is active as creator in ways other than making the world is found in other places in the Bible, too. In Exodus 34:10, God says that he is going to make a covenant with the people of Israel and as a result of this he will "perform miracles which have not been produced [literally, *bara,* 'have not been created'] in all the earth, nor among any of the nations." These fabulous deeds which God was to do in and through Israel were to be a sign of God's presence in its midst.

Another creation story in the Bible is found in Numbers 16. In this story, Moses' authority is being challenged by a certain faction. So he calls all the people together for a showdown in the presence of the Lord. When they have gathered he tells them:

"If these men die the death of all men, or if they suffer the fate of all men, then the Lord has not sent me. But if the Lord brings about an entirely new thing [literally, 'creates a creation'] and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up . . . then you will understand that these men have spurned the Lord" (Numbers 16:28f). The story goes on to tell that this is exactly what happened. But the point is that Moses was expecting God to create something before their very eyes to show that he was at work in their midst.

The prophets also speak of God as creator, especially in the formation of the nation of Israel. For the prophets the fact that God was creator was not some dogma about what God did in the misty, long ago past, but said something about the continuing nature of God and what he would do in the future:

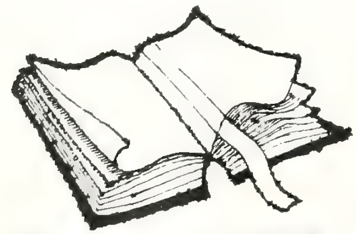
"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing, and her people for gladness" (Isaiah 65:17f).

In the New Testament, too, God's activity as creator is seen as being more than simply as the maker of the universe. Paul picks up the theme in Ephesians 2:15 and applies it to the social situation in which the early church found itself, where Jew and Greek were thrown together in worship. Paul says that Christ would "make" [literally 'create'] the two into one new man, thus establishing peace.

It would thus not be true to the Bible if we were to attempt to limit "creation" either just to the "beginning" or just to "nature." God can act as creator at any time in any arena—in the hearts of individuals, in the formation and preservation of nations, in the social relationships in which people find themselves.

Two other pieces of information may help us get a clearer picture of what the word *create* means in the Bible. First of all, only God is used as the subject of the verb *bara.* It seems to be an activity that he alone can do. Second, the material from which God creates is never specified. This has led some people to believe that God creates out of nothing. But, as a glance at the references in this article will show, it is not that material was not present, but that the material was unimportant, since God's creative activity will produce such a radical transformation, and be so unexpectedly new in outcome.

So for the Hebrew to affirm that God is the creator was to affirm that he can act to radically transform the lives of individuals and the course of human events in the present. For us, too, to affirm God as creator says as much about the way we think God acts in the present as it does about the way we believe the world to have come about. Of course it is safer to confine his creative power to the closed past than to open ourselves to the radical, unexpected, and perhaps disturbing transformations he can bring about in the present! To affirm God as creator is to say that we can be different, that life can be different, that society can be different. By the same token, to fatalistically accept the status quo is to deny God as creator! *Second article in a series of three on creation by Perry Yoder, part-time faculty member, Bethel College, North Newton; and part-time staff, Commission on Home Ministries, Newton, Kansas*



Open your Bible

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Winter and death

Louise Dueck

Winter, to some eyes,
is the most unlovely
season.

To these, the stark bareness
of trees and bushes,
the dirty slush of
tainted snow,
the absence of visible life
is the only reality.

They cannot see that
the snow, so pristine
at birth, becomes slush
only as it is used and
trampled upon;
that the trees, though bare,
are merely resting, waiting
to spring into new bloom
at the given moment.

Death is like that.
To some it appears
as final, no hope,
no future spring awaiting.

Yet we know differently!
We know that the reality
is a resting, a waiting,
full of promise for that given
moment when those in death
will spring forth into new
and glorious life.

Winter, to these eyes,
is a very lovely
season.

News

Epp

Epp appointed president of CMBC

Winnipeg—George K. Epp will become president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College as of July 1. He succeeds Henry Poettcker who has been appointed president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana. In a letter to Canadian churches, John Neufeld, chairperson of the committee responsible for calling a new president for CMBC, described Epp as a "warm, sincere Christian; a gifted teacher and scholar; and an excellent communicator."

Epp, a lay preacher in the Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, and assistant professor in German at the University of Manitoba, was born in the Russian Ukraine in 1924. During the Second World War he came to Germany and from there he emigrated to Paraguay. In 1954 he emigrated to Canada and has lived in Winnipeg since.

He has been involved in teaching and pastoral work for many years, including the period in Paraguay. In 1968 he earned the MA degree in German literature at the University of Manitoba. For the next five years he was an instructor of German and history at the Mennonite Brethren College of Arts in Winnipeg. In 1973 he joined the German Department faculty of the University of Manitoba as a lecturer while continuing his studies toward a PhD in history, a degree awarded to him in 1976.

Besides his academic responsibilities Epp has been active as cultural director of the Mennonite German Society of Canada, and as a member of the Mennonite Historical Society of Manitoba and the editorial board of *Der Bote*. He is the editor and a contributor to *Unter dem Nordlicht, Anthology of Mennonite Writing in Canada* (1977), and worked on a similar book in 1974. He has also written a thirteen-lesson series for the Commission on Education on an interpretation of Genesis, as well as other published articles, both scholarly and creative.

Carter endorses church colleges

—Mennonites and others talk with him

Washington D.C.—President Jimmy Carter believes in the role of church-related colleges in American life. He gave this message to twenty Protestant and Catholic executives of higher education who met with him December 16, immediately after his historic interview with Menahem Begin, prime minister of Israel. Among the executives were two Mennonites, Robert Kreider for the General Conference Mennonite Church and Albert Meyer for the Mennonite Church.

These executives represented about 75 million church members and 800 colleges and universities of the 3,000 higher education institutions in the United States. They spoke for a wide spectrum of denominations, from the largest to the smallest, black and white—Baptist, Southern Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, Episcopal, Lutheran, Seventh-Day Adventist, Nazarene, Disciples of Christ, Roman Catholic, and Mennonite.

The delegation presented a statement to the president commending him for his interest in public, private, and church-related colleges, and underscoring the serious problems which currently beset higher education. Among these are providing students with financial assistance, problems related to government control of educational institutions, and educational concerns of minority groups. Claiming that church-related colleges and universities should be viewed as national assets, capable of making a positive contribution to the religious, cultural, social, and economic development of the United States, the statement affirmed each denomination's commitment to the responsibility of "insuring a responsible but free society." The statement concluded with an invitation to the president to be the keynote speaker to the National Congress on Church-Related Higher Education in 1978 or 1979.

Departing from a prepared statement of response, President Carter affirmed the significant role of church-related higher education. Revealing that he had served as a director of a small Baptist college in Georgia he said, "I know the good side and I know the problems of your colleges." In the prepared statement Carter expressed support for a "pluralistic system of education in which there is a place for a religious view of man," and called for efforts to develop responsible moral education. He encouraged the delegation "to use me as an endorsement of private higher education."

Following the presentation and response, Carter—standing in front of President Theodore Roosevelt depicted in a cavalry charge on San Juan Hill—shook hands with and had a comment for each member of the delegation. To Albert Meyer he observed, "We've got Mennonites at Ogelthorp in Georgia." The president's remark to Robert Kreider was: "We feel a kinship with you."

While waiting to speak with President Carter, the twenty educators conferred for fifteen minutes with Elizabeth Abramowitz, assistant director for education for the White House Domestic Policy Office. She asked the group to share with her office suggestions for legislation related to higher education, as well as "recommendations and reactions" on all educational matters before the government.

In his assessment of the interview with the president, Robert Kreider remarked, "The meeting was worthwhile. It gave occasion for the president to declare clearly and publicly his friendship for church-related colleges and universities. Our colleges need friends, including friends in the White House."

Albert Meyer is executive director of the Mennonite Board of Education of the Mennonite Church. Robert Kreider is chairperson of the Department of Higher Education of the Commission on Education of the General Conference Mennonite Church, director of the Mennonite Library and Archives, and teaches peace studies at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

Peace Section (U.S.) warned of backlash

Winnipeg—"There is a new danger in Washington in the spreading right-wing backlash. It may be due to the U.S. loss in Vietnam and the Pentagon's loss of the B-1 bomber. You can notice strong opposition to the Panama Canal treaty. The question of reconstruction aid to Vietnam is not even being raised. Selective Service is trying to increase its appropriations from $6.8 million to $20 million, so it can mobilize its central computer to register and classify potential military manpower for a possible emergency."

The above comments were included in

Delton Franz's Washington Office report to the annual meeting of Peace Section (U.S.) in Winnipeg, December 1. Franz also told of a November 30 *New York Times* news release about a survey showing that while only 8 percent of teenagers polled in 1973 believed that the U.S. military should be strengthened, a 1977 poll indicated 77 percent support for such a move.

John K. Stoner, executive secretary, reported that New Call to Peacemaking, initiated in 1976 cooperatively with the Friends and Church of the Brethren, has gained widespread support. The arms race and war-tax question remains a vital one. Its focus seems to be shifting from tax withholding to the issue of civil disobedience for conscience's, and God's sake.

The section members were surprised that the previous year's decision to request FBI-CIA files on Mennonite Central Committee had not been carried out. The request was reaffirmed.

Actions taken at the Winnipeg meeting include: (1) assistance to Mennonite youth in preparing preregistration files for the time when the Selective Service may again be calling for these; (2) a proposal to request $10,000 above budget to prepare literature on vocational opportunities in peacemaking, the biblical basis for peacemaking, information on the myths and euphemisms of the military, and clarification of life-styles; (3) continuing work on the legal implications of war-tax withholding; (4) a decision not to undertake major involvement in the debates on abortion and homosexuality, due to prior commitments to other issues more directly related to the Peace Section's assignment; and (5) approval of a budget of $113,000.

TV Christmas special produced by Winnipeg group

"Friends," a group of young Winnipeg Mennonites, produced a half-hour Christmas special for local TV station CKY, an affiliate with the Canadian Television Network. Broadcast Christmas Day, the special blended music and original readings focusing on a journey theme—from darkness to light—as symbolized by the three wise men.

They performed a setting of T. S. Eliot's "Journey of the Magi" by Benjamin Britten. Reproductions of related artwork formed a visual backdrop to the music. Two full evenings of studio and recording time, as well as air time, were donated by the station.

One of the members of the group, Allan Siebert, reflected, "This is the kind of project Friends is looking for—giving a lot of people the opportunity to work together creatively, allowing Christians in the arts to express their faith in a 'secular' setting."

Encounters of a spiritual kind

Cheyenne, Wyoming—World champion rodeo roper Walt Arnold of Silverton, Texas (facing camera), shares his faith wherever he competes. Arnold's story is featured in a new book, More Than Just Talk, The Human Touch in Evangelism.

ALL RESULTS
ODEO HEADQUARTER

El Paso, Texas—Willie Mae Giles, missionary to the Mexican-American barrio in El Paso, moves enthusiastically through her daily assignments. Outside the two-story Baptist center she listens to the competing chatter of neighborhood children. Each week dozens of Spanish-speaking neighbors come to the center to take part in sewing classes, youth activities, or to seek help with their problems.

All-India Mennonite Women's Conference

". . . a wonderful, close, warm experience for everyone"

From November 1-6, 1977, the first nationwide inter-Mennonite women's conference in India occurred. The historic gathering brought together 208 women from widely separated locations across the length and breadth of India. Delegates, observers, guests travelled days and up to a thousand miles to Dhamtari, Madhya Pradesh, to participate in the bilingual (Hindi and English) gathering.

Seven North American women were among the guests. From the General Conference Mennonite Church, Lois Deckert, Newton, Kansas, and Martha Nickel, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, attended. "It was a wonderful, close, warm experience for everyone," indicated Lois.

Each day began at 6:00 a.m. Thereafter there was a full schedule of Bible studies, worship periods, presentations of papers, reporting by the North Americans on women's work, reporting by Indian women, and an evening service which featured sharing, special numbers, and films. "Some things ran overtime," noted Lois with a chuckle. Helen Bhelwa chaired the conference, and Bishop P. J. Malagar coordinated arrangements for the conference.

Major papers, by both visitors and Indian women, were presented in three areas of Christian living: (1) the role of women in the church, church planting, missionary work; (2) marriage, particularly as it relates to changing women's roles; (3) family, community, and church relationships.

"I admired the women of India for tackling difficult topics like these. The women in our churches in Canada and the United States are often afraid to speak out on these controversial issues," observed Martha Nickel. "During the discussion period the women were free to talk and share, and needed little encouragement to participate."

Although most marriages in India are still arranged by parents, the changing roles of women in Indian society are becoming more noticeable. J. Paranjyothy said that although intercaste marriages are increasingly acceptable, there is, nevertheless, social stress when they occur. She asserted that believers should marry believers. Speaking against an increasingly common practice among salaried persons, that of couples living in different towns if their jobs demand it, P. S. Solomon said husband and wife should live together. "The marriage bond," she said, "should be refreshing like the dew." She also spoke against incurring large debts from the customary dowry and big feasts at marriages. Another woman, V. Paul, spoke about the difficulties a Christian woman has in living in an overwhelmingly Hindu society.

Martha Nickel particularly noted the genuine warmth and hospitality of the Indian women. "It was a miracle that the conference was held, and that we were there," she reflected. Martha led the daily Bible study of Ephesians, and related how the epistle was so much more alive because the cultural setting for Ephesians is so similar to India's. "Biblical times were enacted before our eyes, not only in agriculture and food preparation, but in relationships between men and women, as well as in the barriers caused by caste, which reminded me of the walls between Jew and Greek," she commented.

Among the highlights of the conference was a decision by the delegates to elect a continuing committee—two members each from the Bhartiya General Conference, the Mennonite Brethren, and Mennonite Church will implement joint projects and may plan for another gathering in five years.

Dances and skits were featured during a Saturday afternoon cultural program. One woman, a natural comedian, convulsed the assembly with her imitations of missionary language, and a beggar's performance. "The Indian women," remarked Lois Deckert, "were disappointed in us Westerners who had no cultural arts to share."

The Sunday communion and foot washing service, 4½ hours long, was also an inspirational time. The first Mennonite Indian woman to graduate from seminary assisted in the distribution of the elements. All the foreign visitors were asked to speak once more. *Vic Reimer*

". . . very different . . ."

The All-India Mennonite Women's Conference held in November 1977 was a very different experience for the overseas guests. The conference was bilingual: Hindi and English. The weather was warm. Delegates wore brightly colored saris. The food was often rice and curry cooked over open fires in cast iron pots and served under a *shamiyana* (canopy). Overseas guests slept on woven tape beds under whirring fans in school hostels closed for vacation. The other delegates slept on mats on the floor.

But one aspect was the same, had the conference taken place anywhere in the world: the bonds of Christian fellowship reached across all cultural differences.

Before I left for India, I heard comments questioning its value. Would the results justify the high cost of bringing Mennonite women of India together? In a country where the majority of wage earners measure their yearly income in three figures, a conference for church women seemed an unnecessary luxury.

After more than a year of planning and praying, the first All-India Mennonite Women's Conference became a reality. About 200 women gathered at Sunderganj Mennonite Church, Dhamtari, Madhya Pradesh, representing six Mennonite groups in India. The largest group of sixty women came from the Mennonite Brethren area in Andhra Pradesh. Included in this number were eight overseas guests, seventeen visitors from India, and sixteen conference staff. Many delegates were teachers, nurses, housewives, students, or secretaries. For some it was the first ride on a train, the first trip outside their area, the first contact with other Mennonite women.

The gathering aimed to unify the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ women of India and inspire them to greater involvement in mission activities in their own country. The theme was "We Are One in Christ."

Leah Sonwani, member of the program committee, told me how the women's conference got started. The Christian Education Commission of MELARC (Mennonite Literature and Radio Commission) had conducted educational workshops, but usually only for men and young people. Why not one for women to encourage them in the faith and to provide training for Christian service?

Leah had seen the work of Mennonite women during her stay in America as an MCC trainee. Women of India could do more if they knew the range of possibilities. Bishop P. J. Malagar became the coordinator for the proposed conference and a planning committee composed of representatives of each of the groups in the MCSFI (Mennonite Christian Service Fellowship of India) formed the steering committee.

Fund raising was a major obstacle in the planning. Though women's church groups in America were appealed to for support, "We knew we would not have a conference," said Leah, "unless we agreed to collect money from the women in India."

Personal donations were encouraged. Leah and other women canvassed from door to door for donations. Some groups held sales of handicrafts or donated goods. Mennonite Brethren women saved a portion of their monthly sugar ration and brought it along. Mennonite Church women from Dhamtari donated rice as well as wood for cooking. October 9 was set aside as Women's Conference Day to pray for and to take offerings for the conference.

"The women raised money for the conference in a quantity never raised for anything else," Leah said. The possibility of a conference was assured.

At the conference, each day's sessions began with a Bible study on Ephesians, followed by group discussions. Papers on the role of women in missions and evangelism, on marriage and family, and on the changing roles of women in church and society followed. Overseas guests and representatives of the India groups reported on the development of their women's activities.

The evening services were usually filled to capacity by members of the local congregation, including men and young people. Each featured much singing and an inspirational message. The last evening service closed with a candle-lighting service, made more impressive because all the women wore white saris. Communion, foot washing, and a final fellowship meal highlighted the Sunday morning service.

A continuation committee was elected to consider joint projects for the Mennonite women of India, such as supporting a student nurse, helping women in slum areas, education of adult illiterates, sewing for needy children, and publishing a newsletter.

But was it worthwhile? Several guests and delegates responded to this question:

Helen Kripa Ram, teacher in a junior college for girls at Mahbubnagar: "I was reminded of our need for spiritual growth. What we have been neglecting to put into practice was emphasized here. We have been made aware of how much work there is to be done through Mennonite churches in Asia. We didn't know the work was going on on such a large scale among women in other areas. We have received inspiration to help by giving for others, instead of only for our own needs."

Vesta Miller, Yeotmal Biblical Seminary, India: "I see tremendous growth in the women's work during the thirty-nine years I have been in India. It is a tribute to the mission board that it had the foresight to encourage the Indian church to stand on its own feet."

Grace Slatter, Mennonite Church representative who grew up in India, said, "I have seen the church growing up. Women's groups weren't organized when I was here before. Now they are active and giving of what they have in worship. They are giving their own thoughts and offerings. Now they are moving around as adult Christians."
Katie Funk Wiebe

Sorghum distributed in Upper Volta

The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church and Mennonite Central Committee recently administered a successful food distribution program to villagers in the Tougan area of Upper Volta.

There have been insufficient crops in northern Upper Volta for two years and even the November harvest was too scant to provide food until the next growing season. Government distribution programs bypass small villages, and consequently, Terry Stuckey, MCC country representative, purchased sorghum from USAID shipments supplied to the Upper Volta Government for sale within the country.

Commercial trucks transported the 19.5 tons of sorghum to Tougan. It became the distribution center. Pastors and elders from nearby villages were asked to indicate who was in need of food. At the rate of five persons per 100-pound sack some villages required only three sacks while the largest needed thirty-five. The grain was distributed without discrimination, to both Christian and non-Christian.

Ian Wallace, MCC worker, reports that all arrangements including unloading, stocking, arranging bicycle and donkey cart transportation, and collecting receipts were made by the church committee. In this way the program was viewed by the villagers as a response by the local church even though most were aware that the grain came from MCC. A Christian and Missionary Alliance missionary, Herb Nehlsen, also aided the distribution with his truck.

Although MCC food distribution has stopped for the time being, further food shipments to Upper Volta are in process. MCC (Canada) is sending twenty tons of powdered milk. A twenty-five-ton shipment of wheat from Kansas is awaiting USAID approval. Stuckey has requested 100 tons of grain, including wheat, beans, and sorghum.

Mennonite hospital may get millions

Flanagan, Illinois—When a frugal ninety-two-year-old member of the Waldo Mennonite Church, Flanagan, Illinois, died in November 1977, he left a will saying all his possessions, except dishes and household goods, were to be used to "serve the community in which I've spent my life and to which I feel a deep sense of gratitude."

John W. Albrecht's will names the Flanagan State Bank as the trustee of an estate which includes 2,899 acres of farmland valued at 8.1 million dollars. The will calls for the establishment of a hospital or nursing home near Flanagan or Minonk, but if after fifteen years the trustee determines that this project is not feasible the entire estate is to be given to the Mennonite Hospital, Bloomington, in 1998.

His will calls for the land to be held in trust for twenty-one years, and all proceeds from the farms he owns be invested. At the end of that period the estate is to be dissolved. In his will, Albrecht states the cash resulting from the sale of his estate could be used only to build, buy, repair, remodel, maintain, or operate a hospital or nursing home near Flanagan or Minonk, or it all should be given to Mennonite Hospital. The Flanagan State Bank, as trustee, is to have decided what it will do with the millions within fifteen years. One attorney has estimated that the value of Albrecht's estate could be twenty million dollars before it is time to dole out the money.

Trainee sponsors needed

The international Exchange Visitor Program of Mennonite Central Committee currently has a total of fifty-three men and women from sixteen different countries completing the first six-months period of their stay in North America. Sponsors are needed for trainee placement during the second half of this program. MCC welcomes immediate response from readers who can provide placements.

Sponsors are needed for the following: child care workers; workers with the handicapped; teacher aides; general construction and high-rise and bridge-building construction helpers; electronics technicians and electric power engineers; institutional housekeepers; medical, chemical, and quality control lab workers; office workers in bookkeeping, typing, printing, graphic art, photography, audiovisuals; dairy food processor and church-related workers.

While a participant is ready to do full-time work, the trainee program is not an earning program for anyone. The trainee is provided with a monthly allowance of $30 from his or her sponsor as well as room and board. Sponsors also donate $85 a month to MCC for transportation, medical costs, and program costs.

Persons interested in being sponsors may write or call either of the following: MCC-Akron, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501, (717) 859-1151; MCC (Canada), 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8, (204) 475-3550.

New initiatives by MCC in Haiti

"Haiti is a country high on MCC's priority list. The need is greater than anywhere else in the Western Hemisphere," reports Gerald Shank, Mennonite Central Committee Latin America secretary, following a recent visit to that area.

"1978 will prove to be a year of change with old programs phasing out and new initiatives being taken," he adds.

Reporting on the national scene in Haiti, Shank notes some changes which are evident since the 1974 accession of Juan Duvalier as president. The raising of the minimum wage from 40 cents to $1.60 a day is one of these changes as is the stress on the importance of elementary education. The Creole language, now increasingly encouraged, is being used in the teaching of some of the early grades. Translations of the entire Bible into Creole are also nearing completion.

With more industries in the capital city, employment opportunities have risen there. However, for the 90 percent living in rural areas, there is little if any change.

Service projects, aside from church-planting activities, are now a government stipulation for existing mission groups in Haiti. Few new missions are being permitted to enter, according to Shank's report. The prior agreement between MCC and the government of Haiti continues, however, with its special arrangements for entry of needed supplies without tax.

An agreement signed with the Ministry of Health during Shank's visit to Haiti calls for a gradual transfer of the Grande Riviere hospital administration from MCC to the government of Haiti. The medical director to replace the current MCC doctor has been named—a person held in high esteem by the present MCC staff. The agreement permits continuation of the public health program as well as the ongoing work at the hospital.

While the Haitian staff is expected to be in complete charge of the hospital by May 1978, MCC will continue to monitor hospital records until October 1979.

Efforts are being made to explore new possibilities for MCC to work jointly with the government in a specific health project. This project would focus on community-based health rather than a hospital or clinic. New projects will have a definite time limitation and will be located so as to stress efforts in agriculture and nutrition as integral parts.

Community development, agriculture, and nutrition projects at Grand Riviere du Nord are successful because there is more receptivity to the use of soil conservation practices, tree planting, and improved diets. Much of the credit for the participation of fifty-five community councils in the agricultural program is given to two Haitian promoters who have worked with MCC for many years. MCC involvement in these projects will be completed by 1980.

Although agriculture, health, and nutrition seem to be areas of greatest need, other possibilities include new initiatives in the promotion of handicraft activities and developing more specific educational programs based on Haitian needs and efforts giving MCC support to Haitians working with injustices to the poor. The nonformal approach to education, seen as being increasingly effective, is being considered for future involvement in all fields.

In spite of some improvements, the needs in Haiti remain mind-boggling, concludes Shank.

Digging contour canals is part of the soil conservation program in Haiti. MCC efforts will continue to stress agriculture, health, and nutrition, but new initiatives in handicrafts and correcting injustices are being considered.

18
CHRISTMAS
PEACE
PILGRIMAGE

Participants in the Christmas Peace Pilgrimage en route from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

Bethlehem or bedlam?

Akron, Pennsylvania—It is ten miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem in eastern Pennsylvania, not as far as the seventy-five miles that separates the biblical towns by the same name, but a good afternoon's walk for those who participated in the annual Christmas Peace Pilgrimage, December 10, 1977.

The pilgrimage is intended to give a public witness to the way of peace at Christmas time. Pilgrims carry lighted candles and lanterns through the streets of Bethlehem in the last mile of the walk. Eighty persons joined in the eighteenth annual march.

"It was a powerful peace education for the young people who participated," said John Stoner, Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section (U.S.) executive secretary. "They will remember for a long time that they took a Saturday before Christmas to say that Jesus is not a member of, nor a chaplain to, the military establishment of any nation."

An indoor service culminated the pilgrimage. "Bethlehem or Bedlam?" was the title of the address given by Richard Deats. "For thirty years we have been in a mad arms race to buy ourselves security, and yet we are not secure," he observed. He called on the pilgrims to become part of a public cry to world leaders to disarm, and particularly pointed to the May 1978 special session of the United Nations on disarmament which, he thought, could be a pivotal event leading to disarmament.

Words & deeds

The first Writers Conference at The People's Place, Intercourse, Pennsylvania 17534, will take place January 20-21. Featured at the conference will be workshops and lectures ranging from fiction to film and drama to inspirational articles and features led by well-known writers Rudy Wiebe of Edmonton, Alberta; Katie Funk Wiebe of Hillsboro, Kansas; and Merle Good of The People's Place. Registration is limited to eighty persons. Information is available by writing to the above address or telephoning (717) 768-7171.

Prayers for peacemaking will be a common focus of Brethren, Friends, and Mennonite congregations, Sunday, March 5. The call to prayer is sponsored by New Call to Peacemaking with the suggestion that services be centered on the place of prayer in peacemaking. As an aid in observing the call of prayer, bulletin inserts in the form of bookmarks are being prepared. Coordinator of New Call to Peacemaking is Robert Rumsey, Box 235, Plainfield, Indiana 46168.

A seminar for professionals focusing on faith, ethics, and Christian identity is to be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, March 3-5. It is designed for students and young adults who are already employed as professionals, or who are preparing for a profession such as law, art, social work, medicine, education, business, science, etc. Organizers are Rick Mojonnier in Philadelphia, Dave Wenger in New York City, and Arden Shank in Washington, D.C. For information write to Mennonite Student Services, 2026 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19121.

Is marginal living for everyone? Brethren in Christ psychiatrist Roger Sider in an article titled "The Missionary as a Marginal Person," asks, "What does the Bible say to us about marginal living, about being exposed, . . . not quite belonging . . . ? The missionary must come to grips with this question as few Christians do. (The Bible says) the margin is the place for all of us. (As missionaries) we are always exposed and vulnerable . . . and that is the call of God to every believer." Interested persons may request individual copies from Mennonite Board of Missions, Box 370, Elkhart, Indiana 46515.

Mennonite multiculturalism is alive and well. John de Gruchy from Cape Town, South Africa, spoke at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, during November 1977. After his return to Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, where he has been visiting professor during the fall term, he related this anecdote. Sitting at a table with a group of CMBC students he asked, "Is there anyone attending CMBC who is from a different cultural background than yours?" There was a brief pause, and then one student opined, "Oh yes, I think there is a Mennonite Brethren on campus."

Despite the ethnic preponderance of Mennonites at Goshen (Indiana) College, a 1977 study of the school by representatives of the National Council of Churches found that the campus does not have a "fortress mentality." Prepared by educator Merrimon Cuninggim, former president of the Danforth Foundation, the report states that students and faculty are "open and at ease with a visitor, are by no means of one mind, and practice an enthusiastic outreach to the community nearby and the world at large." Goshen was one of fourteen American church-related colleges studied to assess perceptions students, staff, and faculty have of church-relatedness in higher education. It was particularly noted that Goshen ministers to the church "not merely indirectly by training students . . . , but also directly by supplying both helpful advice and constructive criticism."

Rhodesia may have bought U.S. designed military aircraft—twenty Cessna "Milirole" aircraft—despite a United Nations embargo which is officially supported by the United States. The American Friends Service Committee has called for an investigation into the alleged sale. The planes were said to have been produced by a Cessna subsidiary in France and delivered to the breakaway Ian Smith regime in Rhodesia in mid-1976 by way of a "Spanish fishing company" in the Canary Islands. Tony Avirgan, a freelance journalist based in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, said the Rhodesians used the planes as spotters in raids on neighboring Mozambique.

A winter cultural series is planned for The People's Place, Main Street, Intercourse, Pennsylvania. Beginning January 16 the series will feature unusually creative individuals who belong to the Mennonite peoplehood said Phyllis Good, chairperson of the series. The presentations will include interpretive readings from the Bible, vocal music, and talks about creating pictures and collecting old things. Information may be obtained by calling (717) 768-7171.

Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, has been awarded $9,200 by the Schowalter Foundation to assist in the development of an agricultural program, and to update the cataloging of some 30,000 photographs, as well as numerous foreign language books in the Mennonite Library and Archives.

Chaplain Jerry Griffin of the Bethel Deaconess Hospital, Newton, Kansas, is one of 100 clergy selected nationwide to participate in a project to train community clergy in services to the elderly. Following a national seminar in Indianapolis, Indiana, in February, Griffin is to conduct a one-day session for Newton-area clergy providing a comprehensive, educational experience to enable them to strengthen pastoral relationships with the elderly, and to develop action programs in local congregations. The project is funded by a $150,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Russian-language religious broadcasts by the Mennonite Church are meeting an important need, stated recent immigrants from the USSR. Vasil Magal, speaker on "Voice of a Friend," received many affirmations of the ministry during a visit to Germany. An immigrant preacher told how four of his children came to the Lord through the radio broadcasts. Another minister related that in his travels throughout the USSR he found people everywhere who regularly listen to the broadcasts. He said the communist governments of eastern Europe and the USSR know the importance of these religious programs which can be heard day or night. While in Germany, Magal attended a radio conference in Frankfurt and also spoke to immigrant groups. A man approached him after a service and told him that he had been listening to Vasil since 1963 and said, "We have prayed to God to give us the opportunity to meet this brother from 'The Voice of a Friend' before we die, and here you are!" Vasil was also able to sell all the copies of *Pilgrim's Progress* in the Russian language which he had, and observed, "*Pilgrim's Progress* is one of the books best known by Christians in the Soviet Union."

For the first time since the Reformation, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox church members are able to use the same edition of the Bible, the *New Oxford Annotated Bible,* with the Apocrypha, and still have all the books recognized as authoritative by the churches. The new Bible is an expanded edition of the Revised Standard Version, and coincides with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the RSV Bible this month. It is the only Bible version approved by all three major branches of Christianity and the only version produced by a committee that includes Protestant, Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Jewish scholars.

Record

Workers

Jake and Wanda Neufeld of Boissevain, Manitoba, have taken on managerial responsibilities at Camp Koinonia in Boissevain.

Current officers of the board of directors of the Mennonite Foundation of Canada are chairman, *Myron Stevanus* of Kitchener; vice-chairman, *C. Blake Friesen* of Edmonton, Alberta: secretary, *Art Rempel* of Winnipeg; and treasurer, *Mervin S. Good* of London, Ontario. Mennonite Foundation is a nonprofit agency of four Mennonite denominations of Canada which promotes stewardship of accumulated possessions, provides estate planning counsel, and offers investment services.

Ministers

Paul Koehler, Rockhill Mennonite Church, Telford, Pennsylvania, has begun serving as pastor of the Walton (Kansas) Church. He has attended the Maumee Valley School of Nursing; Bethel College, Mishawaka, Indiana; Huntington (Indiana) College; Fort Wayne Bible College, Fort Wayne, Indiana; and the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana. He is employed as a supervisor at McPherson Diversified Services, a program for the adult developmentally disabled.

Don Pahl is serving as assistant pastor at Ebenezer Church, Bluffton, Ohio. He is a graduate of Grace College of the Bible, Omaha, Nebraska. He served for two years as pastor of the Fairview Bible Church, Swift Current, Saskatchewan.

Tim Sprunger is serving as youth minister at First Church, Berne, Indiana. He is a 1977 graduate of Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Calendar

January 26-28—MCC annual meeting, Rockway Mennonite School, Kitchener

January 30-February 3—Pastors' workshop, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana

February 10-14—Council of Commissions, Newton, Kansas

February 10-11—Mennonite Disaster Service annual all-unit meetings, Phoenix, Arizona

March 30-April 2—Central District Conference annual sessions, Wooster, Ohio

May 4-6—Eastern District Conference annual sessions, Deep Run Church, Bedminster, Pennsylvania

June 15-18—Pacific District Conference annual sessions, Flagstaff, Arizona

Canadian

February 2-4—Canadian Council of Boards, Winnipeg

February 10-11—Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia annual sessions, Eden Church, Chilliwack

February 17-18—Conference of the United Mennonite Churches of Ontario annual sessions, Leamington

February 24-25—Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba annual sessions, Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg

February 24-25—Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan annual sessions, Zion Church, Swift Current

May 6—Manitoba Women in Mission annual meeting, Winkler

Central

February 24-25—Lay leaders' workshop, sponsored by the General Conference Central District and the Illinois Conference of the Mennonite Church; Camp Mennohaven, Tiskilwa, Illinois; resource person, Ronald Ropp

Western

February 17—Forum on farm and energy issues, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kansas; speaker, Paul Longacre

Published

Hyperion Press has released *A Russian Dance of Death* for the Mennonite Literary Society of Manitoba. It is the first of a series of works about the cultural heritage of the Mennonite people, and has been recommended as supplemental reading for senior high school and undergraduate university history classes. Inquiries may be directed to Hyperion Press, 61 Gertie Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3A 1B5.

Program director needed

Friendship Day Care, Inc., has an opening for an administrator-program director beginning March 6. For more information contact Friendship Day Care, Inc., 517 East Avenue B, Hutchinson, Kansas 67501. Phone 316-663-1801. Applications due January 20.
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Free distribution of the pamphlet *Who Are the Mennonites?* has been discontinued because demand for it has been so strong that the cost of giving them away has become too high to absorb. The price for the pamphlet is ten cents (1-99 copies), nine cents (100-499), eight cents (500-999), and seven cents (1,000 or more). The pamphlet briefly sketches the origin and history of the Mennonites and explains the basic characteristics of the Mennonite faith. It has been popular with churches, museums, schools, and other organizations to which tourists and visitors come. To date approximately 44,000 of the pamphlets have been distributed. La Vernae Dick is the author. Orders for the pamphlet may be sent to Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

Ufa Settlements, originally published in German, is now available in an English translation. The book, edited by Gerhard Hein, describes the beginnings, the development, and the disintegration of the Ufa settlement near the Ural Mountains in Russia. The book may be ordered for seven dollars from Catherine Klassen, 54 Noble Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2L 0J4.

Review

Mennonite Brethren Confession of Faith

Confession of Faith of the General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches, *by the Board of Christian Literature (Hillsboro, Kansas, 1976, 22 pages) is reviewed by John Friesen, assistant professor of theology, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, on sabbatical (1977-78) at Weierhof, Germany.*

From the time of its inception in 1860 in Russia, various religious heritages have shaped the Mennonite Brethren Church. In the Molotschna settlement the influence for renewal came largely from Lutheran pietism mediated especially by Eduard Wuest. This pietism emphasized church discipline, personal religious conversions, and missions. In contrast to most Lutheran pietists, Wuest was a separatist, which meant that he was interested in organizing the "renewed" people into separate churches instead of having them remain as active cells renewing the church from within.

The influence in the Chortitza settlement came from German Baptists. Their distinctive beliefs were similar to those of Wuest's. However, they insisted that immersion was the only valid form of baptism. This form was eventually accepted by the Molotschna Mennonite Brethren and has remained normative for the Mennonite Brethren Church.

The renewal sparked by influences from outside the Mennonite community caused the Mennonite Brethren to look anew at their Mennonite heritage. They discovered in Menno an emphasis on personal religious experience which the larger Mennonite church had lost sight of. They discovered Menno's concern for a disciplined, pure church, and for vigorous proclamation of the Word. They continued to emphasize that refusal to bear arms for nation states was a proper interpretation of Christian nonresistance.

The confessions which the Mennonite Brethren Church has used reveal the influence of the various religious heritages. In its early years, the Mennonite Brethren Church adopted for its use a Russian Mennonite confession drawn up in 1853 by Frisians, Flemish, and High Germans. In addition, some early documents and correspondence which emphasized its distinctive beliefs were also used.

In 1900 the first Mennonite Brethren confession was accepted for Russian and American use. It explained that the Mennonite Brethren Church agreed with the Mennonite church's theology, and added that it disagreed with its lax use of church discipline (the issue in Molotschna), and with the mode of baptism (the issue in Chortitza). The introduction also expressed its close fellowship with other *Evangelisch-Taufgesinnten* ("evangelical, baptism-minded") groups, and added that the Mennonite Brethren Church could not unite with them because they were willing to accept military service.

The new Confession of Faith adopted by the Mennonite Brethren General Conference in Winnipeg in 1975 also expresses this multiple heritage. In the preface the editors indicate that the Mennonite Brethren Church was rooted "in evangelical Mennonite-Anabaptism." The adjective "evangelical" has been used to describe that part of sixteenth-century Anabaptism which included the Swiss Brethren, Hutterian Brethren, and Dutch-North German Mennonites. Evangelical, in North America, also means conservative Protestant, with its emphases, among others, of missions, evangelism, individual conversion, and the authority of Scriptures. Even though the designation in the confession leaves unclear which meaning is intended, there is considerable influence in the content from the North American evangelical tradition. The use of this ambiguous term also indicates that the intent is to identify with both traditions.

The Confession of 1975 begins with the same affirmation of the triune nature of God as did the Confession of 1900. However, immediately following this, the 1975 confession inserts a new section on revelation which includes an affirmation of the infallibility and authority of Scripture. The authority of Scripture, as a separate issue, has been one of the most important emphases of North American evangelicals.

Further evidence of the influence of the evangelical movement upon the Mennonite Brethren is expressed in the section on "Love and Nonresistance" in which military service is discouraged. In this section, two reasons are given why Christians ought to reject military service. One is that through a life of peace the Christian fulfills his evangelistic responsibility. The other is that to take life contradicts the new nature which the Christian has in Christ. This section thus combines both the evangelical's concern for evangelism, and the historical Mennonite view that nonresistance is a Christian mandate because it agrees with the nature of the Christian gospel.

The Confession of 1975 is evidence that an effort has been made to integrate the various heritages—Lutheran Pietist, German Baptist, evangelical, and Mennonite. Even though the characteristics of the various traditions are still discernible, a remarkable integration has been achieved. Throughout it is also noticeable that the intent of the integration is to remain within the Mennonite context.

The Mennonite Brethren Church is to be congratulated for examining and reformulating its basic beliefs. The process of reexamining and integrating different emphases from various traditions was surely a difficult task, as is evidenced by the fact that it took almost ten years and seven drafts. The result will, however, surely be positive for the Mennonite Brethren Church as it seeks to be faithful to Christ and his teachings.

Letters

Christians and divorce

Dear Editor: I would like to comment on "The Question of Divorce" (November 29, 1977 issue). I can very well understand the dilemma that divorce has created in all Christian circles. Having experienced the agony of marriage breakdown, and having been brought up in a Mennonite church for over twenty years, I feel I can relate with some degree of expertise the feelings that some churches have toward the acceptance or rejection of divorced or remarried Christians.

I do not feel that the author can categorically state that all divorce is sin. Divorce between professing Christians may very well be sinful; however, many Christians through human volition are unequally yoked or mismated, and for reasons of adultery or desertion by their mates find divorce the only alternative from an impossible, often devastating, situation. It is perhaps this exact attitude which prevents the true in-depth, heartfelt forgiveness that the author feels the congregations need to exhibit to people that have experienced this human failure; a failure that we as Christians often categorize as being one of greater magnitude than the many other errors of omission or commission. It is not my intent to justify divorce but merely to point out that in spite of the Scriptures speaking of the permanency of the marriage bond, there are most definite provisions made for divorce. These can be found in some of the Scripture verses that the author quotes as being used to forbid divorce. Many divorced Christians cling to these portions of Scripture as their link to our forgiving Lord, and it is the unacceptance of these very provisions that prevent divorced or remarried Christians from experiencing the true love from fellow members of the congregations that Christ talks about in 1 Corinthians 13.

I fully agree with the author that divorce is already a very, if not the most, painful life's experience and the price is very high to the persons caught up in this devastating, humiliating situation. However, God can indeed put together broken, bruised lives and can provide in the words of Isaiah: "Beauty for ashes, joy instead of mourning, praise instead of heaviness."

It would be my earnest prayer, hope, and desire that many of our congregations could and would exhibit the same kind of acceptance for the grieving *and* the many happily remarried Christians that our Lord showed for those to whom he ministered. It would also be appropriate at this point, perhaps, to encourage both written and verbal discussion on this very important area of human relationships; but always, always, in the spirit of love and compassion.

Thank you for allowing me to share. *Eugene William Shahariw, 33 Cedar Bay, Brandon, Manitoba R7B 0Z3*

December 5

Native land rights

Dear Editor: I simply want to acknowledge the brief but very good article by John Funk (November 22, 1977 issue of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada Edition of *The Mennonite*). John's letter draws needed attention to the very one-sided agreements between the government of Canada and the various aboriginal peoples of this country.

While no one can live in reverse in order to correct previous errors, it is necessary to reinterpret some of the history of our dealings with the Indian people. But more than that, it is appalling to discover that the present manner of dealing with the Indian people is no improvement over that of a hundred years ago. Indian people are still being jockeyed out of their land by virtue of nonsettlement and sometimes overruling agreements, as in the case in northern Manitoba where treaties were simply disregarded in favor of the Manitoba Hydro Development Project.

John Funk is one of the few people within the church whose mind encompasses the entire history of the Mennonite people and then puts that reality together with the realities of the Indian people. We do well to hear his voice which articulates some of the detailed information he is digging out of the Okanagan Valley. For the church to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, without taking into account the long history of malicious treatment, is to preach an escapist gospel. I think John Funk wants to tell us that performing concrete deeds of earthly justice is part of the Anabaptist gospel.

How we will come to terms with native land rights, especially in those areas where it affects our people directly, will qualify or disqualify whatever else we do in our mission activity.

May God give us all bigness in our hearts and an increased dedication to the justice of Jesus Christ as we attempt to be his church. *Menno Wiebe, 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8*

December 6

Violence to the truth

Dear Editor: In the news release on the Kansas City draft consultation (*The Mennonite,* November 29, 1977) I note this paragraph:

"The draft has caused Mennonites to have a one-issue theology. It was noted that PAX, Teachers' Abroad Program (TAP), and voluntary service were created as a reaction to the draft, and *not as a result* of a Mennonite theology of service" (italics mine). I know something of the origins of TAP and voluntary service. To assert that these were "a reaction to" and "not a result of," strikes me as a casual kind of playing with the data.

Voluntary service had its roots before there was a draft; one of the models—the American Friends Service Committee work camps of the 1930s. One of the earliest Mennonite voluntary service projects was one led by Carl Landes in Chicago. The earliest Mennonite Central Committee-sponsored voluntary service units were for women, who were not subject to the draft. The programs which developed after WW II had a strong thrust on "let's provide opportunity to do that which we know we ought to do when we don't have to do it." The draft played quite an indirect role. Read the memoranda setting up MCC and conference voluntary service programs and you probably will find a substantial body of theological underpinning.

TAP, too, had its theological underpinning, including a theology of gifts and stewardship and a recognition of the *kyros* moment of need in the emerging churches and countries of Africa and Latin America. Most who went into TAP initially were not subject to the draft—women, Canadians, overseas volunteers, and men beyond draft vulnerability.

Prophets, evangelists, and all kinds of persons like us who want to capture our audiences when we give speeches have a way of saying things which make dramatic debating points but carry a strand of violence to the truth and a violence toward persons in the past or present who were incarnate in those experiences.

Maybe this is much ado about nothing—or next to nothing. I realize how easy it is to manipulate history to our own purpose. I constantly struggle with this. In this case I see the need to demythologize this particular account of the past. *Robert Kreider, Box 365, North Newton, Kansas 67117*

December 19

Meditation

Relating to a condemned criminal

An event occurred about 1907 which speaks for P. M. Friesen's wide sympathies, warm heart, and deep feelings of religious and social responsibilities toward fellow humans. One day I entered Friesen's home and found the family depressed. I asked for the reason and was told that five days ago something unusual had happened. P. M. Friesen had been summoned to the jail to administer the Lord's Supper to a convict at ten o'clock that night. Immediately he had realized that a criminal was about to be put to death and that since he, a Mennonite minister, was called, the criminal must be a Mennonite. The thought that a Mennonite was to be executed weighed heavily on him and made him literally sick. He and his family prayed much that God might grant him the necessary calmness for this task.

At ten o'clock the policeman came to get him and verified Friesen's fears that the prisoner was a Mennonite. Soon he confronted a young man in prisoner's stripes and chains writing some notes. After they were left alone, Friesen inquired about his name and background. He discovered that the young man was Abram Vogt from Mariental, where his parents were making a meager living. Their reputation had not been good and no one wanted to associate with the children. Even in school they had found discrimination to the extent that the other children had refused to play with him. How he had been hurt by being treated as an outcast! He now sought to avenge himself. The almost daily punishments did no good. When the fifteen-year-old boy left school, it was difficult for him to get a job since he was not dependable. Finally he left home and went to a city where he got into bad company. For a number of years he was the member of a gang of robbers. One day, when they were plundering a firm in Simferopol, a man was killed and the police caught the gang. This night all of them were to be hanged.

Friesen asked the young man about his inner life, and he replied that he was deeply penitent for his sins and was writing notes to those whom he had wronged, asking for forgiveness. Now, although facing death, he felt calm and peaceful. After Friesen had read the passage about the prodigal son, quiet joy came into the heart of the Mennonite convict. Then Friesen prepared the table for the Lord's Supper, and they knelt in prayer, reading Isaiah 53 and the song "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded." The last stanza expressed what the two felt:

Be near when I am dying,
  O show thy cross to me;
And for my succor flying,
  Come, Lord, and set me free;
These eyes, new faith receiving,
  From Jesus shall not move;
For he who dies believing,
  Dies safely, through thy love.

At the close, a holy gladness spread over the young man's face. Remembering this moment, Friesen said that no doubt, of the two of them, the man about to die was the worthier guest at the Lord's Table.

What Friesen experienced during that night and the following days is hard to describe. The thought that a young man brought up in a Christian community had died as a criminal was almost unbearable for him. He considered himself, other ministers, and teachers guilty of this man's death. He said, "I am guilty even though I did not know Abram Vogt, because I did not have enough Christian love. The ministers are guilty because they did not take care of the lost sheep. The teachers are guilty because they did not give the poor boy a chance." We, the friends of Friesen, resolved anew not to bypass people indifferently, but to deal with them in love and helpfulness.

F. C. Thiessen

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CONTRIBUTORS

J. D. Hillson is a lawyer in Melville, Saskatchewan.

Louise Dueck, 55 Flerimac Road, West Hill, Ontario M1E 4B1, is a free-lance writer.

Katie Funk Wiebe, Hillsboro, Kansas, was one of the Mennonite Brethren delegates to the women's conference in India.

CREDITS

Cover, Miller Services, 45 Charles Street East, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1S6; 18, 23, RNS; 21, Jim L. Bowman, Box 170, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17108; 26, Ron Sawatsky, MCC; 27, Steve Goosen, MCC.

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Uneasy about Canada

I am a Canadian who loves Canada. When our family needed to decide on a nationality (we lived in the United States from 1971 to 1976 and our oldest son became of voting age), we chose to be Canadians and returned to our home in Winnipeg.

In the last 1½ years, I have become uneasy about Canada. Our country has seen a breakup of the prime minister's marriage. Quebec elected a premier who wants to separate that province from our country. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police have become ensnarled in our own Mountie-gate.

In the light of other crises in the Middle East, Ireland, and Africa, perhaps it is not so terribly alarming. Politics is a risky business at the best of times. Today's inflation, unemployment, security and energy problems are making the whole world unstable.

It is not the vulnerability of Canada that makes me uneasy. I believe that a commitment to follow Jesus Christ is always an openness to engage the challenges of a world most often dominated by human sin.

I am uneasy because I feel an unusual silence among some of my Christian brothers and sisters.

When the United States became involved in the senseless Vietnam War, many Canadian Mennonites joined in condemning our neighbor's actions. When Washington had its Watergate, we pointed fingers and said, "Just as we thought."

When one of our Canadian sisters, who has become a citizen of the United States, pleaded before the General Conference at Bluffton for her conscience against war taxes, fellow Canadians objected that this is no problem for us.

Today, the United States shows little concern for rebuilding war-ravaged Vietnam. Our neighbors are war weary. They are now trying to build up a defense arsenal of such magnitude that no one shall dare to attack them. And we Mennonites see the Pentagon way as directly opposite to the "narrow way" of Jesus (Matthew 7:13-14).

Meanwhile, Canada's own arms industry escalates. Ernie Regehr (*Making A Killing,* page 3) says that Canada is in sixth place among the world's arms merchants—exceeded only by the United States, the USSR, France, the United Kingdom, and Italy. Regehr also writes that Canadian arms exports exceed those of the United States, on a per capita basis.

I am uneasy because I don't hear my brothers and sisters protest against Ottawa. Somehow we manage to wash our hands and keep pointing at the Pentagon. (There's an old saying that whenever you point your index finger at another person, three fingers keep on pointing back at you.)

At Bluffton, the majority voted for a midtriennium conference on the war-tax issue. Every discussion I have since heard on this subject turns to the fear that the Canadian third of the General Conference may refuse to participate; after all, that's a U.S. question.

Are our hands clean? Don't we, as Canadian Christians, need to ask ourselves about our country's commitment to the military? Isn't it time we look into our own mirrors instead of at the giant over the fence?

Are we one people in Christ? As one people, do we stand to resist any government that relies totally on military force for its defense? Are we Canadians, after all, selective pacifists?

Maybe the focus of the midtriennium conference needs to be changed from war taxes (which isn't totally accurate even in the United States), to that of obedience to Christ in a militaristic society. If that will make our Canadian Mennonite peace spokespersons break their silence, then let's change that focus immediately.

The issue is much greater than Canada or the United States. It has to do with the stewardship of God's planet Earth. He created it and put it under our dominion (Genesis 1).

I'll continue to be uneasy until my Canadian sisters and brothers also accept this trust north of the border. The midtriennium conference could become an occasion to join hands with all people around the world, who, in the name of Jesus Christ, see that there are times when we must "obey God rather than human rulers" (Acts 4). This event could become one of our "finest hours" in the global quest for peace. BW

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93: 3 JANUARY 17, 1978

Inside:

Stewardship as a life-style

Creation and evolution

Bible reading

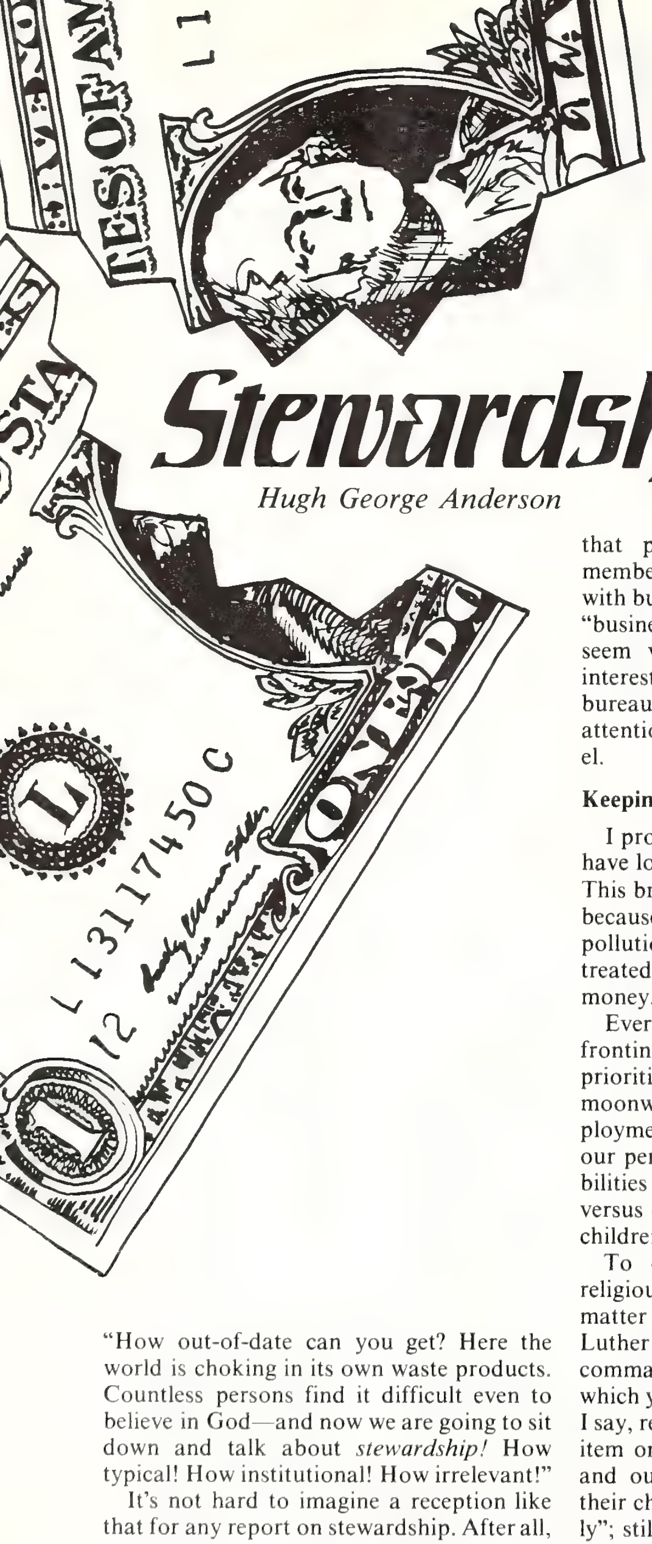
Canada needs Quebec

When you don't agree

We spend money on insurance, market forecasts, research and development, and even on fortune-tellers. Why not see if this remarkable tool could not be put to another use?

Stewardship as a life-style

Hugh George Anderson



"How out-of-date can you get? Here the world is choking in its own waste products. Countless persons find it difficult even to believe in God—and now we are going to sit down and talk about *stewardship!* How typical! How institutional! How irrelevant!"

It's not hard to imagine a reception like that for any report on stewardship. After all, the term has become a euphemism for "contributing to the church." We have succeeded in tagging members' money as the "trace element" by which we (and they) can discover how their lives are organized.

But I don't need to tell you how restricting that popular equation of "stewardship" with "money" really is. The current skepticism about stewardship springs precisely from that popular misunderstanding. Church members associate stewardship campaigns with building programs, funding efforts, and "business as usual." Now that other issues seem vastly more crucial, there is little interest in pumping funds into a bloated bureaucracy. The world demands our attention; let the church-as-institution shrivel.

Keeping the broad view

I propose to speak with those of you who have long held a larger view of stewardship. This breadth is needed now more than ever, because it offers a standpoint from which pollution, faith, world, and church can all be treated. It even has something to say about money.

Every one of the major problems confronting us is basically a problem of priorities. Which is more important to us—moonwalks or sidewalks, inflation or employment, defense or decontamination? In our personal lives we wrestle with responsibilities to job versus family, social action versus church participation, and giving our children standards versus understanding.

To establish priorities is to make a religious statement, because religion is a matter of what we put first in our life. As Luther says in his explanation of the first commandment (*Large Catechism*), "That to which your heart clings and entrusts itself is, I say, really your God." On this basis, the top item on our priority list becomes our God and our religion. Some people "worship" their children; others play bridge "religiously"; still others are "dedicated" employees.

Sacrifice and priorities

Seen in this light, the whole sacrificial system of the Old Testament makes sense. Why did God demand the first-fruits? Why did he declare that "everything that openeth the womb belongeth unto God"? When we remember that the Israelites were a nomadic people who counted their wealth in the size of their herds, the demand for firstlings becomes significant. It was a way of guaranteeing that "God would be God." To sacrifice a bull or a ram to God was a visible demonstration of priorities. No earthly wealth was to stand between the believer and the living God. As the system developed, family and crops were added to the list of would-be idols that had to be offered to the one God through dedication and the tithe. In this way Israel kept its priorities straight.

Many gods, many aspirins

Seen in this light, most of us are trying to serve many gods. No one activity receives our undivided attention. We rush from one altar to another, trying to offer a little of ourselves to each deity—nation, job, home, society. If we find this hectic condition within ourselves, I think it is safe to assume that it plagues many others in our society, both inside and outside the church.

Now comes the crucial part. We dare not let stewardship become another of the gods—just one more competing voice for time, talent, and treasure that would make it part of the problem. It must become part of the cure. Stewardship must become the way we deal with competing claims; it must furnish us the perspective within which we handle conflicting priorities. It is like a magnet passing over the jumbled pins and needles of our life, organizing them into a meaningful pattern. Stewardship is the Christian life-style. It is the attitude we bear toward all our responsibilities and possessions.

Responsible and free

The first mark of this life-style is a sense of responsibility. We feel answerable for what has been entrusted to us. What could be more up-to-date than that? This generation calls it "care of the environment"; an earlier generation called it "conservation"; the church has long called it "stewardship." In each case, whether talking about nature, wealth, or time, the steward is answerable to another for the use of them. We cannot exploit them—that is, we cannot use them for our own personal benefit. The point of the many New Testament stories about stewards makes this clear. There will be an accounting.

But stewardship as a life-style also provides us with a new freedom. It removes the awful burden of ultimate responsibility from our shoulders. When we think only of the responsibility, we become paralyzed like that servant who had but one talent to watch over. Which movement should we join? Which action group should we support? Each has something to offer; none is perfect. How can we decide? So we do nothing, since we cannot take the risk.

The world, however, is God's, not ours. We do what we can to help care for it and heal it, but we know that there are forces far greater than ours working toward the same end. So we take the risk and pray to God that he will use our fallible efforts to his own purpose. This is what Luther meant by "sin boldly—and trust yet more boldly to the grace of God!" Stewards know that the ultimate disposition of the property is not in our hands.

Meanwhile, back at the cash register

Now let's come back to money. I'd like to link it with the other crisis of our times—the crisis of faith. We have often linked faith and money in our talk about stewardship, and usually in that order. The faithful Christian is the contributing Christian. If you believe, then you give. I'd like to suggest that reversing the order might also prove workable.

The basic problem of faith today is the question of God's existence, or, more precisely, whether or not God "makes a difference" in our life or the world. The reason it's so hard to find the answer to that question is that we do everything in our power to make sure that God won't have to make a difference. We guard against every unforeseen occurrence; we minimize the variables; we insure ourselves against every possible accident, including "acts of God." In short, we try to put our lives on such a secure and self-guaranteed basis that there is no room for any will other than our own. It's as though we set out to discover life in a laboratory that we had tried our best to sterilize. No wonder it is difficult to discover the "mighty acts of God."

Our chief instrument in this attempt to conquer the future is our money. We spend it on insurance, market forecasts, research and development, and even on fortune-tellers. Why not see if this remarkable tool could not be put to another use? Why not set out deliberately to use it as a means of providing the sort of conditions under which God's power *would* become manifest and his presence made known? To carry through our laboratory analogy, I am suggesting that we use money to establish a "culture medium" in which the acts of God may grow and become visible.

Every one of the major problems confronting us is basically a problem of priorities. Which is more important to us—moonwalks or sidewalks, inflation or employment, defense or decontamination?

CONTAINS LEAD
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NO
GAS

Tithing for fun and profit

If money is our chief defense against the unforeseen, then one way to allow the unforeseen to happen is to let down our guard—to spend our money in other ways. The tithe has long been debated among some Christians because it smacked of legalism. Let's forget that; we can never give enough to God. But what about seeing the tithe as a challenge to take a financial risk? What if the purpose of the tithe is not to satisfy God but to make us a little hungry? What if stretching the budget to give a significant portion to God would force us to rely on him to see us through? I believe two results are guaranteed.

The first result is that God *will* see us through and we will discover that he *does* make a difference. I have known many families who have been challenged to give sacrificially—usually to a building campaign—and who have discovered that the risk they took brought exciting discoveries. There was still enough food for the table; the family focused on their new-found burden and thus learned to share; the "financial crisis" never developed. In other words, by using money to *create* risk rather than to avoid it, a "space" was opened for the graceful touch of God. New friends, new tasks, new joys, and new values crowded onto the scene. It was like a fresh start.

The second result springs from the fact that "where your treasure is, there is your heart also." When a family gives sacrificially to a project—and let's hope that it won't always be a building—they are interested in what happens to their money. When the contribution goes toward a project involving people, the family can see how their small gift is multiplied in its usefulness. Perhaps they also will get involved in the project. Once again the stage is set for God's action.

Having everything, possessing nothing

There is no better way for faith to grow than to be exposed to the radiation of God's activity in our own lives and the lives of others. A program of financial risk will provide the opening for this radiation to flood upon us. One of the best prospects about the current financial crisis which confronts the church is that it will force us to rely again on the power of God—rather than the interest rate—to multiply our loaves and fishes.

Perhaps we are on the brink of a new era of faith in the church, since doubt is a disease of the affluent. To live one's life as a steward is to have all things and possess nothing—a difficult life-style, but one that offers alternatives to the most vexing problems of our generation.

Creation and evolution

What is the relationship of the Genesis account of the origins of the universe and the theory of evolution? It is usually assumed that there is a conflict between these two points of view—that to hold a creationist view is to deny the evolutionist explanation, and vice versa. Fifty years ago, you could lose your job as a public school teacher because of teaching evolution in the classroom; it was felt that this was attacking the Bible.

A lot of people still feel that evolution is a threat to the Bible. When the theory of evolution was first proposed in the last century, it was the church leaders who tried most vigorously to deny it. Though the battle continues today, it has largely been lost. Unfortunately, the church has had a history of trying to suppress what later becomes commonly accepted. For instance, the facts that the earth is round and that it goes around the sun were at one time considered heresies. So when it comes to the matter of evolution, you have to wonder whether the church is fighting the same old rearguard action that will make it look silly in the future.

In the discussions concerning creation versus evolution, sometimes those who argue in favor of creation seem to think that if they have proved evolution false, they have shown creation to be true. However, this is clearly an error in logic. While it may be true that if evolution is true, creation as presented in Genesis 1 is not historically accurate (that isn't to say it isn't true), it does not follow that if evolution is false, Genesis 1 is historically accurate. (We may say that if it rains the street will be wet, but we cannot conclude from a wet street that it has rained—maybe the street-cleaner just went by.)

A second error in many of these arguments is the idea that the real conflict between evolution and the Bible lies in the conflict between the historical accuracy of Genesis 1 on the one hand, and evolutionary accounts of origins on the other. As we will see, this is neither the most basic nor the most dangerous conflict between the two.

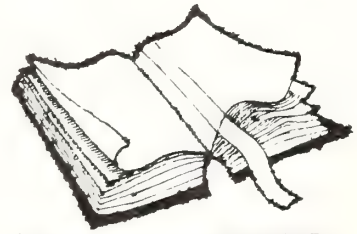
To get at the real conflict, we need to take a brief look at the rise of evolutionary theory. Evolutionary biology represents one of several "historical sciences" that were developed in the last century to reconstruct what happened in the past. Geology is another. In fact, historical geology, too, faced opposition when it was first developed. At that time many geological features were accounted for in terms of catastrophes, like the flood, which God had inflicted on the earth. So when geologists began accounting for faults and uplifts on a different basis—natural forces—this seemed to be an attack on religion.

Now all of these historical sciences have one thing in common—what may be called a "uniformitism hypothesis" (from the word *uniformity*). This holds that the past can be fully explained in terms of forces and factors which can be observed at work today. The geologist would explain geologic features as due to volcanoes, earthquakes, erosion, and sedimentation—all features which we can observe in operation today. Likewise, when Darwin was studying the different species of animals and how they were peculiarly fitted for their environment, he set out to explain their differences and adaptations on the basis of processes which could be observed operating in the present. Since he felt that the variety and intricacy of life could be accounted for in terms of causes which we can see at work in our world today, it was no longer necessary to believe that special "acts" or "events" were needed to explain things. No more in biology than in geology did one need God as the explanation for the way things are.

In an earlier day than Darwin's, a scientist like Isaac Newton could think that in discovering the laws of nature, he was discovering God's own laws and in a sense glorifying God through his analysis of the world. Newton held that though in the past God did act, in the present there are laws operating so that we do not need God to explain things. (When the apple fell from the tree and hit him on the head, he didn't say, "Thanks, I needed that," he developed the theory of gravitation.) Today, on the contrary, the historical sciences are showing that even in the past, science can explain things without using God as an explanation.

Today, therefore, the basic argument becomes "What is the nature of the present?" For it is on the basis of how the present is believed to operate, that people explain the past. For the writers of the Bible, since God was active in the present, he must have been an agent in the past. Just as he causes wonderful as well as fearful things to happen in the present, so he also caused them to happen in the past.

For us likewise today, to affirm God as creator must be an affirmation that grows out of our experience of God in the present. If it does not, then we are being false to ourselves and to our own sense of reality. Ultimately, the truth of the Bible's account of creation is not whether we must believe it blindly as a matter of principle, but whether we experience the truth of God the creator acting in our lives. If the only truth about reality that we know grows out of a test tube, then Genesis can never be true for us, but if it grows out of our experience of God in our lives and among people, then Genesis 1 will always be an important affirmation about the nature of reality for us. *Third article in the series on creation. Perry Yoder, part-time faculty member, Bethel College, North Newton; and part-time staff person, Commission on Home Ministries, Newton, Kansas*



Open your Bible

THE MENNONITE seeks to witness, teach, motivate, and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published weekly except biweekly during July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton, Kansas 67114, by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kansas 67114, and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions: in United States and Canada, $9.00, one year, $17.00, two years, $24.00, three years; foreign, $9.50 per year. Editorial office 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Canada R3P 0M4 Business office. 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114

How is your Bible reading?

Walt Neufeld

How is your Bible reading? is the title of a tract printed by Whittermore Associates, Boston—a tract which I enjoyed reading. I would like to ask that question and rephrase it a little by asking "Do you read your Bible at all?" or "How is your Bible *study*?"

The Bible societies annually come out with various suggestions about reading the Bible—even suggesting outlines and plans by which we can read through the entire Bible or the New Testament in a year's time. In keeping with that kind of emphasis, I would like to suggest that all of us try to make the month of February a "special" time for us to renew our acquaintance with God's Word. And I would like to suggest just a few tips about how to do this.

Perhaps you want to reevaluate your practice of the study of the Scriptures as a family, as a group, or as an individual. Either way, the first step in this process is to walk over to the television set and turn the switch to the "off" position. (Yes, most television sets do have a switch!) If turning the switch to the "off" position does not quiet the beast, find the cord on the back end and pull the plug. Then, if you are studying alone, get into a room where you won't hear the telephone or doorbell, and perhaps even go to a place where your family will not be interrupting you to ask for advice or money or whatever. If you are studying as a family, try some similar arrangement which will assure that you will have some uninterrupted time. The concern here is that you need to set aside a definite time, one which can hopefully be set aside regularly every day. Ten or fifteen minutes a day are worth much more than one uninspired spurt of an hour once a week. Once you have tried to tune out all possible interruptions, you are almost ready.

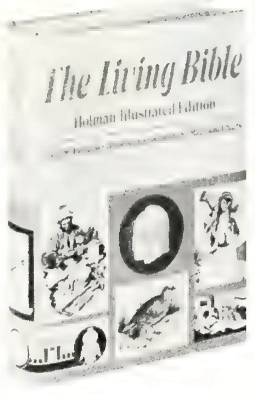
The second step is to pause just a moment to ask God's blessing before you begin. This should be a prayer to God for the vision and strength to study his Word and for his help to discern, with an open mind, what he is trying to say to you. If we study the Bible in the context of this kind of a prayer, we will be in a better position to quietly seek and find his guidance while we are immersed in his Word.

After studying for your prescribed time, it might be well to pause for a brief time of silence in which you again ask God for his wisdom and the strength to follow that guidance.

Third, approach the study of the Scriptures, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, with an open mind and heart. Too often we approach the Bible with an attitude in which we say to ourselves, "I already know the truth—I just want to find a few verses to confirm it." When we approach the study of the Scriptures in such fashion, we are, in a real sense, preventing God from becoming the Lord of the Scriptures and of our life. Genuine study of God's Word does not take place when we go to the Scriptures only to find chapter and verse to confirm our prejudices and to approve the things we are already doing or want to do. That is making ourselves "Lord" of the Scriptures, thus twisting and perverting its message.

This leads us to the fourth prerequisite. We must study the Bible with Christ as Lord and, as much as possible, through his eyes. When we study for doctrines and basic beliefs that form the foundation for our faith, we must begin with the life of Jesus and interpret everything that we study in light of his teaching and example. As we read the Bible, and especially the Old Testament, we must always do so through the mind of Jesus, which then becomes a pair of glasses that puts everything into its proper focus and perspective. What did Jesus say? What did Jesus do? What did Jesus believe? These are primary questions which should be uppermost in our minds whenever we study his Word. These will usually lead us to a satisfying conclusion about what Jesus would do if he were in our shoes and facing our decisions.

Finally, we need to gather the Bible about us and begin. When I suggest here that we gather the Bible about us, I am suggesting that we gather around us our favorite translation and several others as well. There are many different translations of the Scriptures—some very recent and some very helpful. For those of us who do not read the original Greek, looking at different translations of the same passage can sometimes be illuminating. Of some twenty-five different versions or translations of the Bible, I most enjoy the Revised Standard Version, the New English Bible, and the Phillips translations.



Others that are also helpful are the King James Version, the *Good News Bible*, the *Living Bible*, the Weymouth translation, and the Smith-Goodspeed translation. I also enjoy comparing translations in German with the Martin Luther German Bible. For those of us who have at least a passing acquaintance with German, this can be enlightening.

The important thing is that we must not be afraid of going to different translations from our favorite one to get new and additional ideas. When new translations began coming out in greater numbers—some twenty or thirty years ago—there was some hesitancy and fear on the part of many people, that maybe God's Word would somehow suffer or be diluted. But I have complete trust and confidence that God, who has preserved his Word in a trustworthy and reliable fashion for almost 2,000 years, will continue to do so in the future. I therefore feel that some of the newer translations do not take away from God's Word, but rather add to it and make it more clear and plain.

The important thing is that we study the Bible with more understanding, rather than less. It is quite possible for us to study the Bible only for its beauty and aesthetic appeal and completely miss some of the harder teachings about confessing our sins, cleansing our lives, discipleship, and cross-bearing. The Bible is to be studied sincerely, intensely, with an open mind, under the lordship and guidance of Jesus Christ. It will indeed speak to our own individual and corporate human condition and bring to our time and to our lives the message that God has desired.

How is your Bible reading? The answer to that question is not only being able to say, "I read it from cover to cover." The real heart of the matter is being able to say, "I am studying the Bible with real understanding. It is changing and transforming my life."

Mennonite troika warmly received in USSR

—Russian groups expect to send reps to Wichita

Paul Kraybill

Lombard, Illinois—Since the first Mennonite World Conference in 1925, repeated efforts have been made to invite representatives from the Russian Mennonites but always without success. Late in November 1977, a North American delegation of three made a special trip to the USSR to seek out Russian Mennonites, and invite them to send a delegation to the tenth assembly of MWC to be convened in Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30.

The action was taken by the MWC presidium in light of the growing travel and communication between East and West. An invitation was extended to send a delegation comprised of two persons from the Baptist Union (including one Mennonite), two from registered Kirchliche Mennonite congregations, and one from registered Mennonite Brethren congregations. Correspondence with the Baptist Union led to an invitation from them to MWC to send an official delegation to negotiate the invitation. This action seemed necessary because independent Mennonite congregations, even though registered, have no central leadership or organization.

Hence, the executive committee of MWC appointed Million Belete, president, from Kenya; John Toews, presidium member, from Canada; and Paul Kraybill, executive secretary, from the United States, to travel to the USSR, November 19-December 2, 1977.

Our travels took us to Moscow; to Frunze and Romanovka in Khirghizia; to Alma Ata and Azun-Agatch, in Kazakhstan; and to Riga in Latvia. We were accompanied by Traugott Quiring, a Baptist leader of Mennonite background, and a Baptist pastor, Sergey Nickolaev from Leningrad, who served as our interpreter.

We preached in eleven Baptist churches, including both Russian and German (Mennonite) services. We were warmly received and often spoke to crowded churches, with audiences of more than 1,000 persons.

We were disappointed that we were only able to visit two Mennonite congregations of the Kirchliche Mennonite groups at Romanovka and Alma Ata.

Our visit was all too brief but it was a rewarding experience. We were received with much joy. The invitation to the tenth MWC assembly was deeply appreciated, as evidenced by many expressions of gratitude.

The leaders are selecting those who will represent them. They stated that they will "with great joy" pay the cost of the air tickets. We promised to cover all their expenses in the United States and Canada as our guests.

Later in Moscow we discussed further with the Baptist Union the plans for a delegation. It seems clear that the Mennonite delegates will need the assistance of the Baptist Union to expedite the necessary governmental formalities. The Baptist Union has scheduled the delegation on their calendar for this year and will be presenting the necessary application to the government.

Therefore, we not only hope but expect a delegation to the tenth assembly of the Mennonite World Conference. As a world gathering it will be more nearly complete when this large portion of our fellowship is represented.

Mennonites in the USSR have been known traditionally as German-speaking people. Mennonite congregations continue to use German in their services. Many Mennonite delegations to the USSR include a majority of German-speaking persons. In the Mennonite World Conference delegation only one, John Toews, spoke German.

For many Mennonites and Baptists the sight of a black Ethiopian serving as president of the Mennonite World Conference was a rich experience. As a delegation we spoke often of the nature of the church as a worldwide fellowship embracing God's people in every nation. We spoke of reconciliation, of barriers broken down, and of oneness in Christ.

But the most eloquent message was the presence of Million Belete as he preached, conversed, greeted, and was greeted. Always the response was an intense and moving expression of appreciation and agreement, as heads nodded and tears flowed freely. Many were reminded of another Ethiopian whose conversion was a milestone in the life of the early church.

Many asked questions about the church in Africa, its problems and its growth. In turn, Belete spoke in his own unique way of witness and the Great Commission. He reflected on the experience of the Christians in Africa where there is opposition to the church, of countries where it is illegal to profess Christianity, and of places where Christians suffer.

On one occasion Belete challenged a group of Kirchliche Mennonite leaders about the use of German instead of Russian. Later, after reflection, a brother responded to Belete that his point about language was right.

Among the Baptist and Mennonite churches in the USSR, many customs are continued that are being lost in Europe and North America. One of these is the "holy kiss." So it was a sure measure of their acceptance as many pressed forward after the services with joy and deep emotion to grasp his hand and greet him with a kiss! Many remarked that this was the first time they had met an African Christian.

Following one discussion, a brother in a Kirchliche church commented that the delegation reminded him of the words of Jesus. He quoted the Scripture: "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14). And now he sees that this is coming to pass.

As guests of the Baptist Union, we as a delegation made many visits to Baptist churches. In many of these there were substantial numbers of German-speaking persons of Mennonite background. It was gratifying to sense the progress of the churches. There were frequent evidences of an intense emphasis on preaching and exhortation at every opportunity. Services are long, two hours or more, and are held several times a week. In addition, choir rehearsals, family gatherings, weddings, and funerals are utilized effectively.

The reality of the persevering church was pressed upon us many times as we spoke to eager audiences intent on every word. We sensed the warmth of their response, reveled in the grand singing of the choirs, and shared in a genuine fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ.

Bethel to enroll Ugandan exiles

North Newton, Kansas—Bethel College will enroll fifteen Ugandan students for the spring semester. The fifteen are part of a group of 700 exiled Ugandan students presently living in Kenya. Three hundred are being placed in North American schools by African Enterprise of Nairobi, Kenya. Another 400 are to be placed in Europe and Africa.

They have been forced to leave their homeland because of the policies of Ugandan dictator Idi Amin. Amin has outlawed all but three Christian groups in Uganda. Students and others are still escaping, walking through bush country to Kenya. The students identified for Bethel include six in general studies, two in business, two in the natural sciences, four in pre-medicine, and one in pre-engineering. There are twelve men and three women.

African Enterprise is a fifteen-year-old Christian organization whose main work is reaching African political and community leaders for Christ. However, in response to the current situation in Uganda a special refugee committee has been organized called RETURN (Relief, Education, and Training for Ugandan Refugees Now). Among the supporting organizations are churches and foundations. RETURN is also appealing for funds from governments and has received a grant from the Netherlands Government. African Enterprise has an American office at Box 988, Pasadena, California 91102.

According to the Pasadena office, African Enterprise is taking responsibility for all student expenses, except for the one-fourth tuition support which Bethel College has agreed to supply. "This is a calculated risk," President Harold Schultz said, "but one we take on faith." A support services team has been set up to assist the Ugandan students in adjusting to a new culture and Bethel's atmosphere. Several days of orientation are being planned prior to the January 31 registration for spring term. All of the students speak fluent English, and all are Christians, the majority being members of the Episcopal Church. Some have attended teacher-training schools and others are coming out of Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, a national university of outstanding record in East Africa.

When the students arrive in Kenya they are screened and processed. Once it has been established that they are refugees they qualify for United Nation's subsistence funds. According to the Pasadena office the Kenya Government will issue travel documents for the exiles. One of the staff at the Pasadena office, Edward Wilson, also a Ugandan refugee (since June 1976), said that Ethiopian refugees are also beginning to arrive in Kenya.

Annual MCC meetings in January

The annual board meetings of Mennonite Central Committee (Akron) and MCC (Canada) have been scheduled one week apart to facilitate planning between the two organizations. MCC (Canada) will meet in the Parliament Church of the Mennonite Brethren in Regina, Saskatchewan, January 19-21. One week later MCC (Akron) will convene its meeting at Rockway Mennonite School, Kitchener, Ontario, January 26-28. Public assemblies are planned for both meetings, but the business sessions are open to the constituency as well.

MCC (Canada) will consider policy on several major concerns including which agencies and organizations it should align itself with. A particular question is the extent to which it should take the role of "a united voice for the Mennonites in Canada." What is the MCC (Canada) stance on northern development? The budget is expected to receive considerable discussion because increased domestic programs have reduced funds for overseas programs. Two domestic actions begun in 1976 and in 1977 will receive major attention: the Food Bank, officially started October 1, 1976; and the services for Old Colony Mennonites, particularly the fast growing *Mennonitische Post.* A public meeting on Friday will focus on conditions in southern Africa.

To kick off the MCC (Akron) meeting one week later Willard Swartley of Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia, will speak on "Justice, a Biblical Imperative," and John Wieler of MCC (Canada) will present slides of his December trip to cyclone-ravaged Andhra Pradesh on India's east coast. Reconstruction in Andhra Pradesh will be a major 1978 action by MCC. During the business sessions all day Friday and Saturday representatives of MCC's member church groups will evaluate the work of 1977 and set goals for 1978. A special feature, held over from last year because a blizzard forced postponement, is a Friday evening dinner to honor H. Ernest Bennett, chairperson of MCC until last year.

Previous to the beginning of the main sessions, the members who represent American church groups will meet to begin discussions on the recommendation of MCC (Akron) and MCC (Canada) executive committees calling for consideration of a national United States structure to handle strictly American agenda.

Hubert

MCC sharpens material aid administration

Akron, Pennsylvania—Mennonite Central Committee has created a new position in its material aid program to improve the effectiveness of the aid. John Hubert, former MCC agriculturalist in Jordan, has been named material aid coordinator.

Hubert will serve as a link between material resources and needy people, with particular emphasis on formulating guidelines for the use of commodities. The MCC collection system draws in a wide range of commodities—wheat, powdered milk, meat, cloth and clothing, school kits, health and layette bundles, as well as miscellaneous items such as used hospital equipment and soap. Whereas John Hostetler, MCC material aid director, will continue to head the collection procedure, Hubert will define areas where these resources can be used appropriately, bearing in mind that inappropriate distribution of material aid can lead to dependencies.

Specific areas of need which appear most vulnerable at the present time are in refugee activity in at least five or six locations and a possible catastrophe in the African Sahel comparable to the 1972-73 tragedy.

Educator paves way for new overseas curriculum

Scottdale, Pennsylvania—Paul Lederach has been appointed by Mennonite Board of Missions to prepare background papers dealing with the philosophy and theology of Christian education growing out of the believers' church vision. The papers will be used in training and guiding Christian education leaders in local churches overseas.

When the Foundation Series appeared, overseas church leaders proposed translating that series for their use, but Lederach, who is Foundation Series director, and MBM responded that a translation would not be helpful since the materials were written for a North American audience. The project follows publication of the first five books in the Mennonite Faith Series written by J. C. Wenger, which has been translated into several languages.

Graham's identification with Marcos attacked

Editor's note: The following assessment of Billy Graham's Manila crusade is based on accounts in Manila newspapers, as well as conversations and interviews MCC workers Dorothy Friesen and Gene Stoltzfus had with Filipino Christians. Friesen and Stoltzfus wrote the report.

Thousands of Filipino students are shown being drenched by antiriot waterguns in Manila during October 1977 as authorities broke up a rally called to protest human-rights abuses. Several students were injured, while others were arrested.

Manila—Billy Graham was greeted by an army of reporters when he arrived at Manila International Airport for his November 1977 metro-Manila crusade. Early in his statements to the press he warned, "No political questions. I am here as a messenger of the kingdom of God. My task is not to mix in local politics." Nevertheless reporters questioned him closely on his relationship to Richard Nixon.

His arrival and plans for the five-day crusade were given prominent coverage in all three national newspapers, the *Daily Express, Times Journal,* and *Bulletin Today.* After alluding to Graham's concern for the kingdom of God, one reporter wondered why he needed a heavily-armed bodyguard.

After the crusade was under way the papers gave front-page coverage to a state dinner hosted by President Marcos for Graham at the presidential palace. Many church people wondered how dining with pharaoh constituted noninterference in local politics. While some columnists generously praised Graham's great contribution to spirituality, others noted that Protestants have never had it so good in this predominantly Catholic country.

What was not covered in the controlled press were the comments of critics. They asserted that Graham was unwilling or unable to realize that he was playing into Marcos' strategy to silence his opponents. The strongest opposition and critique of repression by the Marcos government has come from church people, both Protestant and Catholic. Just as the recent visit of Cesar Chavez was used by Marcos to gain further respectability for his martial law regime, they claim, by co-opting a social activist, Graham's visit gave prestige and support from the evangelical Christian wing.

The Marcos government continues to harass, and sometimes imprison, students, community and church workers, and the urban poor. Some simply disappear to be found later—dead. In southern Philippines the conflict between government troops and Muslim opposition continues to escalate in a war that has already claimed fifty thousand lives. Marcos has stated that the goal of his government is to create a New Society.

According to the *Times Journal,* Billy Graham, during a prayer breakfast attended by over 500 dignitaries, including Marcos, commented on the Philippines, "The great foundation for the New Society, the heart of the New Society, is the cross."

During the final rally Graham emphasized that the real meaning of the crusade will only be realized as persons live out the message of salvation through Christ. Opponents of Marcos, many of them Christians, including some who are victims of the New Society, share Graham's hope that salvation as lived and preached by Christ will become more visible in the Philippines.

Seminar surveys Mennonite experience in Russia

Winnipeg—On November 11-12, 1977, about seventy-five participants devoted five sessions of a Russian Mennonite Studies Seminar to an updated survey of the experiences of Mennonites in Russia before and after the Russian Revolution.

A carefully researched paper by Peter Klassen (California State University) identified bibliographic surveys and archival collections now housed in European university libraries and state-church research centers, which provide access to Russian Mennonite materials.

Several specific aspects of earlier Mennonite experience in Russia were highlighted in presentations by Carl Bangs (St. Paul's School of Theology, Kansas City) and Cornelius Dyck (Institute of Mennonite Studies, Elkhart). Bang's paper pointed out the importance of sociological factors in the emergence and growth of church groups.

For many of the participants, however, the most gripping presentations of the seminar were those delivered by MCC research scholar Walter Sawatsky, now working on a book, *The Soviet Evangelicals Since World War II.* Located at Neuwied, West Germany, Sawatsky is the best-informed Mennonite scholar in the subject of recent religious developments among the Mennonites in the Soviet Union. The book will include the story of registered and unregistered Mennonite groups.

The gathering was sponsored by the Institute of Mennonite Studies with some financial assistance from the Schowalter Foundation. The sessions were held alternately on the campuses of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, and Mennonite Brethren Bible College. Inquiries may be directed to Russian Mennonite Seminar, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Award for film about loneliness

A film which came about from the initiatives of a Mennonite church in Wichita, Kansas, has been awarded a Certificate of Merit in the annual competitions of UNDA-USA, a national Catholic association for communicators.

The association seeks to honor films and television productions which exhibit "creative treatment of issues concerning human values." More than 500 entries competed in twenty-five categories. First-place winners are awarded the Gabriel Award, and second-place entries receive a Certificate of Merit. The presentations took place in Phoenix, Arizona, November 30, 1977.

Titled *Back Seat*, the film takes the viewer into an average town, and illustrates how loneliness comes in many different packages. Interest in producing the film arose from experiences members of First Mennonite Brethren Church in Wichita had in relating to persons who were lonely.

Larry Hatteberg, member of the congregation and chief photographer for KAKE-TV, Wichita, took the initiative to do the filming. KAKE-TV donated the use of equipment. Individuals in the church were able to raise about half the cost of the twenty-eight-minute film. Additional financing was sought. At this juncture four national church groups, the Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Brethren Church, the General Conference Mennonite Church, and the Church of the Brethren, already cooperating in the Inter-Mennonite Media Group (IMMG), committed money and consultative expertise to the venture. IMMG has previously produced radio and TV spots. Diane Umble, General Conference media director, acted as consultant in scripting and shooting.

IMMG has the rights to the public media distribution of the film, but otherwise copies may be rented from the audiovisual libraries of any of the participating Mennonite churches. The marketing agencies for media use are Mennonite Media Services, Box 1252, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801, and Mennonite Radio and TV, Box 2, Station F, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2L 2A5.

Diane Umble, on behalf of Inter-Mennonite Media Group, accepts award for the documentary color film Back Seat *from Anthony Scannel, president of UNDA-USA.*

Civil approach to civil disobedience resolution

A Christian's response to civil authority will be given concentrated emphasis by the General Conference during the next year. The study is an outcome of a resolution at the triennial conference in Bluffton, Ohio, July 22-August 3, 1977. That resolution called for a thorough study of civil disobedience which is intended to state an official position of the General Conference with respect to that portion of income taxes which are used for funding military expenditures, and in general, to research the whole question of obedience-disobedience to civil authority.

Responsibility for the study has been given to the peace and social concerns committee of the Commission on Home Ministries. They, however, requested that a special obedience-civil disobedience committee be formed to give general direction and leadership. This latter group consists of Palmer Becker, Ted Stuckey, John Gaeddert, Harold Regier, Perry Yoder, and Heinz Janzen.

To date three major aspects of the study have been planned—an attitudinal survey, an invitational consultation in June, and a study guide to be ready by the fall quarter.

Included in the survey are twenty-eight questions with responses varying from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" chosen to provide an inventory of congregational attitudes towards the authority of the church, and of the state. It will also indicate attitudes to particular issues such as abortion, capital punishment, and payment of taxes for military purposes. A copy of the questionnaire will be sent to every congregation to be duplicated locally.

A second major happening is scheduled for June 1-4 at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana. An invitational consultation will bring together about thirty participants, including persons not committed to civil disobedience. The gathering will include administrative personnel from the General Conference, lawyers, biblical scholars, as well as representatives from Mennonite Central Committee and the Mennonite Church.

It is expected that the study guide will evolve from the proceedings of the consultation. Five of the thirteen lessons in the guide will focus on peacemaking in a technological society. What sort of peacemaking should Mennonites be about in an age of nuclear warfare and worldwide arms shipments? The remaining eight lessons will center about the meaning of civil disobedience. Was it practiced in the Bible? Is nonpayment of taxes a case in point?

The study process will culminate in the special midtriennium conference scheduled for February 1979. That gathering will be an official decision-making conference to which congregational delegates will come. At that point a decision on the meaning and practice of civil disobedience will be made.

After the 1979 conference the questionnaire will again be used to determine whether the churchwide discussion on obedience-civil disobedience has generated any changes in attitudes.

Protest planned against nuclear weapons

Denver, Colorado—Citizen groups in this city are planning a mass protest against the production of nuclear weapons. These weapons are produced at the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant sixteen miles from Denver. A call for Mennonite participation in the April 29 protest has been issued by Peter Ediger, copastor of the Arvada (Colorado) Mennonite Church, and Don Goertzen, a member of the Rocky Flats Action Group steering committee and Mennonite Voluntary Service. Other citizen groups organizing for the event are the Mobilization for Survival and the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

The Rocky Flats plant is the site of plutonium "trigger" manufacturing. These plutonium components (atom bombs) are assembled into nuclear warheads and transported around the world at the rate of three a day. If the neutron bomb is approved it would also be manufactured at Rocky Flats. Organizers are planning for 3,000 participants. Individuals and families interested should write to: Rocky Flats Action, 5927 Miller, Arvada, Colorado, 80004.

Words & deeds

MCC urgently requires two persons for its information services. Needed immediately is an editorial assistant whose basic responsibility is the preparation of news articles. Needed by April 1 is an experienced writer and administrator who will assume departmental leadership June 1. Both positions require a BA in communications, journalism, or English, preferably with previous practical experience. Both positions are at the Akron office, and may be salaried or on a voluntary service arrangement, although the latter is preferred. Individuals interested may write to Lowell Detweiler, Secretary of Personnel Services, Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

Hesston, Kansas—"The Christian in Small Business" is the topic for a two-day seminar at Hesston College, January 27-28. Business persons from Wichita, Newton, Hesston, and Hillsboro will participate as group leaders. The seminar is sponsored by Bethel, Hesston, and Tabor colleges, and the Mennonite Industry and Business Association. For information and registration contact Gladys Graber, Hesston College, Hesston, Kansas 67062, or call (316) 327-4221.

Southeast Asian "boat case" refugees, some of whom are expected to come soon to the Sacramento area in California, will be helped with counseling and mental health services through a program directed by Nguyen Van Ninh, a former Mennonite Central Committee staff person in Vietnam. Ninh and his family were assisted in their resettlement by MCC in 1975. Many of the new refugees, after perilous escapes from their countries by small boats and after long stays in crowded and unhealthy refugee camps in Southeast Asia, are reportedly suffering from serious emotional problems. The program is designed to help them cope with the new situation, and is funded by various church groups including Church World Service, the Presbyterians, the Lutherans, Interchurch Aid, and West Coast MCC. The total 1978 budget is $36,000. Beginning in 1979 it is anticipated that the ministry will be supported by government funds.

A multimillion dollar damage action against the FBI and Honeywell Inc., filed April 1977 in U.S. District Court, Minneapolis, Minnesota, has been joined by the American Friends Service Committee. The lawsuit charges Honeywell and the FBI with forming an illegal conspiracy to deny several individuals and religious and political groups their constitutionally protected rights. The suit was begun by the American Civil Liberties Union, and also includes the organization Clergy and Laity Concerned as a plaintiff. Honeywell, one of the largest producers of antipersonnel weapons in the Vietnam War, was the subject of protests by the plaintiffs in the early 1970s. Honeywell is accused of working with the FBI in its COINTELPRO (Counterintelligence Program) to prevent the plaintiffs from protesting Honeywell's production of antipersonnel weapons used against the Vietnamese people. Among these was the "guava" bomb which spewed thousands of ¼-inch steel pellets outwards and downwards in a killing zone 1,000 yards long and 100 yards wide. The plaintiffs allege that "such weapons were designed to cause large-scale, indiscriminate, and savage destruction of both military and civilian populations."

Somerset, Bermuda—Forty Christian leaders from around the world met January 6-13 for a major consultation on the gospel and culture. Sponsored by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, theologians, anthropologists, national church leaders, missionaries, and evangelists discussed problems in communicating the Christian message in different cultural contexts. John Stott chaired the conference and said that the gathering should not be seen as "irrelevant theorizings," but as a necessary prerequisite to effective strategy in global evangelization. It was noted that cross-cultural communication is not simply determining how Americans and Europeans relate to others because countries such as Brazil and South Korea are sending Christian missionaries elsewhere, too. Further, there are large immigrant populations in the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States to whom Christian workers need to relate. Proceedings of the consultation will be the basis for a book.

Nagpur, India—One hundred and forty Christian communicators from all parts of India gathered here in early November for a five-day communications seminar which dealt with all phases of communications. Specialists challenged delegates during the general sessions. Among those presenting major papers were Donald Smith of Daystar in Nairobi, Kenya; William Haney of Far Eastern Broadcasting Company; Kathleen Nicholls of TRACI in Delhi, India; Anne Ediger of Good News Broadcasting Company; and Venay Samuel, Indian communications authority. Radio, television, films, print media, and the developing ministry in cassettes and records were explored. A significant outcome of the seminar was the establishment of a study commission to investigate secular and religious training facilities in communications media in India. Participants were reminded of the challenge in reaching the 98 percent of India's population which is not Christian.

Winnipeg, Manitoba—Canadian Mennonite Bible College professors Henry Poettcker and David Schroeder taught a first-term course to Christian educators which provided background studies in the New and Old Testaments to the material in the Foundation Series. Meeting weekly on Tuesday evenings, the course attracted twenty-five participants. One participant, Linda Klassen, said, "These classes have added the depth needed to teach the Foundation Series." The course continues during the second term.

The North Newton, Kansas, MCC regional center shipped 942 tons of material aid directly to overseas ports during 1977. The shipments included 5,000 bags of wheat flour (500,000 pounds), 9,600 bags of wheat (960,000 pounds), 1,060 bags of pinto beans (95,400 pounds), 4,000 cartons of beef chunks (200,000 pounds), and 305 cartons of soap (17,800 pounds).

An unusual religious celebration in Sydney, Australia, attracted 2,500 people (at two dollars a ticket) to the installation of Alan Walker as director of world evangelism for the World Methodist Council. Adding a note of internationalism to the celebration were ethnic dance and music groups from Asia, Australia, the Pacific Islands, and the Ukraine. Young persons wore "World Mission" T-shirts, blew whistles, and carried placards. In his address Walker challenged the church to "stop being a stationary institution and become a movement again," which he said will happen when "the church believes with all its heart that Jesus Christ can transform human personality and human society." He also remarked, "There is no future for a secular gospel, neatly trimmed to the modern mind. The humanist church, fearful of the supernatural, has no message for a generation hungry for the eternal. The pietist church, which lacks a social conscience, is irrelevant in today's world." Expanding that theme he observed, "Never, never can the blasphemy of millions living in poverty and hunger amid the wasteful affluence of the Western World be endured."

Caro

Colombian visits Newton

"We see a tremendous future for the Colombian Mennonite Church," stated Jaime Caro, executive secretary of the organization during a mid-December visit to Newton, Kansas.

Currently, the congregation which he pastors in Ibague, a city of 300,000; is building a new sanctuary. Although the Colombian church is small, six congregations, there is a definite need for leadership because the main priority of the church is to plant new fellowships. This year five persons are enrolled in seminary studies in preparation for pastorates and church planting.

The church's key method in evangelism is to organize cell groups which meet in homes for Bible study, prayer, and visitation. Persons are invited to join the cell groups. "It is our experience," said Jaime, "that when persons accept Christ, most of their problems disappear."

Harboring a bitter, rebellious spirit toward his parents, he left home at the age of twelve. Raised a Roman Catholic, he at different times disrupted meetings of evangelical Christians, but was transformed by experiencing the love and kindness of these same people. Initially, when he viewed the plain interiors of Protestant churches he wondered how it was possible to find God in such buildings. Eventually God called him to the ministry, an example of a person whose difficulties were worked through by his new commitment to Christ.

That was twenty-three years ago. Today, he says, the Catholic Church is also interested in presenting Christ. Ecumenical charismatic groups meet together to evangelize.

"Being Mennonite," Caro reflected, "identifies me with a history, a theology, and a tradition which I understand and practice." He noted how Colombian Mennonites try to resolve conflicts through peaceful confrontation and without appeal to civil authority. He also related that recently he was a witness in court, and that he was able to affirm that he would speak the truth. He was not required to speak an oath. Basically there are no human-rights problems in Colombia, he asserted. "Colombia has a democratic government—it is not a police state."

Record

Ministers

Jake Klassen was ordained to the ministry of hospital chaplain on October 30, 1977, in the Zoar Church, Waldheim, Saskatchewan. He began work as hospital chaplain under the Saskatchewan missions committee in March 1976.

Keith Schrag was installed as pastor of the Ames Mennonite Fellowship, Ames, Iowa, on November 27, 1977. He previously served as pastor of the Des Moines (Iowa) Mennonite Church, 1975-77. From 1969 to 1975 he served in the Wichita, Kansas, area, first as pastor of the Eureka Gardens Mennonite Church and then as community minister of the Lorraine Avenue Church.

William Shumaker was installed as the first full-time pastor of the Milwaukee Mennonite Fellowship, Hartland, Wisconsin, on December 4, 1977. He previously served as pastor of a Mennonite church in Benton, Indiana.

Workers

Henry and Helen Dueck, Kitchener, Ontario, left January 2 to begin a four-year assignment in Montevideo, Uruguay, under the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission. Henry will be serving as a teacher-coordinator with theological education and leadership training in the Mennonite churches of lower Latin America. Helen will be working with leadership training, Christian education for children, and Bible study groups for women. The Duecks previously served under COM from 1969 to 1974 at the Montevideo seminary. After the seminary's move to Asuncion, Paraguay, the Duecks continued to serve with theological education by extension in Uruguay, 1975-76.

Shelley Goerzen, Tabor Church, Newton, Kansas, has been appointed secretary for Heinz Janzen, general secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church. She began work January 3, replacing Chris Graber who held the position for four years. Shelley is a 1977 graduate in business (Associate of Science degree) from Emporia (Kansas) State University. Her previous work experience has included secretarial positions with Emporia State and with Cargill Industries, Newton. Shelley has been a short-term voluntary service worker in Beatrice, Nebraska. Her parents are Milton and Alice Goerzen, Newton.

Dennis and Jeanne Rempel, missionaries to Upper Volta under the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission, were commissioned at First Church, Upland, California, on December 18, 1977. On January 2 they left for a year of language study in France before beginning their assignment in Upper Volta.

Published

The official minutes of the forty-first triennial sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church, July 28-August 3, 1977, at Bluffton, Ohio, have been published. Congregations, pastors, and a wide variety of church leaders will receive copies automatically, but other persons who would like the minutes may write to the General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114 to request a copy. Included in the minutes is the program for the conference, workshops, resolutions, names of delegates, youth conference activities, Women in Mission meeting, and a record of elections and church representation.

Calendar

January 26-28—MCC annual meeting, Rockway Mennonite School, Kitchener

January 30-February 3—Mennonite Voluntary Service orientation, Camp Mennoscah, Murdock, Kansas

February 10-11—Mennonite Disaster Service annual all-unit meeting, Phoenix, Arizona

February 10-14—Council of Commissions, Newton, Kansas

July 25-30—Mennonite World Conference, Wichita, Kansas

October 5-9—U.S. historic peace church conference on a New Call to Peacemaking, American Baptist Assembly, Green Lake, Wisconsin; speaker, Mark Hatfield

Canadian

January 19-21—MCC (Canada) annual meeting, Regina, Saskatchewan

February 2-4—Canadian Council of Boards, Winnipeg

July 5-9—Conference of Mennonites in Canada annual sessions, Gretna, Manitoba

Central

March 3-4—Lay leaders workshop, sponsored by the General Conference Central District and the Illinois Conference of the Mennonite Church; Bluffton (Ohio) College; resource person, Ronald Hunsicker

Letters

Appreciated articles

Dear Editor: I've just written to La Vernae Dick, Gayle Koontz, and Geri Hess Mitsch of my appreciation for their contributions to the November 29, 1977, issue. I'm glad you published "The Question of Divorce." How our churches need to practice forgiveness! I also was glad you published "Postmortem" in the November 15 issue. It takes courage sometimes to publish articles on social concerns, but surely they are the end result of a viable theology. Thanks. *Esther Frey, 310 West Brayton, Mount Morris, Illinois*

December 8

Panama Canal issue

Dear Editor: Thank you for featuring the significant article by Delton Franz (November 22, 1977, issue) regarding the Panama Canal. It is highly important that the facts be publicized as to how we got the opportunity to build the canal and extract holding privileges. I well recall how we schoolchildren were incited to great elation as we were told how the French tried to build it and failed, and how our engineers and workers went in and turned failure into success. Of course, we had no idea of the maneuverings that opened the way for the accomplishment.

In assessing the matter now there are two considerations which should weigh heavily, over against all the emotional surge that has been drummed up against ratification of the treaties. One is that the means used to get our entry into Panama looked far different then than now.

At that time, imperialism (colonialism is the more euphemistic term now used, but it all means the same—the imposition of a superpower's will upon a lesser nation) was at its height. All major powers had gone across the world and taken over, by one means or another, whatever territories and peoples they found possible. In light of the violence used in such mastering and subjection, what we did in Panama fell quite within the pattern.

But now it is different. By the vicissitudes of warfare and the rising tide of self-realization on the part of once subject peoples, those empires have been broken up and imperialism (colonialism, if you prefer) stands outmoded and repudiated. But we still have our grip on Panama, despite years of discussion on our part and growing resistance on theirs; and the question is whether we, with all our vaunted size and strength, propose to enter the next century still holding on.

The decision must also be made in light of another sobering consideration. We have at great cost won for ourselves the unenviable distinction of having become the most war-waging nation in this present century, exceeding all others in the number of major wars waged and the number of years of warfare. We rival or exceed others in the development and sale of military material. Now we stand to decide if we are to add the further somber distinction of becoming the last rampart of imperialism, both before and as we enter the twenty-first century.

We face a unique opportunity to show that we really are a big nation. May God help us and so move us that we do not muff that opportunity. *R. L. Hartzler, 809 North Evans Street, Bloomington, Illinois 61701*

December 9

Bible clear on divorce

Dear Editor: I was distressed by La Vernae Dick's article on divorce (November 29, 1977, issue). It appears to me that the author does not accept the Scripture as the final authority regarding this problem. She describes the verses concerning divorce as the easy way out. She also questions the biblical commands regarding excommunication and church offices.

Several things came to my mind as I read and pondered the article. First, if we Christians cannot accept the revelation of a sinless, holy God as final authority, what do we accept? The thoughts of sinful men? If the latter, then we are in a dangerous position.

Second, the gospel of forgiveness and reconciliation does not overlook sin. It deals with it head-on. True love and concern do not look at sin through rose-colored glasses. Love brings sin out into the open where God's light reveals all its ugliness and thus opens the way to forgiveness. Guilt is part of that process.

Third, divorce is no worse than any other sin, but the Bible does lay down specific guidelines for dealing with it. As with any other sin, if the persons involved fail to repent, they are to be excommunicated. In addition, a divorced person cannot hold church office (1 Timothy and Titus) and is forbidden to remarry (1 Corinthians 7). This does not exclude forgiveness; it only shows that sin has consequences.

Finally, the commands regarding divorce are not unreasonable or arbitrary. They have one purpose—the protection of God's most sacred institution—the family. And who would understand the family better than its architect, the infinite God. *Eugene Thieszen, Box 116, Henderson, Nebraska 68371*

December 9

The other side

Dear Editor: I found Glendon Klaassen's article "Barriers Broken" (November 8, 1977, issue) interesting because it suggested a strong need for change by the Roman Catholic Church. I have heard similar statements in several of our churches. Mennonites, it seems to me, are too certain of their own rightness and others' wrongness.

It would have been good if our denomination had been at the Jarvis Street Baptist Church in Toronto on July 31 to hear the pastor, Eric T. Gurr, admonish Menno Simons, by name, for excesses in interpreting the gospel. Perhaps he should be invited to contribute an article which could help us to see where we need to change. I think we need to take the message of the November 22 cover story ("Now We See in Part") more to heart. *Loel E. Graber, 32965 Park Hill, No. 202, Wayne, Michigan 48184*

December 12

About letters: To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Brevity is encouraged. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations. Editor

Program director needed

Friendship Day Care, Inc., has an opening for an administrator-program director beginning March 6. For more information contact Friendship Day Care, Inc., 517 East Avenue B, Hutchinson, Kansas 67501. Phone 316-663-1801. Applications due January 20.

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Christians and world events—a comment

Canada needs Quebec

In November 1976, the province of Quebec elected a government whose long-term aim is to secede Quebec from Canada. It was, and is, the Parti Quebecois (PQ) contention, that the French Canadians cannot function as a people within the framework of Canadian confederation.

While separation (or independence) is the avowed aim of the PQ, it is not nearly so clear that they have such a mandate from the electorate. Two factors muddy this. First is the platform on which the party ran. It ran on a platform of economic reforms and an end to the corruption of the Bourassa Liberals. Seldom did they raise the independence question.

Second, even though it received the majority of seats in the Quebec legislature, the PQ received only about 40 percent of the popular vote. This leaves the other parties, all of which favor some form of continuing federalism, with a majority of the total votes. Nevertheless, after more than one year in power the government of Rene Levesque appears to be moving irrevocably towards independence. They are committed to holding a referendum on that issue within the next two years.

How can I, as a Canadian Mennonite, come to grips with an issue that proposes to split the country of my birth? The answers are neither obvious nor simple.

First, one must come to a realization of the ethnic makeup of this country. About 44 percent are of British origin (of these, perhaps half are of Anglo-Saxon descent), and 30.4 percent of Canadians are of French origin. The next largest group, the Germans, are 6.1 percent. While the majority of French Canadians live in Quebec, there are a significant number of French in the rest of the country. If Quebec were to secede, French would still be Canada's second most-spoken language.

Second, as a result of this ethnic multiplicity, two nations (in a sense) have evolved. The French Canadian nation is one with a 300-year history and a unique culture—very unlike that of France. They are a people with a direction and a purpose. They have all the elements of a nation.

English Canada, on the other hand, is not nearly as clearly defined. It contains a multiplicity of ethnic and language groups. As a result of the continual push for bilingual and bicultural government services, the various non-English and French convinced the Trudeau government to evolve a policy of multiculturalism, which attempts to strengthen all the various cultural groups in Canada. It cannot be overemphasized that many of the concessions, which we as Mennonites enjoy in this country, are a result of the fact that there were two founding peoples who had to accommodate each other.

Third, it is precisely the "French factor" in Canada that makes this country unique. The French have been a reminder to us that every step in the direction of wooing our great neighbors to the south is a move toward loss of a distinct identity. The policy of multiculturalism reinforces this motif—it is a wedge against the "melting pot." We are a state, not a nation. We have nations within us (Webster defines *nation* as a stable community of people with a territory, history, and language in common), but the state (a body of people politically organized under one government) is there to function in a servant role, as a guarantor of our rights. This is certainly more of a New Testament concept than that of a nation-state which must dominate and crush all minorities within it.

It is my belief that the loss of Quebec would reduce the remainder of Canada's will to maintain a unique identity. It would become little more than a "banana republic" of the United States.

I do believe that Quebec has all the elements of a nation to go it alone, at least for some time, even if there would be many economic hardships. It is therefore Canada's problem, not Quebec's, to convince Quebec that we need her to make this country work. We will have to allow the French to operate much more as a nation (yes, including the French in the West), than they have been able to until now.

Can we invoke some theological language to hold Canada together? No, I do not think so. We, as Mennonite Christians, must remain ready to be reconcilers. Quebec sees its struggle not unlike that of the Israelites of biblical days. To condemn it as ungodly is not theologically justifiable. Let us be in prayer for this country, which has provided us with a home and, due to its multifaceted nature, allowed us to maintain our Mennonite culture and identity as a people.

Harold Fransen, from Smithville, Ontario, is a senior student at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg.

Reviews

Two books for Christian growth

Walking in the Resurrection, *by Myron S. Augsburger (Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, 1976, 159 pages), and* Independence for the Third World Church, An African's Perspective on Missionary Work, *by Pius Wakatama (Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1976, 119 pages), are reviewed by Bernie Retzlaff, 2808 Clarence Avenue South, Saskatoon.*

"*Walking in the Resurrection* seeks to show how one's relationship with Christ, by his indwelling Spirit, transforms one's life and fellowship with others. It also attempts to show how genuine evangelical faith issues in a social consciousness and responsibility." Thus the author summarizes in his preface.

In the introduction, Keith Miller writes, "*Walking in the Resurrection* is a strong statement calling for a Christian ethic based on a relationship with Christ and his people, rather than on rigid rules. Questions concerning political and social involvement, the use of money and power, and war and peace, which evangelical Christians have often avoided or repressed, are shown to be integrally involved in the life and ministry of the person who walks in the resurrection."

Augsburger has done an excellent job of portraying that "walking in the resurrection" has practical, everyday, down-to-earth consequences. There is little of dividing life into physical and spiritual, into sacred and secular, into religious and weekday activities. This book can give considerable direction in helping Christians develop a consistent life-style that incorporates responsibility for all aspects of life that Jesus affected by his redemption.

A weakness of the book is that it lacks the warmth of human daily experience. It is strong biblically, it is consistent theologically, but it is distant emotionally. The mind is duly spoken to but the feelings and emotions are left largely untouched.

Independence for the Third World Church, An African's Perspective on Missionary Work takes a careful look at missions today in light of what it means for the Third World church.

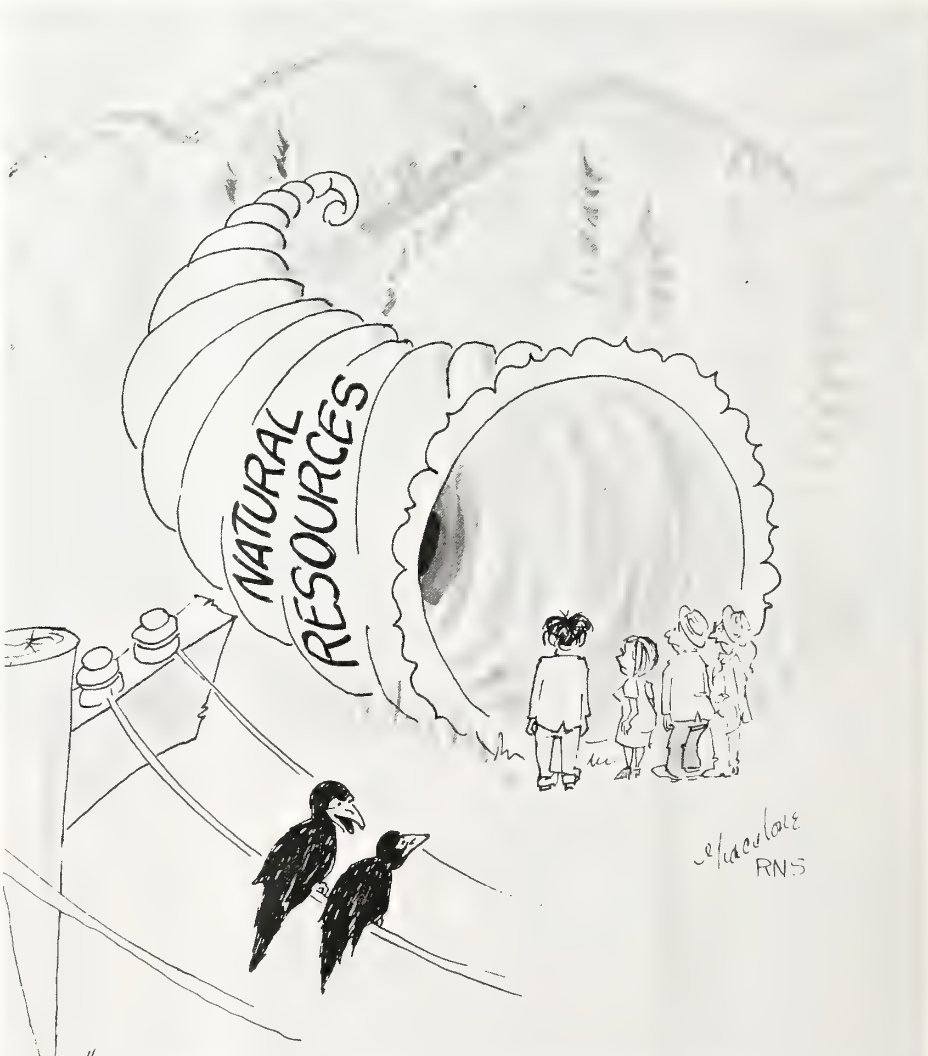
Many people, especially from Third World countries, have given impetus to the idea of declaring a moratorium on missionary activities; in other words, that all foreign missionaries should go home and stay there.

Most western evangelicals abhor the thought. Probably few evangelicals in Canada and the United States have really attempted to understand the reasons for speaking about a moratorium.

In this book, Wakatama, a native of Rhodesia, very ably gives an African point of view on the matter. He is an evangelical Christian, having received some of his education in the United States, who has worked together with missionaries for a number of years. He explains why many people argue for a total moratorium on missionary work. In greater detail, he then presents his own view of a partial moratorium, allowing only those missionaries to come that have special training and special ability that will help the African church in its own development.

In a direct and analytic way, though not overbearing, the author presents western missionary work as seen through the eyes of a sympathetic, yet critical, African.

A book like this is important reading for anyone who wants to keep abreast of the current developments in mission work in the Third World.



"IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE GOING TO BE PUTTING SOME BACK BEFORE THEY TAKE ANY MORE OUT."

Meditation

Economics for teachers, business persons, farmers, secretaries, pastors, social workers....

"Most of the luxuries," wrote Thoreau, "and many of the so-called comforts of life, are not only *not* indispensable, but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind." The late British economist E. F. Schumacher, author of *Small Is Beautiful,* not only believed this, he preached it with vengeance.

Until now western capitalism has proclaimed a gospel of unlimited growth, reckless abandonment of nature, rapid automation, and absolute dependence on fossil fuels. "For at least another hundred years," wrote Lord Keynes, "we must pretend to ourselves and to everyone that fair is foul and foul is fair; for foul is useful and fair is not. Avarice and usury and precaution must be our gods for a little longer still."

Our time is up, wrote Schumacher. In a postindustrial society he reasserts the old commonsense values of permanence, health, and beauty. "It would be the height of folly," maintains Schumacher, "to make material so that it should wear out quickly, and the height of barbarity to make anything ugly, shabby, or mean."

Profit can no longer be the sole incentive for laborers. Schumacher adhered to a "religious" view of work. It should: (1) "give you a chance to utilize and develop your faculties," (2) "enable you to overcome your ego-centeredness by joining with other people in a common task," and (3) "bring forth the goods and services needed for a becoming existence." A century ago Gerald Manley Hopkins put it this way: "To lift up hands in prayer gives God glory, but a person with a dungfork in hand or with a slop-pail gives him glory, too. He is so great that all things should give him glory if you mean they should."

In agriculture, soil fertility must be put at a premium. On spaceship earth, we can't afford to deplete the organic reserves or water table in one area and then move on to virgin land. We can't plant cash crops year after year and never alternate with legumes. We shouldn't continue to encourage corporate farming that measures viability in terms of technological ease and short-range profit, thus rupturing the intimate bond between people and nature. Nor is it feasible to concentrate the world's food production in our own organic-rich Midwest. For "one of these days," says Father Hesburgh, the world's poor "are going to start walking west saying, 'You've got a house and we're going to help you live in it; you've got food and we're going to help you eat it.' "

In industry we must develop intermediate, "nonviolent" technology, what Schumacher calls "technology with a human face." The western model of breakneck urbanization, heavy capital investments, mass production, and centralized planning simply will not work in the Third World. What the poor need first and foremost is not American-engineered cars, but a decent job. According to Schumacher our methods and equipment should be "cheap enough so that they are accessible to virtually everyone; suitable for small-scale application; and compatible with our need for creativity."

But why get involved in the seemingly hopeless task of overcoming poverty? For Schumacher it's a matter of simple gospel economics: "Everyone to whom much is given, of him will much be required."

"I think it was the Chinese, before World War II," he notes, "who calculated that it took the work of thirty peasants to keep one man or woman at a university. If that person took a five-year course, by the time he had finished he would have consumed 150 peasant work-years. How can this be justified? Who has the right to appropriate 150 years of peasant work to keep one person at the university for five years?" And most significant of all, What do the peasants get back for it?"

Ken Bazyn

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CONTRIBUTORS

Hugh George Anderson is the president of Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbia, South Carolina.

Walt Neufeld is the copastor of Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kansas 67107.

Ken Bazyn, 264 22nd Street, Apartment 2C, New York, New York 10011, is a free-lance writer.

CREDITS

Cover, David Hiebert, Box 301, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 35, Paul M. Schrock, Box 200, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 40, 46, RNS; 41, Dick Jameson, Cincinnati, Ohio.

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The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Christian familial relationships—1

When you don't agree

People are becoming increasingly disenchanted with schools and other formal educational organizations. Ray Rist (*Restructuring American Education: Innovations and Alternatives*) refers to a crisis of confidence in America's secular religion (education). Thought ranges from the view that schools require substantial reform (Silberman, Postman), to the view that schools are essentially instruments of oppression and should be abolished (Holt, Illich).

There is more and more recognition today that much learning and education happens in clusters or groups outside of the formal institutions. One such natural group is the family. Instead of regarding the family as a unit for socialization and school as a unit for education, many people are beginning to see the two functions as inseparable. But the public institutions have not been able to become familial (or relational) in their approach.

Thus, suddenly there is a renewed interest and focus upon all kinds of familial groups. The term "familial" is being used because today's concept of family needs to include groups of singles, intentional communities, and extended families besides the usual nuclear family.

Familial groups are regarded as perhaps the most important setting for learning and socialization in the foreseeable future. The entire range of human experience can occur in familial settings. So also can a big variety of educational encounters.

Unfortunately, at a time when larger society and leading professionals are beginning to see the universal familial needs and potential for all human beings, the state of the family is in disarray.

Joyce Brothers, addressing a Fort Wayne, Indiana, banquet last October, reported that out of every twelve marriages in the United States, six will break up, four will exist at a tolerance level (no growth), and two will succeed at becoming dynamic, creative, familial groups.

The stress upon familial groups is largely due to our inability of coping with conflict. This is especially obvious among Christians.

Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword . . . and a person's foes will be those in your own household" (Matthew 10:34-36).

In spite of Jesus' prediction that anyone having the courage to pursue the human need for familial intimacy will experience conflict, Christians have tried hard to pretend that familial life is smooth and calm. As a consequence, churches have provided little help to families for dealing with conflict.

A new book, *When You Don't Agree* (Herald Press, 1977) by James Fairfield, is the first book written by a Mennonite specifically for resolving marriage and family conflicts. It is probably the most creative Christian resource on the market for familial groups who are concerned about their life together.

Fairfield dips into some of the most current psychological models of conflict: (1) withdrawal—because I can't win; (2) win—dominate at any cost; (3) yield—give in to keep the peace; (4) compromise—to get your way; or (5) resolve—cope with the problem.

Instead of jumping quickly to their psychological implications, the author goes into detail to show how conflict is rooted in the human story told in God's Word—and so is the proper management or resolution. The biblical context is maintained throughout the book. James Fairfield goes on to show the skills involved in communication and the aspects and skills of love. Anger and other feelings are to be "owned" as natural and therefore they have creative potential.

Conflicts can be dealt with creatively and constructively, so that they improve familial relationships. Again, that is a message which we find also in the Bible; but somehow it has been difficult for Christians (especially nonresistant Mennonites) to admit.

Fairfield's is a new breed of book. He provides questions and discussion exercises with each of the thirty-one chapters. When you've thought about the exercises, he also offers his personal comments to compare with your opinions. It is actually a most interesting workbook.

When You Don't Agree is an excellent, much-needed resource for study groups and individuals concerned about familial disagreements. Persons and groups who seriously study it will find their familial relationships strengthened and more firmly rooted in the Christian faith. Try it, you'll like it.
BW *First in a series of four*

The printed index for the 1977 issues of *The Mennonite* is available to anyone who writes for it. Address: *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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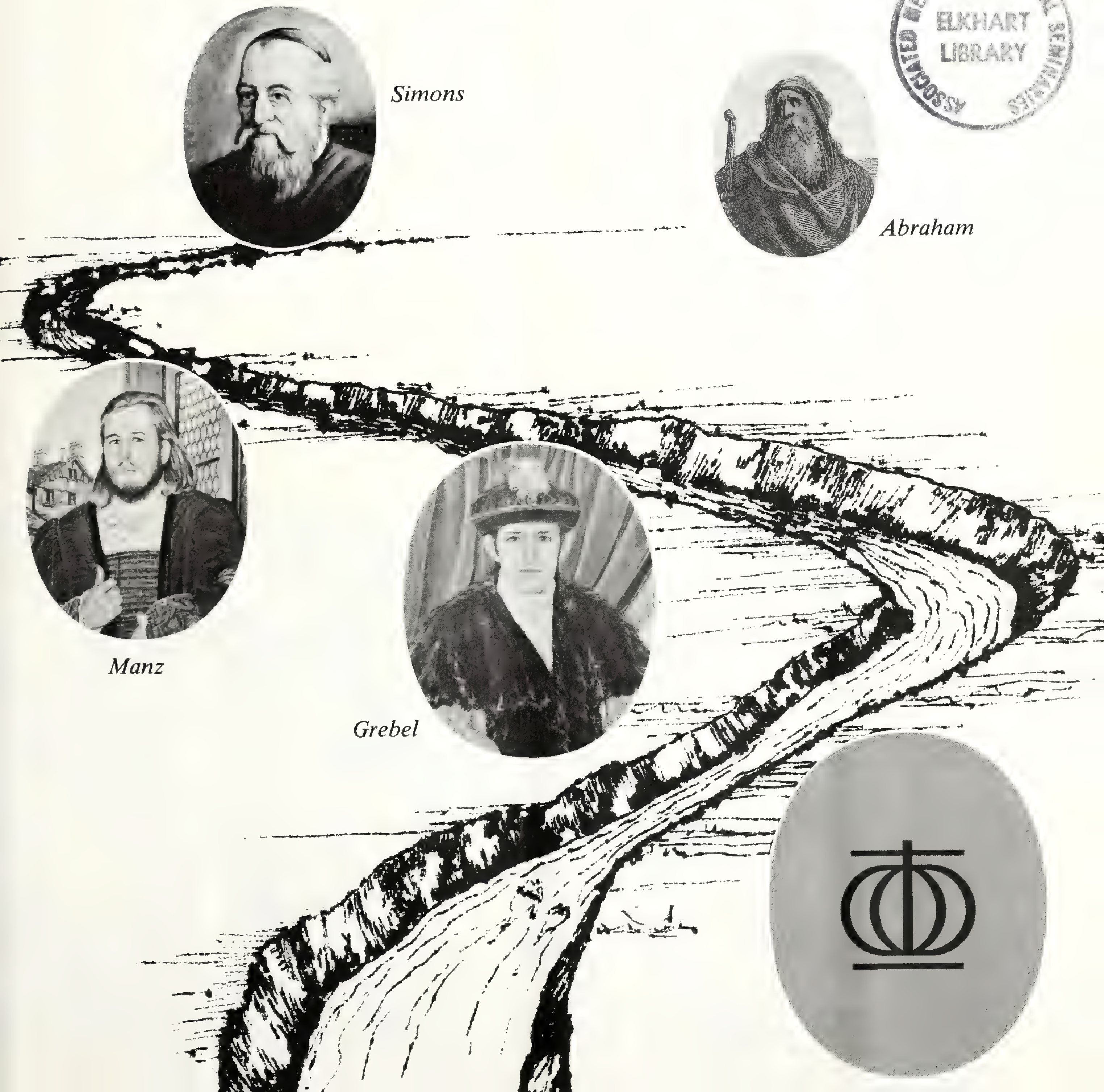
Simons
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Through the eyes of a stranger

Peter J. Hampton

We who are Mennonites see ourselves often enough that we form sure opinions about Mennonites—who we are and what we are like. Psychology teaches us that we really don't know ourselves as well as others know us. Therefore it can be helpful to see ourselves through the perceptions of others. This can be true individually and also for a people. Not too long ago, I had the opportunity to see our Mennonite people of the early years in Russia through the eyes of a stranger.

What were the Mennonites like when they first settled in Russia in the latter part of the eighteenth century? We have detailed accounts of their life from the latter part of the nineteenth century, but accounts of the Mennonites dating back to the early years of their roots in Russia are rare. It is understandable, therefore, why I was pleasantly surprised recently when I discovered an account of the Mennonites dating back to the middle of the nineteenth century. I came upon an early history entitled *Russia, Its History and Condition to 1877,* written by Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace and published by the J. B. Millet Company of Tokyo. As I paged through the books I made my discovery.

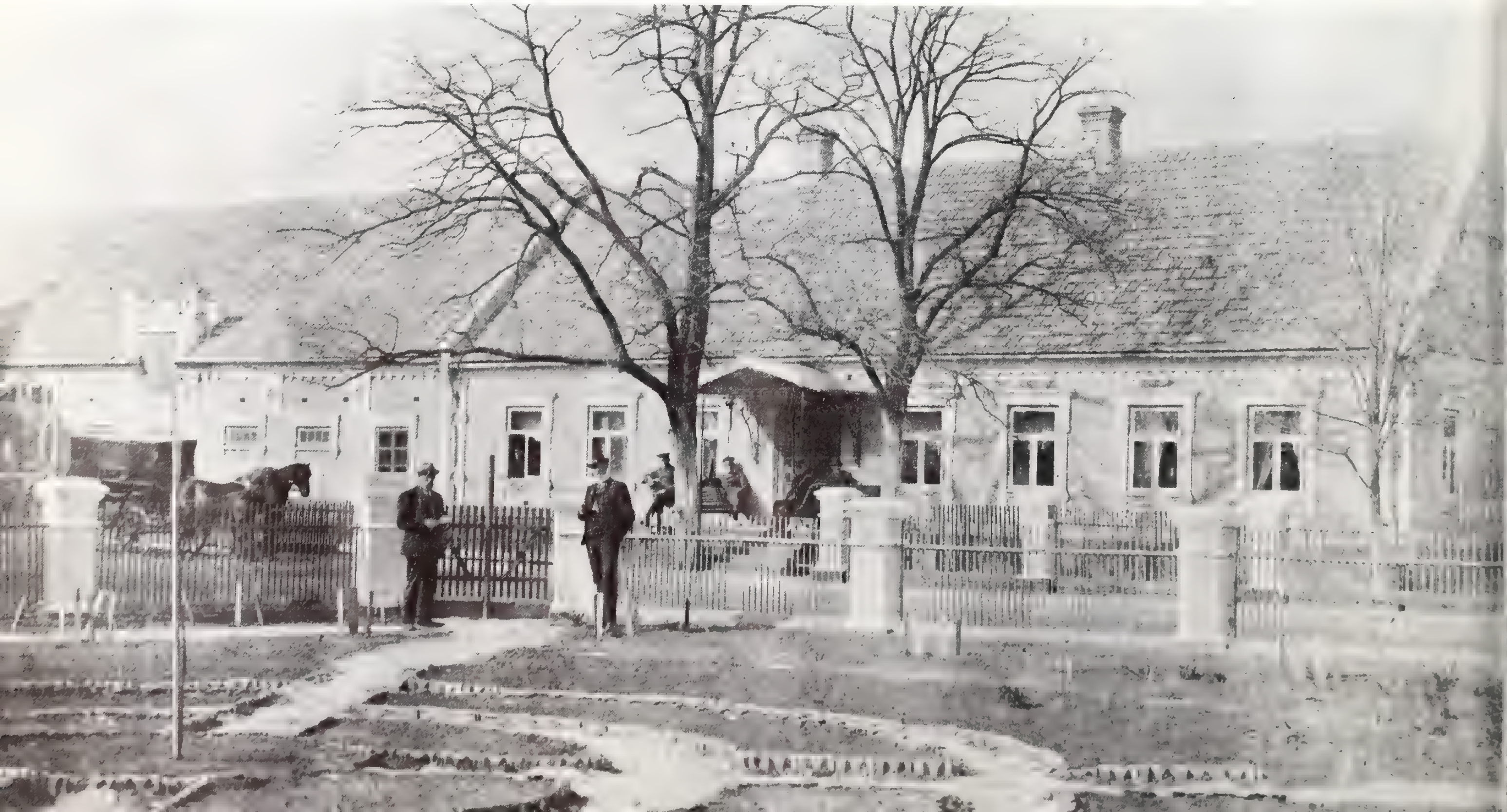
Many of the pages of the two-volume history were still uncut. The books were among many donated to the University of Akron and now for sale at ridiculously low prices. When I discovered my find about the Mennonites, I hastily purchased the books and retired to a quiet place in the library to read what Mackenzie Wallace had to say about the Mennonites in Russia such a long time ago.

Traveling in Russia during the middle of the nineteenth century, Wallace looked upon the Mennonite settlements as oases in an otherwise uninspiring countryside. He says: "To the wearied traveler, who has been living for some time in Russian villages, one of these Mennonite colonies seems an earthly paradise. In a little hollow, perhaps by the side of a watercourse, he suddenly comes on a long row of high-roofed houses half-concealed in trees. The trees will be found, on closer inspection, to be little better than mere saplings, but after a long journey on the bare steppe, where there is neither tree nor bush of any kind, the foliage, scant as it is, appears singularly inviting."

Continuing his narrative, Sir Mackenzie Wallace writes: "The houses are large, well arranged, and kept in such thoroughly good repair that they always appear to be newly built. The rooms are plainly furnished, without any pretensions to elegance, but scrupulously clean. Adjoining the house are the stable and byre, which would not disgrace a model farm in Germany or England. In front is a spacious courtyard, which has the appearance of being swept several times a day, and behind there is a garden, well stocked with vegetables. Fruit trees and flowers are not very plentiful, for the climate is not favorable to their cultivation."

Mackenzie Wallace's observation that the

"The houses are large . . . plainly furnished . . . adjoining are the stable and byre . . . in front is a spacious courtyard." This observation by Mackenzie Wallace seems to be confirmed by this photograph of the Johann Dueck farm built in southern Russia in 1906.



climate in the Ukraine is not favorable to the cultivation of flowers and fruit trees was incorrect, of course. Those of us who grew up in one of the Mennonite villages in the Ukraine recall with abundant nostalgia the profusion of flowers and the many different kinds of fruit trees that graced our gardens. But then, Wallace probably did not know what miracles, with the help of God, the Mennonites are capable of performing.

Much as he enjoyed his visits to the Mennonite colonies in Russia, Sir Mackenzie Wallace cautions travelers not to stay too long, "for the severe order and symmetry which everywhere prevail would soon prove intolerable to anyone having no Dutch blood in his veins." However, he adds: "As a temporary resting place during a pilgrimage on the steppe, when the pilgrim is longing for a little cleanliness and comfort, the colonies are very agreeable."

Of the Mennonites themselves he has this to say: "The inhabitants are plain, honest, frugal people, somewhat sluggish of intellect and indifferent to things lying beyond the narrow limits of their own little world, but shrewd enough in all matters which they deem worthy of their attention."

It was probably the lack of responsiveness to strangers that Mackenzie Wallace identified as intellectual sluggishness. We must remember that the Mennonites in those early days in Russia were clannish. They had to be. The Mennonite settlements were islands in a sea of somewhat hostile Russian peasants. The Mennonites were strangers in their adopted land. They had little in common with their Russian neighbors, many of whom were still serfs who tilled the land of the Russian landowners.

In the *Moscow Gazette* of 1801 we find advertisements like the following: "To be sold, three coachmen, well trained and handsome; and two girls, the one eighteen and the other fifteen years of age, both of them good looking and well acquainted with various kinds of handiwork. In the same house are sold pianos and organs." And again: "In this house one can buy a coachman, and a Dutch cow about to calve."

With humans, pianos, and cows all treated as chattels to be bought and sold at the owner's whim in the Russia of those days, it is no wonder that the Mennonites were suspicious when strangers knocked on their doors—at least until they could be assured that the strangers meant them no harm.

Continuing his description of the Mennonites, Wallace writes: "If you arrive amongst them as a stranger, you may be a little chilled by the welcome you receive, for they are exclusive, reserved, and distrustful. They do not much like to associate with those who do not belong to their sect; but if you converse with them in their mother tongue and talk about religious matters in an evangelical tone, you may easily overcome their stiffness and exclusiveness."

Thus, while Sir Mackenzie Wallace extols the Mennonites for their virtues, their skills, and their work and moral ethic, he at the same time concludes that the ordered and almost ascetic life that the Mennonites lead is not for him—not for the Englishman who likes his tea and his onion soup, and who likes the freedom of an English gentleman. He does not relish the responsibilities of tilling God's acres in sweat, in perseverance, and in service to him and his people.

The Heinrichs milling place in Neuendorf, Russia.

While it is true that the Mennonites in Russia were hardworking, frugal people, they also found time for picnics, as this 1914 excursion at the Peter Wiebe farm, Kuruschau, shows.

ABRAHAM—the first Mennonite?

David Flusser, the professor of early Christianity at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, once asked me who was the first Mennonite mentioned in the Bible. After thinking a while I said, "I assume it must be Isaac for he never retaliated against those who made living conditions difficult for him; he simply pulled up stakes and moved elsewhere."

"You are wrong," he said to me. "The first Mennonite in the Bible is Abraham."

I was not ready for this answer from a devout and orthodox Jew. He has written one of the best books on Jesus. He remains firmly and steadfastly committed to the Jewish faith and he believes Jesus did the same. Who was he to instruct me on what it means to be a Mennonite?

In our further discussion, Professor Flusser pointed out that in Genesis 18:16-33 it is clear that Abraham becomes, as he put it, "a Mennonite." Since that time I have given much thought to this question and have become increasingly intrigued by what the author of Genesis describes in that chapter, and the way in which Abraham emerges there as the first in the long line of intercessors to stand between the guilty sinner and a righteous and just God.

Abraham the haggler

Professor Flusser is aware that Mennonites are great hagglers. If we can get the price down on a product we certainly will do so. What is described in Genesis 18 is clearly a case of Abraham haggling with God.

The situation is this. Sodom and Gomorrah were very wicked. The outcry against them was great and their sin was grave (verse 20). It is time now for God to "go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry" and for God to do what the evidence demands that he do. At the same time, the question is, Should he hide this from Abraham or should he tell Abraham in light of the important role which Abraham is to play in the history of God's dealing with people from now on? God concludes that he will tell Abraham, and Abraham stands before the Lord overwhelmed by this news. At the same time, like all the prophets, Abraham is not a puppet in the hands of God, but debates and argues with God, tests him to see whether something cannot be done to change the situation.

We must note, first of all, that Abraham does not challenge the description of Sodom. It is clear that Sodom has done very wicked things. It stands condemned in the presence of God and, as all convicted criminals, therefore must be prepared to accept from the hand of God the punishment which it deserves.

Abraham's intercession on their behalf revolves around the question of whether the righteous remnant in these towns is not great enough to at least call for a stay of execution, if not to spare the two cities completely.

It is clear to Abraham that if God punishes the just with the unjust, then he is not doing right (25). Abraham's haggling proceeds on the assumption that if there are as few as ten righteous people in the city, then the whole city must be saved because there is always the possibility that the ten righteous will transform the whole city. Along the lines of the Book of Jonah where one disobedient prophet, dragged by the scruff of his neck to preach to Nineveh, the traditional enemy of Israel, is responsible for the conversion of the whole city, so the whole biblical faith affirms that when one person is righteous, in that righteousness lies the hope of many other people. It is this conviction which lies at the basis of the one fully righteous man, Jesus Christ, giving himself for the sins of his people and thus serving as a source of redemption for the whole world.

It did take nerve for Abraham to engage in this haggling process with God. The halting way in which he introduces each question, or each step of the haggling process, indicates clearly that Abraham does not put himself in the place of God. But in spite of his acknowledgment that he is but dust and ashes (27) and in spite of his request that the Lord not be angry with him (30 and 32), he is convinced that having begun the process of speaking to the Lord about this matter (31), he must see it through to the end.

As we know, Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Before that was done, however, Lot and his family are rescued. The intercessory role of Abraham did yield some results.

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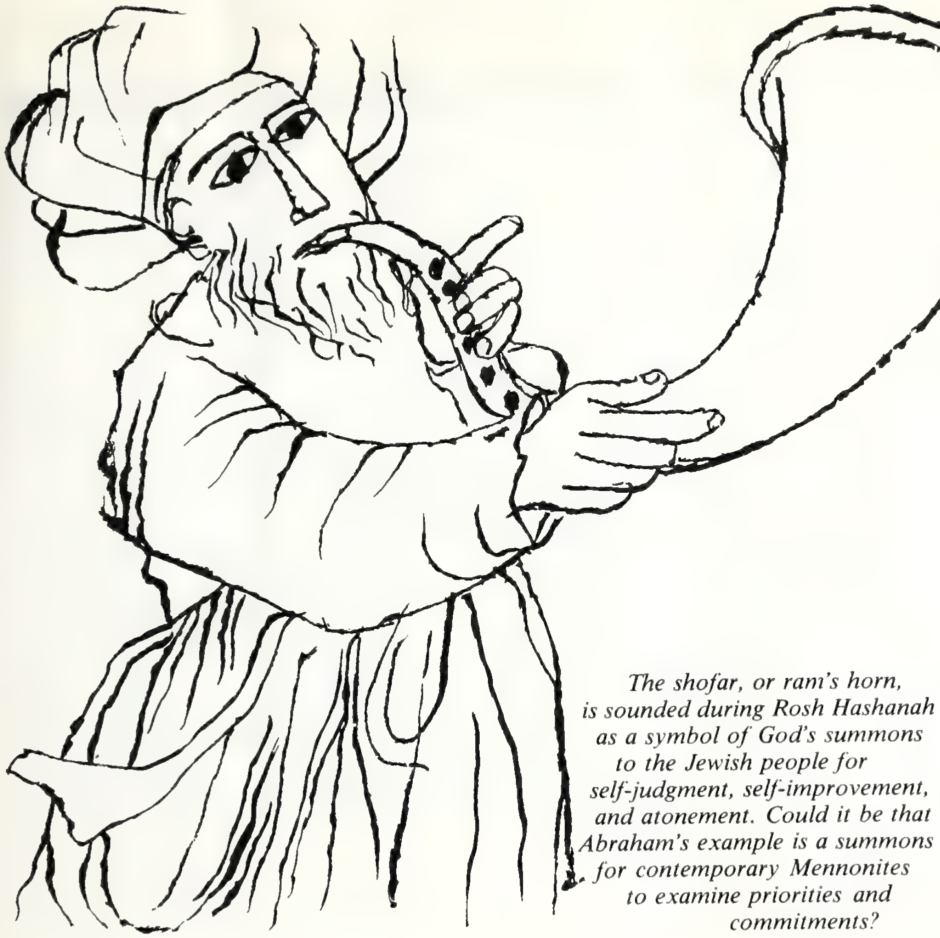

William Klassen

The shofar, or ram's horn, is sounded during Rosh Hashanah as a symbol of God's summons to the Jewish people for self-judgment, self-improvement, and atonement. Could it be that Abraham's example is a summons for contemporary Mennonites to examine priorities and commitments?

Moses the bargainer

Moses, too, took his place in that tradition. In all his troubles with the children of Israel and all of their unfaithfulness, he never calls for their destruction. Rather, he repeatedly pleads for another chance. Upon his return from the mountain, when he sees the idolatry of the people, he too haggled with God. Yahweh, so revolted by their behavior, cannot then bring himself to "own" that people and so he tells Moses: "Go down now, because *your* people, whom *you* have brought out of Egypt, have apostatized (Exodus 32:7, New Jerusalem Bible, italics added). He tells Moses that he will destroy the people and out of Moses himself make a great nation. But Moses declines the honor of taking the place of Abraham and pleads with God: "Why should your wrath blaze out against this people of *yours* whom *you* brought out of Egypt with arm outstretched and mighty hand?" (Exodus 32:11).

It is as if neither one of them at this point wished to take responsibility for the people, neither wished to own them; but in the end they accept joint responsibility for this rebellious people.

Mennonite identity

If we come back now to the question raised by Flusser, then the answer hinges on the attitude of Mennonites towards evil people. We have established a reputation throughout the world for being prosperous, hardworking, and conscientious people. The dividend that we have reaped from this is that our average income is considerably above the national average in the countries where we live. Throughout the world, Mennonites are prosperous and wealthy. In part that may be because, like Abraham, we have learned to haggle our way through the various countries and cultures in which we have lived. We have sought bargains and we have found them.

The question that haunts me, however, is that the essence of being a Mennonite may *not* be as Flusser put it. Is it true that our deepest and most pervasive conviction, that love can overcome evil, is being expressed in Abraham's discussion with God? If so, where are the Mennonites who are today haggling with God so that those who deserve to be punished for their sins are allowed instead to live in the presence of righteous people who can make available to them the transforming power of God?

There are such Mennonites. They are the physicians, lawyers, counselors, business persons, farmers, housewives, and students who pray for, work for, and witness toward the emancipation of those who are caught in the bonds of sin. Mennonites who continue to pray that sinners may be freed rather than destroyed, saved rather than damned, stand in the tradition of Abraham. Those who find gratification in the punishment of the wicked obviously stand in a different tradition.

Abraham desired that the righteous be allowed to live with the unrighteous. Too often, we, calling ourselves children of Abraham and Menno and followers of Jesus, would like to have the wicked destroyed from amongst us—removed to prisons or banned out of our churches. What hope is there for their redemption if they are removed from the community of God's love?

Abraham believed in the power of God to change wicked people into righteous people. He believed also that the strongest power to make those changes was continuing contact with the righteous. He saw God's destructive act against Sodom and Gomorrah as such a serious matter that he used every means to prevent it. In many places, and in many times, Mennonites have stood in this great heritage and in this profound biblical tradition. When they do, they are truly children of Abraham, the first to haggle with God.

Development work on the agenda for Andhra Pradesh

Akron, Pennsylvania—Phase two of the Mennonite response to the Andhra Pradesh cyclone is functioning well. It is expected that within a few months phase three will begin. This will involve reconstruction of villages, and hopefully agricultural extension and community development projects.

Of the funds sent to India by Mennonite Central Committee for initial emergency relief (phase one) after the November 20 disaster, $30,000 has been used for the purchase of clothing and blankets. Another substantial amount was used for medicines. The second phase, currently in operation, is centering on cleanup and repair of houses and community buildings, as well as the purchase and distribution of seed. Eighty Indian Mennonite volunteers are participating in this project, which is being done cooperatively with Village Reconstruction Organization (VRO), an Indian volunteer agency.

Phase three calls for the reconstruction of villages that were annihilated by high winds and tidal waves. The extent of this program is to be considered by the MCC board at its annual meeting January 26-28 in Kitchener, Ontario. Current plans anticipate a total relief and rehabilitation project costing $285,000 to be completed by the end of this year. For this work the Indian Mennonite churches plan to send six longer-term volunteers.

Since the overall goal is to provide the disaster area with a carefully planned ministry, there is a possibility that the work in 1978 will evolve into a larger, long-term program. This would include agricultural extension and community development.

By mid-December 1977, India Government transports were delivering palmyra leaves, to be used in making roof thatch, to the disaster area. Generally villages on main roads are receiving more assistance than more isolated villages. Some church agencies, such as the Evangelical Lutheran Church, are using wheat in food-for-work projects in which farmers whose crops were destroyed in the cyclone gather the leaves.

Villagers in Andhra Pradesh, India, rebuild a home destroyed by the cyclone. The November 20 storm killed more than 50,000 people (the unofficial estimate is now 85,000), affected over eight million, and left two million homeless. International and Indian relief agencies are active in the region. One international agency, World Vision, has pledged funds that would rebuild twenty villages. The Billy Graham Association has promised money to rebuild the 100 churches destroyed or damaged in the cyclone.

Missionaries to Brazil Indians ordered to stop work

Erwin Rempel, General Conference missionary in Brazil, reports that Wycliffe Bible Translators (Summer Institute of Linguistics) have been ordered to stop their work among Indian tribes. The order, effective January 1, was issued by Brazilian Minister of the Interior Reis.

Except for one or two instances, visas have not been canceled. The translators do not have to leave the country. However, one WBT family leaving for furlough had to give up their permanent visa. Of more than 500 missionaries working with Indian groups, less than 200 are Wycliffe translators, but the order apparently includes all missionaries. In response to this, WBT plans to spend 1978 making a stepped-up effort to train Brazilian linguists. Brazilian church members have protested the order. General Conference missionaries are not directly affected by the order as their work is not among Indian tribes.

Why has this happened? William Hewlett, executive secretary of the Missionary Information Bureau located in Sao Paulo, says a number of factors have contributed to the order. Those in power are suspicious about the radios, planes, and other equipment missionaries use, and question the motivation of missionaries. Developers don't want missionaries in areas rich in minerals, nor do land companies want moralists around when they steal land from the tribes.

The Minister of the Interior has also declared that Indians must become literate in Portuguese, and not in their native tongue. However, linguistic experience has shown that it is easier for native peoples to first learn to read and write their own language. The other approach often leads to extinction of the native culture and language.

"Most significant," says Hewlett, "is that Minister Reis is reported to have said that the 'Bible is useless for Indians.'"

Hector Valencia, General Conference secretary for Latin America missions, reflected that the move may also be a response to the bad image Brazil got in the North American press when it imprisoned Thomas Capuano and Laurence Rosenbaugh last May. Capuano, a Catholic working for Mennonite Central Committee, and Rosenbaugh, a Catholic priest, were active in a ministry among the poor in Recife. In publicizing the inhumane conditions in the jail, in which prisoners were "treated like animals," their protest received wide media coverage because they had an interview with Rosalynn Carter, wife of US President Jimmy Carter, who visited Brazil early in June 1977. Capuano's visa was not renewed in July 1977 because the Brazilian Government said his continued presence "was not in the best interest of the country."

Giving for 1977 $340,000 short of budget

Although the General Conference donated $2,839,849 to its North American and worldwide ministries during 1977, this amounted to less than 90 percent of the budget. The budget for the year was $3,179,883.

Actual expenditures will not be compiled for another week, but Ted Stuckey, conference treasurer, indicated that the budget was not spent. Cutbacks in spending were initiated when it became apparent by mid-1977 that receipts would not be equal to the budget. Although receipts are down, Stuckey expressed "deep appreciation for that which has been given."

During December 1977 receipts were $636,346. For the same month in 1976 giving was 673,084. Altogether, giving was $90,000 higher in 1976 ($2,929,467) than in 1977 ($2,839,849). In 1976, 97.7 percent of the budget was attained as compared to 89.3 percent for 1977.

Words & deeds

Paraguay—A Central Credit Committee (CCC) has been formed by Indian, Mennonite, and missions groups interested in the welfare of the Chaco Indians. Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) will make loans available through the organization and MEDA executive director Lloyd Fisher says it is a positive step towards better financial management. CCC's task is to educate the Indians in more advantageous use of loans. Two qualified Indians have been hired to promote better understanding in the use of credit in the home and on the farm. CCC has asked for a $135,000 loan from MEDA for an extensive three-year program. The loan would provide cooperatively owned tractors and plows, individually owned smaller equipment, and funds for the development of grazing areas.

Bluffton, Ohio—First Mennonite Church has installed a Schulmerich carillon, given by an anonymous donor. The electronic quadrabell has been set so that the Westminster chimes play on the hour from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. During the Christmas season two Christmas selections were played at noon and at 6:00 p.m.

Training laypersons for caring ministries is the purpose of the Stephen Series, a heavily practical program with a distinctively Christian emphasis. Two-week leadership training courses have been scheduled for this summer. Pastors and other congregational representatives are taught how to set up caring ministries in their own congregations. The courses emphasize listening skills; using community resources; ministering to inactive members, the grief-stricken, and to shut-in persons; and other caring skills. Executive director Kenneth Haugk says the program is an attempt to "put a dent in the fragmentation and depersonalization which is often present in society and sometimes even within our own churches." The program recently received a $53,000 grant. It is administered by Pastoral Care Team Ministries, 7120 Lindell Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63130. They work with congregations across the continent.

Kansas—A farm and energy issues forum will be held February 17-18 at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel. The workshop begins at 7:30 p.m. Friday, with a keynote speech by Paul Longacre on the theme "The Earth is the Lord's." Workshops on Saturday will include the management of natural resources, alternative farming technologies, food, energy, and efficiency. To preregister, send five dollars to Mennonite Central Committee, Box 235, North Newton, Kansas 67117.

Out-Spokin's year-round biking program may have to pedal harder to prevent cutbacks. The total two-year budget for 1977 and 1978 is $263,700. Biker fees are expected to raise $167,500. The difference of $96,200 needs to be raised by contributions. Out-Spokin' involves nearly 1,000 bikers each year, and is aimed to help riders grow in their Christian commitment. "I see Out-Spokin'," asserts board chairperson Sherman Kauffman, "as being one of the church's most creative mission tools—and not just for kids. As a pastor, I see it as an important tool for congregations, too. The group decision-making, close fellowship and caring, the working together, are all glimpses of what the brotherhood can be. That can add a real spark to church life." This year Out-Spokin' has January interterm hikes in Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and Florida. A European tour, scheduled for May in cooperation with TourMagination, is filling rapidly. The year's longest hike will take bikers coast to coast beginning in June. Biker fees cover the cost of equipment, travel, and food, but only a portion of staff costs (four full-time and fifteen summer volunteers). Persons interested in supporting Out-Spokin' may write Box 370, Elkhart, Indiana 46515.

The Middle East

Barriers broken

Urbane Peachey

Akron Pennsylvania—King Feisal of Saudi Arabia vowed that he would pray in Jerusalem, the third holiest Muslim site, before he died, but he did not live to see that day. President Sadat of Egypt did not wait for history to accommodate his wishes. He changed history so that he could do what he wanted and prayed at Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

"There are moments in the lives of nations and peoples when it is incumbent upon those known for their wisdom and clarity of vision to survey the problem, with all its complexities and vain memories, in a bold drive toward new horizons," Sadat stated in his historic, precedent-shattering speech.

The announcement of President Sadat's visit to Israel brought people dancing into the streets in Egypt and Israel. Paul Quiring, Mennonite Central Committee program director for West Bank, wrote that Israelis went into a state of euphoria.

"Stern, beleaguered faces began to smile," he said. "Arguing neighbors reconciled in celebration of the events. Everywhere families and friends were glued to their television sets and radios. The unthinkable had happened. For reasons clear to no one, Egypt's president was willing to make an enormous political and tactical concession in exchange for little more than Israeli hospitality. For a few hours at least hope was reborn in West Jerusalem and Israel."

Israeli Prime Minister Menahem Begin, left, and Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat met in Ismailia, Egypt, on Christmas Day for summit talks. Although the two leaders did not agree on substantive issues, committees were set up to formulate details of the peace process.

What are the forces that contributed to the sudden shift in relations between Egypt and Israel? Egypt sits astride two continents—Asia and Africa—and has been pushed and pulled by outside forces for centuries. Egypt has its own glorious history and deeply rooted national spirit which is clearly distinct from Arab nationalism. For centuries Egyptians have expressed the slogan—"Egypt for the Egyptians." Egyptians identify with Africa as well as with Arab states.

In short, the demands of the Palestinian-Israeli war came into conflict with Egypt's own national priorities. In my association with Egyptians over the past years I have sensed increased impatience with the Israeli-Palestinian impasse and the inability of Palestinian groups to arrive at peaceful terms with Israel.

Another factor was President Sadat himself, who perceived a stalemate and was unwilling to wait for international and American initiative. The cost of another war for Sadat, the military, and the Egyptian people was unthinkable.

Sadat understood the psychological dimensions of the conflict. The mutual fear and suspicion between Arabs and Israelis, accentuated by Jewish paranoia brought forward from the holocaust history, prevented Israelis from hearing any Arab peace initiatives. Sadat also understood that Arab conception of honor paralyzed Arab states and Palestinian leaders, thus preventing any change in the complexion of the conflict. Sadat bolted from the old cycle and succeeded in communicating another signal which was received much more positively in Israel than anyone could have predicted.

Egypt and Israel cannot tolerate, nationally and economically, a continuing state of war draining national energy and resources away from nation-building priorities. Economists have indicated that without massive military and economic aid from the United States, Israel's economy would not survive. Total economic and military aid, including military hardware, to Israel from the US Government in fiscal year 1977 was around $2.5 billion.

What has been the outcome of the recent Sadat-Begin initiative? Perhaps the most significant change is the new openness among at least some of the parties in conflict and the partial demolition of the old conflict structure. The prospect of a climate receptive to communication rather than an intransigent climate is indeed a welcome relief.

As in the past Palestinians have been bargained over, but are not yet participants in the bargaining process over their future. The Israeli-Egyptian contact gives further momentum to the search for alternatives other than the Palestinian Liberation Organization to represent the Palestinians. The scale of the regional conflict is greatly diminished by this new initiative, but a new hostile front including Syria and Palestinian resistance elements is in formation. Sooner or later the PLO and the Palestinians who support it will still need to be taken into account.

The most recent Sadat-Begin conference in Ismailia was unable to agree on the future status of West Bank and Gaza. Israel demands continued military presence with provision for civilian self-rule; whereas President Sadat, along with other Arab states, is calling for Israeli withdrawal and establishment of a Palestinian state in Gaza and West Bank. An Israeli-Egyptian political committee resumed consultations in Jerusalem January 14, as an Israeli-Egyptian military committee simultaneously resumed negotiations in Cairo.

In spite of all of the activity none of the outstanding Middle East questions have yet been resolved. Perhaps the most significant changes are the new level of talks, increased movement between Egypt and Israel in the Sinai, establishment of telephone contacts, and personal acquaintances between Israeli and Egyptian leaders. One can anticipate other visits between Egypt and Israel and visits of Palestinians from West Bank and Gaza to Egypt. Educational and commercial exchange can also be anticipated in the future. Prime Minister Begin, in responding to Sadat in the Jerusalem visit, said, "Let us open our countries to free passage. Come you to us and we shall visit with you. I am prepared to announce, Mr. Chairman, today that our country is open for all citizens of Egypt."

Meanwhile tensions may increase on the Israeli-occupied West Bank. The Israeli military administration's reach into every aspect of life in the territories is a source of continued discontent and deep grievance for the Palestinians of West Bank and Gaza. The dilemma for Palestinians in the territories is increased by Palestinian resistance elements in Lebanon who threaten assassination of West Bank and Gaza Palestinians who cooperate with the current Israeli-Egyptian initiative. During the last month two West Bank Palestinian officials were shot from a passing car. One was the deputy director of education in Ramallah and the other was a building contractor employed by the Department of Interior.

Through Mennonite Board of Missions' presence in Israel and Mennonite Central Committee's programs in Egypt, West Bank, Lebanon, and Jordan, a Mennonite presence that encourages a just, peaceful resolution and reconciliation is active on several fronts.

American initiatives need support

Delton Franz

Washington, D.C.—In a recent all-day conference of twenty-five church agency representatives and a dozen US State Department officials, we came to more fully appreciate the laborious international efforts now in process to keep alive the momentum toward Middle East peace talks.

When asked by one of the church agency representatives what would happen if efforts to launch the Israel-Arab peace negotiations in Geneva are thwarted, a high State Department Middle East spokesman stated that: (1) Pressures would mount on Arab governments to not cooperate further with the United States, to press for sanctions against Israel, and to use the oil weapon against the industrialized nations. (2) A definite deterioration of relations with Arab governments would ensue and pressures would mount for another Arab-Israeli war. (3) Legislation would be required in the US Congress to accommodate—in the United States and other countries—numbers of homeless Palestinians for whom the long wait to return to occupied territories would be dashed.

The church leaders present were informed during an informal luncheon that the joint US-Soviet statement released October 1, on a declaration of objectives for a Geneva peace conference, stirred a firestorm of protest from Jewish groups across the country. Within three days the White House and the State Department had received 15,000 letters, telephone calls, and telegrams with 95 percent in opposition to the joint US-USSR initiative to move the talks forward.

The joint statement aroused opposition, first, because it marked the first time that an official statement by the United States referred to "the *rights* of Palestinians." Jewish groups claimed this term represented a retreat from long-term US commitments to Israel. President Carter has since denied that any US shift in support of Israel is indicated therein.

The second reason for the strong protest was because the joint statement initiates the step of "letting the Russians back into the Middle East." It is closer to the truth to say that (1) the Russians have been in the Middle East for a long time and (2) they are going to be an important element in the area for the indefinite future.

Moscow may no longer have influence in moderate Arab countries like it had in Egypt in Nasser's day, but it retains influence in the radical Arab states and among the Palestinians. Moscow clearly has the ability either to make trouble or to ease the path toward any Arab-Israeli accommodation that Washington might facilitate. It is unthinkable then that Moscow could be left out of the peace talks. Soviet pressures on the militant Arab leaders will be needed at crucial junctures to bring concessions, just as will US pressures on Israel, as accommodations by both sides become necessary to move a peace settlement forward.

If we believe it is better to have the big powers (United States and USSR) mutually engaged in using their influence in the art of negotiating a Middle East peace, rather than in the use or provision of their weapons to wage war, it would seem the better choice to involve the Soviet Union in legitimate efforts now rather than watch helplessly as they might later play a disruptive role.

In view of the tremendous pressures to exclude both the Palestinians and the Soviet Union from negotiations, President Carter needs the undergirding of fellow Christians for his continued efforts to seek a just solution that will take into account the legitimate rights and opportunities for both Israelis and Palestinians in a Middle East peace settlement. It is clear that the overwhelming number of communications to date have been one-sided. A recent full-page advertisement appearing in major newspapers by fifteen evangelical leaders seems shortsighted. They charge that the recent peace initiatives are an "erosion of American governmental support for Israel (as) evident in the joint US-USSR statement."

The ad asserts: "This land mass has been the exclusive homeland for the Jewish nation." Chapter and verse are cited: "And I will plant them upon the land and they shall no more be pulled up out of the land... saith the Lord" (Amos 9:15). But the "Evangelical's Concern for Israel" advertisement, opposing the US-USSR statement for its inclusion of the Soviet Union and the Palestinians in peace talks, offers no alternatives. If nations do not *talk* to their enemies, the remaining option is normally to fight them. Those who wish to encourage the present effort to engage *all* parties in peace negotiations need to say so. Write: President Jimmy Carter, The White House, Washington, D.C. 20500.

If the shoe fits, wear it.
medical services
agriculture
social work
community work
water projects
administration
teaching

If the Word of God is a light to your feet,
it may be calling you to walk the path of service.
In 1978 MCC needs 300 pairs of helping feet.
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Write or call:
Mennonite Central Committee
21 South 12th Street, Akron, PA 17501
(717) 859-1151
201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Man. R3T 2C8
(204) 475-3550

Record

Ministers

Levi and Betty Hochstetler were ordained as pastors of Grace Church, Chicago, on December 18, 1977. They have served the congregation for one year. Both have attended Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana.

Lloyd Penner was installed as pastor of Bethel Church, Fortuna, Missouri, on November 6, 1977. He had previously served as principal of Corn Bible Academy, Corn, Oklahoma.

Calendar

January 30-February 3—Mennonite Voluntary Service orientation, Camp Mennoscah, Murdock, Kansas

February 10-11—Mennonite Disaster Service annual all-unit meeting, Phoenix, Arizona

February 10-14—Council of Commissions, Newton, Kansas

Canadian

February 2-4—Canadian Council of Boards, Winnipeg

April 5-7—Evangelism workshop, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Eastern

February 10-12—Conference on land use and stewardship, Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania; speakers, Alvin Beachy, Orland Gingrich, Paul Lederach, Willis Miller, Earl Newcomer

Western

February 17-18—Forum on farm and energy issues, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kansas; speaker, Paul Longacre

Published

Lordship as Servanthood, a thirteen-lesson book on the biblical basis for peacemaking, has been reprinted. Written by William Keeney, professor of Bible and religion at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, the book is also being prepared for a Spanish edition. The book was first published in 1975 and has sold 3,500 copies. Other materials available for use with the book are cassette tapes and a filmstrip, as well as study guides for younger and older age-groups. Priced at $2.00, the new edition may be ordered from Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

Letters

Alcohol report disturbing

Dear Editor: I feel that General Conference Mennonites in general have grown spiritually during the last two decades, and are more spiritually alive and biblically oriented today than was true before. For this we praise the Lord. But then from time to time I get a shock which makes me wonder. This was the case when I read the news item on the use of alcoholic beverages among Mennonites in Canada (December 6, 1977, issue).

The headline "Canadian GC Mennonites Lead in Alcohol Use" should lead us GC Mennonites to serious reflection and repentance. Knowing that alcohol use can and does destroy persons, marriages, other relationships, and life itself, we, who confess to be God's people, cannot overlook this serious problem. We sometimes pride ourselves in being the group that stresses not only personal salvation but also wholesome living, discipleship, and obedience, but this survey hardly bears that out.

A second concern which I want to express is the classification of such basic Christian truths as "the Bible as the infallible Word of God," "literal miracles," and "eternity in hell-fire for those who die unsaved" as fundamentalist beliefs, over against Anabaptist beliefs in this survey. These are biblical truths and are as Anabaptist as they are fundamentalist. This attempt, whether conscious or unconscious, to belittle certain biblical truths by categorizing them as fundamentalist and non-Anabaptist does not serve the cause of the gospel and of Christ's kingdom.

May we as General Conference Mennonites, together with other Mennonite and non-Mennonite Christians, continue to grow and become more and more biblical both in teaching and in life. *Peter Derksen, 2212 Grant Street, Clearbrook, British Columbia V2T 2M7*

December 21

Consequences of children

Dear Editor: I am responding to "Children: A Heritage of the Lord" (December 13, 1977, issue). First of all, I declare that I have no underlying hatred for children. I, too, was saddened (but not surprised) by the negative response to children in the Ann Landers' survey. It's time to take a long, hard look at childbearing because it is quite obvious that a lot of people are disillusioned with their children. I contend that what we need is not a survey by the Mennonites showing that we still like "our kids" but a reeducation as to the consequences of having children—both to us as individuals and also to the world situation. Obviously, a lot of people do not consider childbearing to be an issue of much moral consequence. I believe it is. North Americans hypocritically condemn Third World parents for having ten or more children; instead we ought to examine our family sizes and consider that our average 1.9 children per family (Mennonites are much higher) consume much more than those ten children in a Third World country.

Second, one of the responses concerns and bothers me a great deal. "The necessary question for prospective parents should be the complement to the question for prospective spouses. The question is not, 'Why should I (we) marry?' but rather 'Why should I not remain single?' The question is not, 'Should we have children (a child)?' but rather 'Why should we not remain childless?'" (Dorothy Nickel Friesen and Richard Friesen, page 733).

It takes as much responsibility (if not more) to raise a child who is not your offspring than it does to bear your own. Too long we have continued in our cultural tendencies with no thought for the morality involved. The Bible enjoins us to "multiply and replenish the earth." The earth is replenished. John Howard Yoder has said, "Singleness is the first duty of every single person until the reasons for marriage are clear." So rather than ask the question, "Why remain single?" we should ask, "Why marry?" The same criteria should apply to the issue of having or not having children.

Mennonites have a heritage rich in nonresistance and large families. Can we begin to think in terms of limited resources and acknowledge that for every child we have, we *take* (Is this not force?) from a multitude of other children? Can we begin to alleviate some of the pain in the world by providing a home for the homeless instead of "having our own"? And finally, can we bear to ignore ten hungry children for the selfish satisfaction of creating a likeness of ourselves?

If we can, then we should also prepare to listen to these words: "For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite me in; naked, and you did not clothe me; sick and in prison, and you did not visit me" (Matthew 25:42-44). *Al Buller, 1715 15th Avenue, Seattle, Washington 98122*

December 23

Christian business organizations?

Cal Redekop

Many Christian business organizations in the United States and Canada have the purpose of providing "invaluable assistance to those who are seeking to make an impact for Christ," to quote from the brochure of one such organization. These organizations vary from the type which conducts witnessing seminars and prayer breakfasts to overseas service organizations. Some of them use the most advanced and sophisticated business techniques. It is probably correct to say that many MIBA (Mennonite Industry and Business Associates) members belong to some of these organizations. What is there that attracts us to these national, nondenominational groups?

After describing another organization which he actively supports, one MIBA member continued by saying, "Cal, I want to encourage you to lend influence to business persons in our church to be not only sensitive, but alerted to ways we can show the rich blessings of God to those in need in our world. . . ." The particular organization he was advocating was involved in supporting workers overseas, and also in spending time to go and actually see what was being done. From my perspective, all the things this organization was doing had been done better and longer by MCC (Mennonite Central Committee), MEDA (Mennonite Economic and Development Association), and the various church service organizations.

It is difficult to discuss Christian business organizations without appearing to be critical. At the risk of appearing negative, I want to make several points.

1. Many Christian business organizations tend to *oversimplify the nature of Christians in business,* and assume that witnessing to personal salvation in a personal relationship or formal religious setting is the extent of Christian responsibility in that arena. Compartmentalized religion is prevalent everywhere, and it is not missing here.

2. Many Christian business organizations tend to *underemphasize the relationship between personal piety and witness and ethics* in the business arena. It is far too easy to assume that personal piety and ethics is all that there is to Christian responsibility in business. The fact of corporate guilt and ethics cannot be separated from individual behavior. William Capitman in his *Panic in the Boardroom* says that the person in the office has to take personal responsibility for what happens under his or her jurisdiction.

3. Many Christian business organizations tend to *underemphasize the significance of the local congregation* and its importance to the life of the individual member, especially the business person. Business persons are normally already too independent of the local congregation in their life-style and life of decision making. Christian business organizations tend to become surrogate churches, and encourage the isolation of the business person from the fellowship of believers, where faith should be created and nurtured. Granted, they fellowship with peers in the Christian business organization, but the weakness of that relationship is precisely that it is a fellowship of persons with a peculiar orientation.

4. Often the theology of Christian business organizations tends to *downgrade the special or peculiar emphases which have been the birthright of most denominations,* with the resultant stress on the lowest common denominator, namely a personal deity and sweet witness of God's greatness and power. These characteristics are not wrong of themselves, but they are not the entire counsel of God.

Nondenominational Christian business organizations have their place and perform valid and positive functions. Included in such a list of functions would be the ecumenical and interdenominational nature of their relationship, the stress on personal evangelism, the high level of meetings and programs, and in general the optimism that prevails. But they have the weaknesses described above and, unfortunately, the motivation for joining some of the national organizations appears to be more the prestige that comes with being able to say, "I had breakfast with Senator Windbag today," or "That speaker at the annual convention in Barcelona was really terrific." It allows a person to do his "thing" religiously without needing to be confronted by fellow congregational members regarding day-by-day ethics. And finally, it often serves as an escalator for individual business persons to leave the local congregations and their commitments for a larger more nebulous "religion" gracefully, and in "respectable" stages.

In our peoplehood history, we have been blessed with the testimony on nonlitigation and noncoercion in human relationships, integrity in work and production, honesty in word and promise, simplicity and modesty in life-style, generosity and mutual assistance in need. These testimonies must be perpetuated, along with the testimony to new life in Christ.

Relating to a dying person

La Vernae J. Dick

"The thing that I have feared the most is upon me," a hospital patient said after a widespread cancer was discovered. "I am a Christian. I am not afraid to die. But how will my family and I bear the months ahead before death finally comes?"

The anxiety that this patient expressed is a real one. Dying, for the person who has a terminal illness, is often a long, painful, and expensive process. It is also a difficult time for friends, the community, and the church.

The first thing we generally do is to pray for healing. The request is included in the pastoral prayer on Sunday morning, in the many prayers offered at the midweek service, and if there is a prayer chain, the call for special prayers is made there, too. There may also be a request for anointing with oil. All of this may take place while surgery or medical treatments such as radiation or chemotherapy are taking place.

When healing does come via an answer to our prayers, or by anointing, or by surgery and medical treatment, we are thankful and can praise God for granting it.

But not everyone who has cancer or some other form of terminal illness is healed by prayer, anointing, or medical treatment. This tests our willingness to enter into relationships with dying persons and their families. How we do that can also be an expression of God's love and care.

In *A Circle of Quiet,* Madeleine L'Engle quotes a physician who says that "the living tend to withdraw emotionally from the dying, thereby driving them deeper into isolation. Not to withdraw takes strength. To pull back is a temptation. It doesn't hurt nearly as much as remaining open." The Apostle Paul encourages believers to affirm those who bear heavy burdens. Surely there can be no heavier burden than a terminal illness. To help others bear such burdens is to fulfill the law of Christ. (See Galatians 6:2.)

We help first by not being judgmental. It is even all right to be angry with God, as Joyce Landorf admits in *Mourning Song.* When anger can be expressed and accepted, it has less chance of becoming an obsession.

It does not help dying people when we are superficially jovial either by continually telling jokes or by making glib remarks about how much we look forward to dying and being in heaven. Contrary to offering comfort, superficial optimism tends to tell them that you are acceptable only when you are happy about this condition.

We are more helpful to dying persons by listening attentively and allowing the innermost feelings to be expressed. In doing this, we reach out with simplicity, offer our hands and make the gestures which say, "I will care, no matter how repulsive you become. Just give me a chance to listen to what you have to tell me and I will do all I can to make your way easier."

While making sure that dying persons can freely talk about their condition and pending death, we must also be careful not to force them to face what they are not ready to accept.

Usually terminally ill persons have a variety of coping mechanisms which postpone or blunt a realistic acceptance of the fact that death is coming, until they can handle it. These mechanisms include refusal to admit the truth about their condition, pretended denial for someone else's benefit, emotional withdrawal, or studying their disease and seeking a hope for recovery, no matter how improbable. Persons who have just learned about their dying condition typically use more than one of these ways during the adjustment process, while gathering strength to accept the unacceptable.

Generally, people divulge only what they are ready to accept and about to deal with. So it is important not to talk to the dying about information they don't want to admit nor to cater to their unrealistic hopes by making or affirming unsubstantiated claims. This calls for a well-tuned ear, tuned to hear what is actually being expressed and thereby becoming able to respond to their real feelings.

A woman had known for over a week that she had terminal cancer, yet she never mentioned it. When I visited her, we simply talked about other things which were important to her. Then one day she said quietly, "The doctor told me last week that I have cancer and can't live long."

"I know," I responded softly, "and I am very sorry." Now she became ready to explore what it meant to be dying and the ways she could cope with life which was going to be interrupted soon. She planned to live one day at a time. It takes maturity to enter into meaningful relationships with those who are dying. Even though there is pain for us, too, and there will be, it is worth enduring, both for our own sakes and for the sake of the dying persons.

By choosing to become involved with those around us who are dying, we reaffirm for them and ourselves that God has promised never to leave or forsake anyone. By letting the dying persons be honest about their feelings or in waiting until they are ready to talk about their pending death, we help them to know that God understands when promises are doubted and questioned.

A fitting prayer at times like these is: *O God of peace, you have taught us that in returning and in rest we shall be saved; in quietness and confidence is our strength. It is the greatness of your spirit which can lift us now into your presence, where we may be still and know that you are God. Amen.*

We read our will

Ira E. Miller

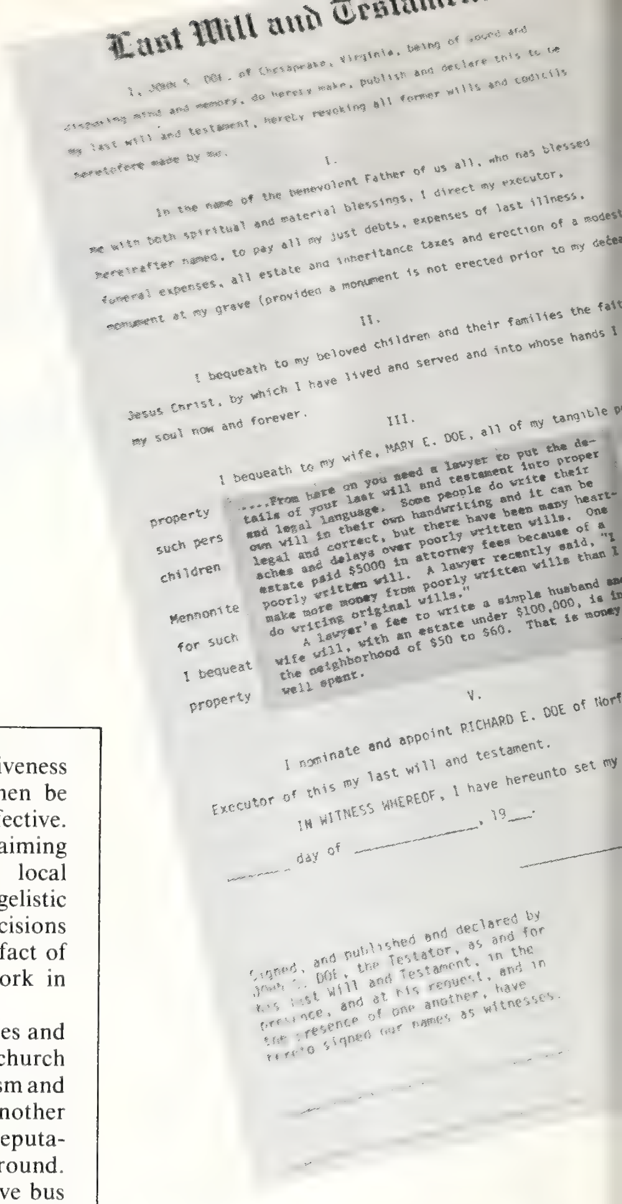
A will can seem like a Christmas tree surrounded with a number of gifts carefully wrapped and securely tied, and everyone wondering what's inside. Some people are like children at Christmas time who can hardly wait for the packages to be opened.

Reading a will is generally a hushed expectation after the funeral. But that is not the way we did it.

Some thirty years ago we had a lawyer draw up our will. After it was finished, we invited our three sons and their wives home for the evening, with the expressed purpose of reading our will to the family. It was a bit solemn and we noticed a tear roll from the cheek of one of the daughters-in-law.

That was about thirty years ago. Some years later we had occasion to make a slight change in the will. Again we did it with the full knowledge and cooperation of the entire family.

We may not be orthodox in the way we do things, and it may not work in every case, but it worked fine for us. Our theory is that it is better to discuss matters while we are still here to help make adjustments if any are needed. It just might help avoid hard feelings in later years.



Last Will and Testa

I, JOHN S. DOE, of Chesapeake, Virginia, being of sound and
disposing mind and memory, do hereby make, publish and declare this to be
my last will and testament, hereby revoking all former wills and codicils
heretofore made by me.

I.

In the name of the benevolent Father of us all, who has blessed
me with both spiritual and material blessings, I direct my executor,
hereinafter named, to pay all my just debts, expenses of last illness,
funeral expenses, all estate and inheritance taxes and erection of a modest
monument at my grave (provided a monument is not erected prior to my decea

II.

I bequeath to my beloved children and their families the fait
Jesus Christ, by which I have lived and served and into whose hands I
my soul now and forever.

III.

I bequeath to my wife, MARY E. DOE, all of my tangible p
property
such pers
children
Mennonite
for such
I bequeat
property

....From here on you need a lawyer to put the details of your last will and testament into proper and legal language. Some people do write their own will in their own handwriting and it can be legal and correct, but there have been many heartaches and delays over poorly written wills. One estate paid $5000 in attorney fees because of a poorly written will. A lawyer recently said, "I make more money from poorly written wills than I do writing original wills."

A lawyer's fee to write a simple husband and wife will, with an estate under $100,000, is in the neighborhood of $50 to $60. That is money well spent.

V.

I nominate and appoint RICHARD E. DOE of Norf
Executor of this my last will and testament.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
______ day of ______________, 19___.

Signed, and published and declared by
John S. DOE, the Testator, as and for
his last Will and Testament, in the
presence, and at his request, and in
the presence of one another, have
hereto signed our names as witnesses.

Notes on church growth

What is the secret?

"If we had the right evangelism . . . if our church were more friendly . . . if our people were more committed . . . if we had a nicer place of worship . . . if we were located at a different place . . . if we had Bible-preaching from the pulpit . . . *then* our church would begin to move forward."

All of the above phrases have one thing in common. They reflect the wistful desire to find a magical key. They reflect the assumption that there is one simple answer which will guarantee church growth. They may also reflect the feeling that the problem is "out there" rather than "right here" with us, where we can work on it.

What is the secret? Sorry, but there is no one simple answer. There is no instant formula. Church growth is complex. Solid church growth takes time, work, prayer, and dedication. There is *some* truth in each of the above phrases. They are not just excuses; but neither is any one by itself the key.

There is no one right method of evangelism; but there are some special methods which God gives for each situation that will be more fruitful than others. It is important to evaluate the effectiveness of one's evangelism efforts and then be willing to change if they are not effective.

More local congregations are reclaiming evangelism as the task of the local congregation. The test of evangelistic effectiveness is not the number of decisions made, but rather the number and fact of people becoming disciples who work in living and active congregations.

Ask people from growing churches and you get a variety of answers. One church has specialized in visitation evangelism and they are sure that this is the key. Another has specialized in music and has a reputation for the best music for miles around. Another has developed an aggressive bus ministry to build a growing Sunday school. In another church they focused on discovery of spiritual gifts, and the congregation grew. Each of these growing congregations has found a secret in its own setting. That is the key: We all need to discover how God is seeking to use us in our own settings.

Mennonites have a long and strong believers' church heritage. There is a place in most communities for such a witness in a special way. We can begin where we are, with the gifts God has already given us.

Seek the direction of the Holy Spirit in prayer. Find a way to discover your resources and gifts. Assess the needs around you and within. Look at your opportunities. Set a measurable goal. Plan. Act. Evaluate. Reassess. Set new goals. Plan. Act. You will grow! *Floyd Bartel, Commission on Home Ministries secretary for congregational mission, Newton, Kansas*

Ira and Maggie Miller

Meditation

Stars in my family

Isn't $100,000 a fantastic sum? Some children at school have a relative who plays professional baseball. He came to visit old friends and former teachers. Tall and good looking, he signed his name with a flourish to a letter to be duplicated and handed out to the schoolchildren. Later, we heard of the contract he signed and his salary.

Do I have any stars in my family? My father spent his life farming. Perhaps some wheat that he grew eased the hunger of a child in Europe or Asia.

My father also spent much time studying the Scriptures. He supported the church. He taught us high ideals through his daily life. And at his death, friends and neighbors heaped words of admiration in his honor.

Thomas Aldrich said, "What is lovely never dies, but passes into other loveliness." When we have known a person with a lovely life, our lives can show what we have learned.

"Quiet and unassuming" were attributes I heard about my father. No autographs, no popular stars in my family. But in quiet moments of reminiscing, my eyes fill with tears of pride and joy.

Name withheld

The Lord's Prayer

The church sanctuary was three-quarters full. As was customary, the first four or five pews remained unoccupied. Most of the worshipers sat immobile and solemn faced. Some young mothers shushed their small children. A few persons glanced at the announcement side of their bulletin, not bothering to read the order of worship. It always remained the same. One or two individuals did notice that a guest soloist was going to sing a version of the Lord's Prayer. That was nice and very appropriate, too.

The moment for music arrived. What was this? Something was wrong. The soloist was standing with her back turned toward the congregation! As she began to sing, accompanied by the organ, the youthful musician lifted her head and eyes upward toward the stained-glass window centered in front of the sanctuary. Its hues of deep red, blue, green, and amber depicted Christ kneeling in prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Following the worship service, several curious members of the congregation asked the young woman why she performed in such an unorthodox manner.

"Because," she replied," "I cannot sing the Lord's Prayer without praying it."

Janice Pauls

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CONTRIBUTORS

Peter J. Hampton, 1416 Delia Avenue, Akron, Ohio 44320, is director of developmental programs and associate professor of psychology at the University of Akron.

William Klassen is head of the department of religion at the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg.

Urbane Peachey serves as MCC's secretary for the Middle East at 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

Delton Franz is director of the MCC Peace Section Washington Office, 100 Maryland Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20002.

Cal Redekop is co-executive secretary of MIBA, 400 South Jefferson, Hillsboro, Kansas 67063.

La Vernae J. Dick resides at 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338.

Janice Pauls, 532 North Eby, McPherson, Kansas 67460, is a free-lance writer.

CREDITS

Cover, Oliver Wendell Schenk, Gustave Dore; 50, 51, CMC archives, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg; 53, Ben Shahn, RNS; 54, 56, RNS; 54, John Wieler, MCC; 62, Slabaugh, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801; 63, James H. Worth, UNICEF.

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman.

How to have a happy marriage

"We can see the family as a workshop in social change instead of as a guarantor of the social order" (Elise Boulding to the 1971 annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association).

David and Vera Mace, the world's best-known marriage counselors, married for over forty years and still extremely busy in family-related programs all over the world, have written their newest book *How to Have a Happy Marriage* (Abingdon Press, 1977), "prepared to guarantee that any normal couple can improve their relationship if they will faithfully follow our directions" (page 6).

The book, probably because it is written for a broad audience, does not do justice to the deep spiritual commitment of the Maces. They are devout Quakers who have expressed great encouragement for Mennonites to become more involved in the movement to build and strengthen Christian familial relationships.

Like the Fairfield book discussed on this page in the previous issue, *How to Have a Happy Marriage* is a unique marriage workbook. It requires couples to commit twenty-four hours over a period of six weeks to a series of practical exercises. Such a program is "guaranteed" to develop greater depth to relationships.

The exercises are simple and nonthreatening. The first one asks you to think of three to five things which you like about your marriage, then three to five things that could be improved, and three to five specific things that you could do to make your marriage even better than it is now. The idea is for spouses to do this alone and then talk these things over together. To start the dialogue, the ten-and ten method is applied. First you write down your own reflections for ten minutes, then you talk about them for ten minutes.

You may discover that even simple things can be difficult. That is why the Maces share how they are learning to communicate more effectively. This includes dealing with listening, self-awareness, anger, and negotiation. They show how some of these relate to popular programs like Parent Effectiveness Training (PET), Minnesota Couples Communication Program (MCCP), Association of Couples for Marriage Enrichment (ACME), Marriage Encounter (ME), and the concept of behavior modification.

A unique element of this book is that it speaks to marriages that are growing or are willing to grow. It speaks of happy marriages becoming happier. While it could probably also help marriages in difficulty, it is basically a program to improve familial relationships.

One of the ideas which made me stop and reflect was the thought, "When we say we *can't* change our ways . . . what we really mean is that *we won't*" (page 34). Another one was, "I have been told in all seriousness by an able man and a keen observer of human affairs that he had scarcely ever in his life come in contact with a successful marriage. Why . . . are the best-married people hiding their light under a bushel?" (page 162).

It has made me wonder. Is part of our familial dilemma today related to our ambivalence on eschatology? Do marriages today begin only on the certainty of the present? Is the missing ingredient our uncertainty about the future?

If this is so, then we as Christians must accept considerable responsibility for the lack of growth in the majority of familial groups. At one time we were all sure that the future was in God's hands. Many had it calculated, on the basis of Daniel and Revelation, just when and how God would assert himself through the second coming of our Lord.

Dispensationalism, premillennialism, and amillennialism have been just a few of the "plans" we've tried to force on God and the Bible. It has caused confusion. Today we realize that just as Jesus came unexpectedly the first time, the final chapter may well catch most of the waiting ones by surprise again.

But that should not keep us silent about the future. The Old Testament vividly portrays an expecting people, even though their signals were mixed up. The New Testament urges us to be an expecting people because there is a new and final day (while Jesus introduced the kingdom to us) that is yet to come.

For familial and any other relationships, it is often this dimension which opens new doors. Because there is a new day coming, new things can happen all along the way. We can experience new and exciting growth whenever we choose to. The Maces say, "We guarantee change for those who want it." Jesus says, "Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find. . ." (Matthew 7:7). BW *Second in a series of four*

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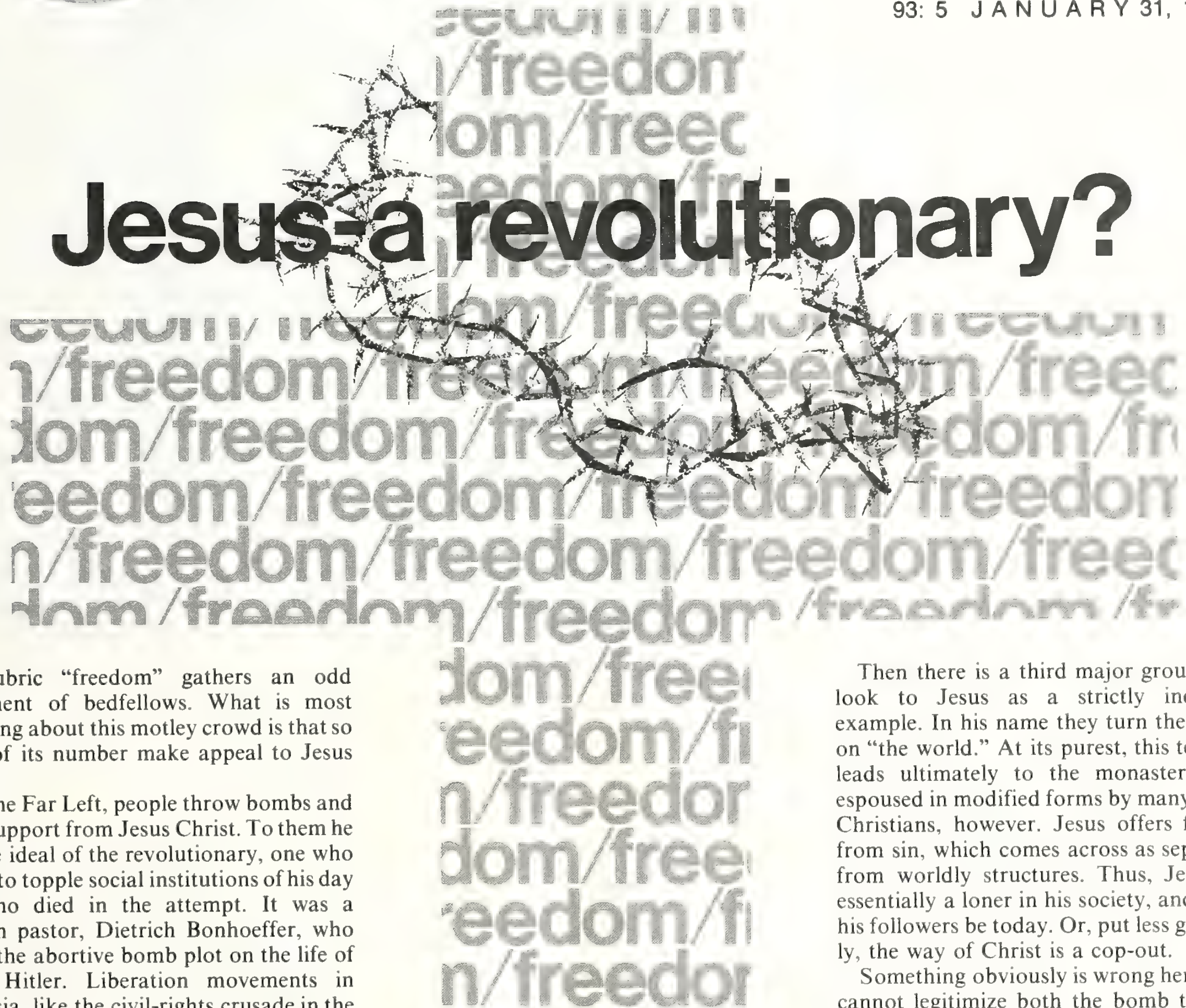
OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93: 5 JANUARY 31, 1978

Jesus-a revolutionary?



The rubric "freedom" gathers an odd assortment of bedfellows. What is most surprising about this motley crowd is that so many of its number make appeal to Jesus Christ.

On the Far Left, people throw bombs and claim support from Jesus Christ. To them he was the ideal of the revolutionary, one who set out to topple social institutions of his day and who died in the attempt. It was a German pastor, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who joined the abortive bomb plot on the life of Adolf Hitler. Liberation movements in Rhodesia, like the civil-rights crusade in the United States, are led by ministers whose motivation is an aroused Christian conscience.

Yet Jesus is also used to buttress the status quo. Some of the most vehement advocates of "America—Love It or Leave It" and "Shape Up or Ship Out" are to be found in the Bible Belt. The "freedom" of Jesus is the freedom of society as it is constituted now; the appeal to Jesus as a revolutionary is blasphemous.

Then there is a third major group. They look to Jesus as a strictly individual example. In his name they turn their backs on "the world." At its purest, this tendency leads ultimately to the monastery. It is espoused in modified forms by many devout Christians, however. Jesus offers freedom from sin, which comes across as separation from worldly structures. Thus, Jesus was essentially a loner in his society, and so will his followers be today. Or, put less graciously, the way of Christ is a cop-out.

Something obviously is wrong here. Jesus cannot legitimize both the bomb throwers and the status quo. He cannot support indiscriminate sex, and faithfulness to but one partner in marriage—let alone celibacy! He cannot be the champion of social reformers and also the example for those who cop out from social concerns. Jesus may be Mr. Freedom, but freedom to do what?

The theologians do not remove the dilemma. They, too, are divided in their interpretations of Jesus. Nineteenth-century

William G. Johnsson

"Christ with the Cross" by El Greco

theology was preoccupied with the task of recovering the real Jesus—the historical Jesus. Hundreds of biographies of Jesus were written. But as Albert Schweitzer showed in *The Quest of the Historical Jesus,* all failed. All the writers interpreted Jesus according to their own lights.

Schweitzer himself set out a radically new portrait. His Jesus was an apocalyptic visionary, one who thought that his preaching would bring in the kingdom and who at last threw himself on the wheel of fate to accomplish that task when his preaching failed. More recently, S. G. F. Brandon in *Jesus and the Zealots* argued that Jesus was connected with the political hotheads of Jerusalem, the radical fringe who eventually led the revolt against Rome. The majority of modern biblical scholars, on the other hand, have given up the attempt to paint a portrait of the actual Jesus. They remain skeptical that the historical Jesus can be recovered from the mists of antiquity, and they doubt that he would be relevant to twentieth-century thought and conduct, even if he could.

Have we reached an impasse? Is every advocate of a new type of liberation to bandy about the name of Jesus at will?

Not at all. Granted that there are formidable problems in interpreting Jesus; yet the task is not hopeless. We know more about him than almost any other figure of antiquity. If many details of his life and teachings remain obscure, the contours may be sketched, as L. E. Keck has now shown in *A Future for the Historical Jesus.* Those contours indicate three facts that bear directly on the question of Jesus and freedom.

Jesus was a liberator

Matthew 4, verses 23 and 24, provides a fair summary of the mission of Jesus as it is developed in all four Gospel accounts: "Jesus traveled all through Galilee teaching in the Jewish synagogues, everywhere preaching the good news about the kingdom of heaven. And he healed every kind of sickness and disease. The report of his miracles spread far beyond the borders of Galilee so that sick folk were soon coming to be healed from as far away as Syria. And whatever their illness and pain, or if they were possessed by demons, or were insane, or paralyzed—he healed them all" (*Living Bible*—LB).

It is indisputable that Jesus spent much of his public ministry in acts of healing. Many of those acts were exorcisms. The backdrop to the healings and exorcisms is a conflict; humankind is bound, a victim of disease or demons, and Jesus comes to shed light upon the way (Matthew 4:15, 16).

In the Gospel of Luke the language of liberation is especially clear-cut. Here the ministry of Jesus commences with the sermon at Nazareth, with its programmatic quotation from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has appointed me to preach good news to the poor; he has sent me to heal the brokenhearted and to announce that captives shall be released and the blind shall see, that the downtrodden shall be freed from their oppressors, and that God is ready to give blessings to all who come to him" (Luke 4:18, 19, LB).

John Howard Yoder in his book entitled *The Politics of Jesus* suggests that Jesus here announces his mission in terms of the Old Testament Jubilee—the year of release. Whether or not Yoder is correct, it is clear that, for Luke, Jesus is the friend and helper of social outcasts. Throughout the Gospel we find Jesus fraternizing with fringe groups—"publicans and sinners," Gentiles, the poor, and women.

In the fourth Gospel the liberation of Jesus is couched in terms of ignorance-knowledge. Humankind is a slave to sin, but is unaware of it. Jesus comes with the truth that sets people free: "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. . . . If the Son sets you free, you will indeed be free. . . . My purpose is to give life in all its fullness" (John 8:32-36; 10:10, LB).

It is plain, therefore, that the modern emphasis on Jesus as liberator is not without foundation in the historical Jesus. Jesus Christ was Mr. Freedom par excellence!

But we have still to spell out the content of the freedom that Jesus offered. This leads us to the second significant fact.

Jesus was executed

Christian parlance commonly refers to the "death" of Jesus, or his "sacrifice." The historical datum is, however, this: He was executed. After a trial, he was put to death publicly between two felons.

No aspect of the story of Jesus Christ is more sure than this. Certainly the critic has never suggested that the crucifixion was an invention of his followers! The cross in the ancient world was a repugnant symbol: It stood for ignominy and suffering, a public display of the fate of those who would oppose the iron clasp of Roman rule.

Yet this fact—the execution of Jesus—is surely the central datum in any discussion of Jesus and freedom. Clearly, Jesus was not an innocuous character. A milksop Jesus would never have come to grief on a Roman cross!

Jesus, in fact, in spite of his humility, must have been a threat to vested interests in his society. What he stood for was inimical to the hierarchy, and eventually the only way out was to have him removed. Whether we wish to pin the blame on the Jewish or the Roman authorities is beside the point; the execution of Jesus points inexorably to the challenge he presented to the society of his day.

In fact, the Gospels—all four of them—depict a Jesus in controversy throughout his ministry. He disputes with the religious leaders over the manner of Sabbath observance, he freely interprets the laws of Moses ("You have heard . . . it . . . said . . . but I tell you"), he clashes with Herod. His denunciation of the religious hierarchy is scathing: "Hypocrites . . . whited sepulchres . . . blind guides." Indeed, the cross at the end of the story is not at all a surprise—it has become inevitable to the discerning reader. This is the condemnation, that people love darkness rather than light. When the light comes into the world their response can only be: Put out the light!

The fact of the execution of Jesus should give pause to those Christians who have chosen the cop-out road in social questions. Jesus was no cop-out.

Likewise, it should cause serious misgivings among those who seek to legitimize the status quo in his name. It was the establishment that erected the cross. Who will dare to say that the establishment has been Christianized?

Does then Jesus take his place among the radicals of the New Left? Is social involvement the new evangelism? We turn to the third fact before us.

Jesus renounced force

This fact is less palatable to the modern advocates of liberation. They would like to stop the discussion at the execution; with Jesus, the one who works and preaches freedom, suffering a martyr's death at the hands of conservative political forces. Then he is merely a pawn among the power-brokers of social institutions.

But history will not allow this easy resolution of the enigma of Jesus. It is not by chance that the cross became the symbol of the new religion derived from him. It is not by chance that the essence of early Christian preaching was the story of a crucified Messiah—foolish to the Greeks, a scandal to the Jews. It is not by chance that the language of personal Christian living employs the terminology of "death" and "crucifixion," especially in the writings of Paul. For Christianity is more than the story of a good person who died on a cross (and rose again). It is witness to a life lived, which culminated in death on a Roman cross. In other words, the mission of Jesus was the cross-life and cross-death.

Jesus was a revolutionary, but not in the manner that anarchists would like. The zealot option was open to him, but it seems clear that he deliberately turned from it. Instead of the appeal to arms to change society, he took up a weapon so radical that no society has ever been bold enough to adopt it—the cross. The cross is individually and societally transforming. It stands for voluntary subordination, for the self-conscious renunciation of force.

"If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me," says Jesus (Matthew 16:24, LB). In the famous Sermon on the Mount he describes the characteristics of the citizens of his kingdom: the poor in spirit, the humble, the merciful, the peacemakers, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the persecuted, the pure in heart. They do not resist evil with evil, they do not discriminate in their love; thus, their lives mirror the acts of the Father in heaven.

This is the paradox of the freedom of Jesus. It is freedom through death, freedom through an utter change, a transformation. In the fourth Gospel it comes across like this: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of Spirit is spirit . . . . Ye must be born again" (John 3:6, 7).

And so, it is freedom to love. It is freedom to look upon people as people, to see in every human being—the butcher, the baker, the candlestickmaker; red, yellow, black, and white—a child of God. It is freedom from prejudice, from hatred, from discrimination.

Freedom through love—it is still a lively option. Gandhi demonstrated its potency as a social lever. But the one who probably understands it best today is Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. He learned the meaning of freedom in a prison cell! It was when he had lost everything that he became free. So his writings are marked by an incredible lack of bitterness toward those who most misused him.

Jesus was Mr. Freedom. He found in himself that liberation of spirit that comes from the cross. He lived to lead others to that same freedom.

And he is Mr. Freedom. Bombers and free lovers, anarchists and the gay people may claim his support, but they fail at the crucial point. They are not radical enough. It is the cross alone that sets people free.

Burn-out or turn-on

(The dilemma of inner-city churches)

Thomas Sine of the University of Washington and World Concern Incorporated, Seattle, warns that North American cities are in grave trouble. The prospect is one of a continuing exodus of businesses and middle-class residents to the suburbs. This results in a steadily lowering tax base and an increasing need to provide for the inner city's unemployed and poor. Sine predicts that this pressure will result in cutbacks for all services not regarded as basic.

Chicago Area Mennonites (CAM), an organization that includes fourteen Mennonite churches and three fellowships (four different Mennonite conferences; three black, four Latino, and ten mixed or totally white groups), is a coordinated effort to be the church in Chicago. David Whitermore is the overall coordinator.

CAM has learned that a basic problem in the inner city is "burn-out." Christina Maslach, a psychology professor at the University of California, defines burn-out as an emotional response that social workers often experience after being exposed to large and frequent doses of human suffering. But it also happens to nurses, psychiatrists, pastors, teachers, policemen, lawyers, transit drivers, citizens—people who, day in and day out, see agonizing human needs that seem to get worse and for which there seem to be so few resources that actually help.

People suffering from burn-out are usually unaware of a shift in their attitudes from that of caring concern, to apathy, detachment, and resentment.

Maslach describes several methods people use which are signs of burn-out. One of the most common is to generalize or lump everyone into a common category. Tired voluntary service workers refer to "them," "they," or "those people." Burned-out caseworkers talk of "caseloads" and "clients." Doctors speak of "coronaries," "diabetics," "this liver case," thus reducing people to specific problems. Pastors and other religious workers divide people into the "unchurched," "unsaved," or "churched" and "saved."

Inner-city workers are especially prone to burn-out. Churches are usually understaffed and the needs are overwhelming. While suburban churches and overseas missions today are usually run on professional standards, giving workers adequate salaries, vacations, study leaves, and support groups, most city mission workers are left on their own with little guidance and inadequate support.

The city is a stranger for us Mennonites. We move to it and work in it, but we don't know how to cope with it.

What does it take to turn on to the city? How can we be more effective Christian witnesses in the core areas?

David Whitermore, CAM coordinator, says we must realize and accept "that some of our city churches will never become self-supporting. Some of our city churches, especially those in changing neighborhoods, in foreign culture and language settings and in poverty areas, are really mission outposts. They also function as rescue missions. While these churches may never become self-supporting, they touch the lives of thousands with the cups of cold water that they offer in Jesus' name."

We will have to learn greater understanding and be prepared to spend more money for city ministries. It is essential for our workers to find groups who will listen and help them work through the personal

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Joyce Shutt

struggles of witnessing for Christ on the sin strips, in the ghettos, amidst the slums, to the night people, and to whomever lives in the inner city. These workers also need regular opportunities for renewal, vacation, and self-development.

Our little congregation at Fairfield, Pennsylvania, is nestled in a relatively prosperous community. Several years ago, we began to designate part of our benevolence budget (about $3,000 per year) as a revolving emergency fund to help people and organizations in crises.

Through this project, we've become aware that there are poor and needy people even in relatively stable communities.

We have bought coal for an elderly woman on social security, groceries for a transplanted Indian family, made a down payment on a house for a low-income family, paid light bills, back rent, medical expenses, and car repairs for individuals who were temporarily down and out.

Sometimes our congregation has become impatient and angry. There are those who take advantage of you. But mostly it has turned us on to missions because we have seen others turned on. One recipient from our fund and other help says, "It feels awfully good to know that someone cares enough to offer help. Before you came, I felt so alone."

It is hard to turn on to the city, especially the core areas. How can you love people who live among the broken homes, buildings in disrepair, beer bottles and cans?

You can begin to love the inner city when you reflect on the deeper meaning of forgiveness. God loved a rebellious and sinful world enough to give his only son on our behalf. When the extent of that love starts to pulsate in your spirit, then you can begin to see the potential beauty of downtown Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, Winnipeg, Toronto, Washington, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Vancouver, and Montreal. Then you begin to see the creative potential in the slum dweller, the prostitute, the ragged child, and the alcoholic bum.

When you experience the true meaning of God's forgiveness, then you can also forgive the inner city.

David Whitermore of CAM writes, "We ask you to help us so that at the close of our individual and corporate ministries we will be able to say with Joseph, 'God meant it (our struggles, defeat, frustations, and victories) unto good, to bring it to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive.'"

Our inner-city churches will burn out or turn on. We can help them to turn on for Jesus Christ and for those people who make their homes in these places.

Many housing areas in the city are marked by littered streets.

Often new buildings are not accompanied by new jobs and possibilities for gaining self-respect. As a result, soon the ghettos are back, only now they are fifteen stories high.

News

Assembly of policymakers to plan for 1978

Female seminary students are asking where they will find a place in church vocations. An urgent need for new missionaries is a top concern of the Commission on Overseas Mission. The Commission on Home Ministries may decide to begin a ministry to Spanish-speaking people. "How do we proceed with the concerns about abortion?" asks John Gaeddert, executive secretary of the Commission on Education. Planning for the 1979 conference on civil obedience-disobedience will also be a key item in the annual Council of Commissions. And tough decisions will have to be made about the 1978 budget.

The policymaking arms of the General Conference will hold their annual forum February 10-14 in Newton, Kansas. The executive committees of all boards and commissions will meet February 10, one day before the plenary sessions. Almost 200 persons (elected officers, administrators, and resource persons) are involved in these policy discussions, which include not only COM, CHM, and COE, but also Women in Mission, the General Board, Division of Administration, Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission board, and the joint board of Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Goshen Biblical Seminary. The sessions will be held at First Mennonite Church, 429 East First Street, Newton. All meetings, except for a few executive sessions, are open to the public.

On the COM agenda are issues related to the Overseas Church Leaders Abroad Study Program. Thirteen overseas church leaders financed by COM have studied at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries during the past five years. A thorough evaluation of this program has been made and will be presented to the policymakers for a decision on whether to continue the training.

Other COM agenda items include delineating guidelines for missionaries caught up in an emergency situation of political or military nature. A major study of the effectiveness of missionary itineration has been done by Tina Block Ediger (COM staff person). The commission will discuss this with a possible view to new initiatives in this area. Further, in addition to full reports on work in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, commission members will likely devote thought to ways of recruiting qualified personnel for overseas ministries.

Palmer Becker, executive secretary for the Commission on Home Ministries, noted that there is no issue on the CHM agenda which he thinks will be central to the deliberations. Spanish ministries are a possibility, but so too is the role of CHM, particularly as it intersects and complements US district and Canadian conference structures in home ministries. Should the role of CHM take on motivational aspects, in which the commission would become a "think tank," more than an administrator of program? If so, can good policy be formed if it is not tested by direct program administration? Palmer also thought there might be some "sleeper issues"—views on heterosexuality, homosexuality, and celibacy, the charismatic movement, and native land rights.

Women in Mission expects to discuss the place of women seminary students in church vocations, and whether the relatively few young women in the organization means that women are actually being incorporated into the organizational structures of the church.

The Division of Administration and the General Board will meet to review the budgets of the commissions and the boards. Among the agenda items for them are a request by CHM that the unrestricted cash balances of the various commissions be pegged at 10 percent, rather than 20 percent as is currently the policy, and they will also set a goal for giving by US General Conference churches to MCC (Akron). This goal will not be part of the General Conference budget, but since giving by American General Conference members to MCC has decreased significantly during the past three years, the MCC board requested the General Conference to set a goal.

The General Board will devote considerable time and energy to planning the civil obedience-disobedience conference in February 1979. What process is best to get congregational input on this question?

Agenda items for the Commission on Education include the youth-adult curriculum. Educators from each district and province are coming to the commission meetings to discuss this inter-Mennonite venture. The commission will also discuss the abortion concern.

MVS plans visitation blitz

Now here, now there . . . and half of everywhere

From February to May, Mennonite Voluntary Service personnel expect to visit 150 congregations in the United States and Canada. This is almost half of the churches making up the General Conference Mennonite Church. In addition to these congregational contacts, thirty to forty Mennonite and non-Mennonite colleges will be visited.

"This represents a major commitment," says director Peter Ediger, "by MVS to share its story, its mission, and its vision with the supporting churches."

The job would not be possible without help. The four administrators, Ediger, and associate directors Jean Krahn, Charles Neufeld, and Dale Suderman, could not do the blitz alone. So sixteen former, and current, volunteers in the MVS program are a central feature of the visitations.

Usually these twenty persons will travel as individuals, participating in worship services, and adult and career-age Sunday school classes. They will interpret the MVS program, work on recruitment, encourage congregations in their local ministries, and seek additional financial support for MVS.

Between now and September, Mennonite Voluntary Service intends to recruit 110 new volunteers. Most of these are needed to replace volunteers who will be terminating during the year, but if the goal is reached there would be a net increase of twenty over 1977. During 1977 there was an average of 140 volunteers in service during the year. Peter Ediger projects a total of 160 by the end of 1978.

The sixteen volunteers helping in the communication and recruitment drive represent a wide range of experience, and in sharing their personal stories will be able to also interpret the broad ministries of MVS. Among the itinerants are home repair and community workers, teachers to the disadvantaged, and persons who have been active in prison work, peace advocacy, environmental concerns, mental health, home care, and other ministries.

Congregations interested in having a voluntary service worker or staff person visit them are encouraged to write Jean Krahn, Mennonite Voluntary Service, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

Development conference stresses understanding

Newton Kansas—A Zairian pastor asked a development worker, "Is there any way my people can have the blessings of technology and development without selling out to materialism?"

His concern is but one aspect of the promise and the agony of development in the Third World. Development projects often promise much, deliver little, or even contribute further to the oppression of the poor.

In an attempt to identify with Third World development questions, and in particular to focus on the place of women in developing countries, about eighty women met at Faith Mennonite Church, January 13-14, to listen to persons who have had wide experience in work in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Several major points were made. During the 1950s it was assumed that the status of women would improve in step with industrialization and urbanization. This has not happened. As Third World countries urbanize, as multinational corporations set up factories, and as international agribusinesses change land use, women are increasingly eliminated from their essential contribution to the economic welfare of their families. Before urbanization, both husband and wife were producers. A wife had an essential role in subsistence agriculture. But urbanization and industrialization are taking this important economic activity away from many women. Now the entire family is dependent on the wages of one person, the husband. Hence, the status of many women, as well as the viability of the family unit, has actually declined in many areas of the Third World.

What is development? In responding to this question resource persons Fremont and Sara Regier humorously observed that in the 1960s they had gone to Zaire as "missionaries" but that a decade later they returned as "development workers." "Development," they said, "is not technology, nor is it chicken projects. Development is people making their own decisions, setting their own goals and strategies. It is an integration of spiritual and bodily needs. God is concerned about the whole of man." A development worker is one who is a co-learner, a facilitator, and one whose relational skills are superior to any technical skills he or she may have.

The conference was sponsored by the Commission on Education in cooperation with Women in Mission. Among the speakers were Cornelia Flora (her speech was read as she was unable to be present), LaVonne Platt, Fremont and Sara Regier. Another ten women contributed to panel discussions.

A packet with a wide range of materials relating to women and development was given to each participant in the conference. The packet includes a study guide, booklets by Ester Boserup, Doris Janzen Longacre, and Luann Habegger Martin, as well as lists of publications, films, and other resources available for the study of development in the Third World. The packet is available for three dollars from the Commission on Education.

COE is interested in giving assistance for similar conferences in other areas. Inquiries may be directed to Herta Funk, Commission on Education, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

MANY SISTERS
Cross-Cultural Perspective
Edited by Carolyn J. Matthiasson
Elise Boulding
WOMEN IN THE TWENTIETH
Integrating Women into Development
Women in

These books and monographs were among the materials displayed during the Women and Development conference.

Khmer Rouge engaged in genocide

London, England—News of the atrocities committed in Cambodia (Kampuchea) since the Khmer Rouge took power in April 1972 has been slow to reach the outside world and only now is a full picture building up, says a statement issued at the end of 1977 by the British Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Commission of International Justice and Peace.

The report states that since the Khmer Rouge victory between one and two million people have been killed or died as a result of their treatment, and some thirty thousand more have fled to neighboring Thailand. Several thousand of these escaped by boat.

The statement was issued following the visit to Thailand by Lord Elton, a staff member of the Church of England committee on international affairs. He spoke with some of the Cambodians at a refugee camp in Thailand.

The statement goes on to ask the British Government to offer authorities in the capital city of Phnom Penh medical supplies, and to increase the allocation of entry permits to refugees who wish to settle in the United Kingdom. Further, it asks international church organizations to "rally world opinion on behalf of the victims of atrocities, and against any further killings and repression, and to mobilize all possible help for refugees from Kampuchea still in Thailand."

Caring for and resettling the refugees is primarily directed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The United States is admitting 15,000 refugees in a program that began last summer. Voluntary agencies are cooperating in their placement so that it is not necessary to set up camps.

Throughout Northeast and Southeast Asia refugees continue to be registered at a rate, during 1977, of almost a thousand per month.

History contest announced

A second contest encouraging high school students to write essays on Mennonite history is being sponsored by the Heritage Committee of the General Conference's Commission on Education.

All high school students from grades seven through twelve, including those who will graduate from high school by the end of the 1978 school year, are eligible to enter. Participants may write on any topic related to past and present Mennonite experiences. All sources are to be listed in the footnotes.

Each manuscript should be about 1,500 words long and submitted in typed, double-spaced form, sixty characters to a line. Handwritten manuscripts will not be accepted. The postmark deadline for entries is June 15, 1978. Prizes of fifty, thirty, and twenty dollars will be awarded for winning essays in each of two categories: grades seven through nine, and grades ten through twelve.

Contestants are to send their entries to their conference or district historical committees, as follows: Canada—Larry Klippenstein, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4; Central District—Arman Habegger, Route 1, Pandora, Ohio 45877; Eastern District—Ray Hacker, 5323 Lake Drive, East Petersburg, Pennsylvania 17520; Northern District—Rosella Schwartz, Box 268, Marion, South Dakota 57043; Pacific District—Judy Miller, Royal Star Route, Othello, Washington 99344; Western District—Robert Kreider, Box 365, North Newton, Kansas 67117.

The agriculture strike and the Christian farmer

Ideas and imagination are the solution

Editor's note: Family farms add up to one of the biggest industries in the United States—greater in capital investment and greater in cash receipts than General Motors. Yet some farmers and observers claim it is an industry on the brink of bankruptcy. A recent survey of more than 300 Kansas bankers reported that at least 55 percent of their farm customers lost money last year, and 35 percent required refinancing of their land and assets to service their loans. Some analysts assert that if economic conditions for agriculture do not improve soon, the character of American agriculture will change from a family-based operation to a corporate-dominated enterprise. One of the responses to this economic trend has been a hastily organized farm strike. Gary Franz, farmer and businessman in Liberal, Kansas, comments on issues raised by the farm strike.

Never before have American farmers been organized so quickly as in the four-months-old organizational effort that is being attempted by the American Agriculture organization of Springfield, Colorado. This farm organization is asking for a guarantee of 100 percent parity for commodities. They implemented a "strike" beginning December 14, 1977. The strike in this case means that crops will not be planted or distributed in 1978 and that agriculture purchases will be curtailed. Efforts are being made to include the commodities of corn, wheat, milo, cotton, soybeans, produce, beef, and dairy products. Thirty-three states now have strike headquarters, and thousands of farmers have attended strike meetings and pledged to strike.

The condition of 100 percent parity is best explained by the example that if a bushel of wheat bought a shirt in 1962, a bushel of wheat should buy the same shirt in 1977. Parity means that a farm commodity should command the same amount of purchasing power today that it did in previous years of "normal" times. Farmers are particularly hit by the decrease of parity due to the fact that machinery prices, fertilizer prices, and production expenses took a dramatic jump in 1973 when wheat and corn prices were high. Since then, however, farm expenses have not fallen though commodity prices have decreased. In fact, production prices have continued to increase, regardless of the price of commodities. A graphic example of the farmer's plight is a recent sign painted on a 1947 truck which stated, "This truck hauled $3.00 wheat in 1947 and hauled $2.00 wheat in 1977." The farmer faces a "depression condition" at this time, and this makes him ripe to be organized for an agriculture strike.

Striking farmers drive trucks and tractors along Main Street in Newton, Kansas, to call attention to their demands. About fifty farmers participated in this particular action.

Most farmers in the United States have or will be affected by the fact that an agriculture strike is considered, planned, and may be implemented by a majority of his neighbors. We Mennonite farmers must not only decide whether we will be a part of this strike, but also how we will respond to its actions and objectives.

Traditionally, farmers have been generous—they have given a share of their wealth to charity and to church. Most Christian farmers will find it difficult to withhold products if they feel their products in the past have gone to feed hungry people. Certainly, the biblical admonitions to "love your neighbor" and "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" run through a person's mind when he thinks about halting all agriculture production and distribution. Proverbs 11:26 tells us, "People curse the man who holds his grain for higher prices, but they bless the man who sells it to them in their time of need."

Most farmers have tacitly assumed that God approved the free enterprise system, and as such, have expected that they should receive more for their crops than it took to raise them. To think otherwise is to have a short career in agriculture. If a man truly is "worthy of his hire" the question is raised: Is the strike a Christian way to obtain that "worthiness"? If all farmers would strike, certainly this would seem to solve a problem of low commodity prices. A long-term view, however, suggests that farmers not strike—but rather increase production.

There are economic problems with striking. First, if we strike and we do not produce food for foreign markets, we will lose those markets. These will be filled by other countries, which means it would take years before we can again build up a reliable food line to those countries. Second, farmers who strike will not have adequate income to pay off loans and may anger landlords which will result in good farmers being put out of business. Third, an effective strike could send a tremendous ripple through the economy, which although it would benefit farmers temporarily, would cripple the economic recovery now occurring in the United States.

Like the energy crisis which we forgot as soon as the lines stopped forming at the gas pumps, we also have forgotten the population explosion going on in our world and its potential for devastating the world because of lack of food. Just as soon as we have one billion bushels of extra wheat in a year we think the surplus condition will last forever. We must take into account long-term needs on a global perspective. Just as surely as we have an energy shortage we have a food shortage coming—even to North America. A long-term view of the total food production problem is necessary.

Farmers in the United States and Canada have prided themselves on being independent, but have felt even more that they were creative and inventive. It is surprising then that the farmer at this point is interested in a negative approach to solving his dilemma when he has usually looked at creative solutions in the past. We need people who will figure how to store our surpluses in such a way that they won't damage prices but will help people who need food. We need farmers to go to underdeveloped countries and teach fellow farmers the techniques they have learned for producing food. (This, of course, will temporarily reduce the amount of crops grown in the United States.) We need leaders who will promote research into alternative uses for grains. We need an agriculture department which locates needs and then encourages the growth of crops that will fulfill those needs.

All farmers need a willingness to experiment, to risk, and to grow in know-how that includes not only growing crops, but determination of what is needed, who needs it, and how it can be profitably produced with low energy use. We desperately need funded research programs aimed at the farmer which pay the farmer to find ways to grow crops without petroleum-based fertilizer. This kind of fertilizer, which accounts for one-third of the energy used in farming, is not going to be available if oil is restricted, temporarily cut off, or when oil supplies are finally exhausted. We desperately need to plan for that day. We need to learn natural fertilizer techniques. We need incentives to use minimum and no-till methods of farming.

The North American farmer has an essential product, a high quality product, a valuable skill, and an amiable climate and land that can produce great bounty. With all of these assets, the North American farmer cannot fail if he continues to put away selfish goals and self-centered goals. He must find first of all what is good for his neighbor, then he will be worthy of his hire.

Hunger amid surplus: The dilemma in 1978 food supply

Akron, Pennsylvania—Two headlines in the *Christian Science Monitor* during October—"Big Wheat Crop Boosts Reserves" and "Twenty Countries on Hunger List"—illustrate the dilemma we face in grappling with the world food situation in 1978.

During the 1973-75 world food shortage, we were told that world food reserves had dropped to a twenty-one-day supply, that 10,000 were dying of starvation every week, and that 460 million of the world's four billion people were chronically malnourished. North American farmers responded by returning all their land to production in an effort to rebuild food reserves.

By the summer of 1977 there was again a grain surplus, wheat prices had dropped drastically, and still millions of people were hungry. In October the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) listed twenty countries faced with "abnormal food shortages."

Most wheat and corn areas of North America produced bumper crops in 1977. Even though on-farm grain storage has increased dramatically, good harvests around the world have brought grain elevator storage in midwestern states to a crisis stage.

By November 3, 1977, global grain stocks were up to about 20 percent of annual world consumption, a seventy-day supply, sufficient to ensure short-term world food security. Unless placed in a workable international grain reserve system, these carry-over stocks of grain may be sold on world markets to the highest bidder rather than being used to feed needy countries in time of emergency.

The crux of the problem of world hunger today is distribution. Many people are too poor to buy food. The world's free market system distributes according to the economic law of supply and demand rather than need. Even in North America there are approximately 14 million people chronically hungry.

Distributing food involves governments. Political questions and special interest groups have interfered with the establishment of the international grain reserve system recommended by the 1974 World Food Conference in Rome, which would stabilize prices and make food available to poor nations in times of emergency. A recent vote in Congress prevents US aid from being sent to six countries including Laos and Vietnam, both of which are in dire need of food assistance this year.

The threat of famine continues. Experts forewarn us of long-term climatic changes which will make it more difficult to grow food. We must store an adequate reserve out of our present surplus to be prepared for years of scarcity which are sure to follow.

Poverty can only be solved by a process of overall development in which people are given access to resources such as land, income, and technology whereby they can help themselves. The Mennonite Central Committee believes that there are situations in which relief is the appropriate form of assistance, but that primary efforts must be devoted to long-term rural community development and food production.

Joseph stored grain in Egypt for seven years before the wisdom of his reserve plan became evident. Let us thank God for good harvests, use our surpluses wisely, and continue to minister to human need by helping to free the hungry from the forces that oppress them, as well as by feeding them. *Jon Jantzen, MCC Food and Hunger Concerns*

Church and community work together to build park

Kansas City—A geographical metamorphosis has occurred on Southwest Boulevard. It has provided the impetus for other imaginative changes in the city. Three churches, including the Rainbow Boulevard Mennonite Church, cooperated in spearheading a community project which transformed a razed school site into an attractive, functional park and playground.

Whitmore School was demolished in 1973. For four years it remained a bleak landscape of asphalt rubble. Then in the spring of 1977 it became the common working ground of church and community volunteers. Trees and shrubs were planted. Playground equipment was built.

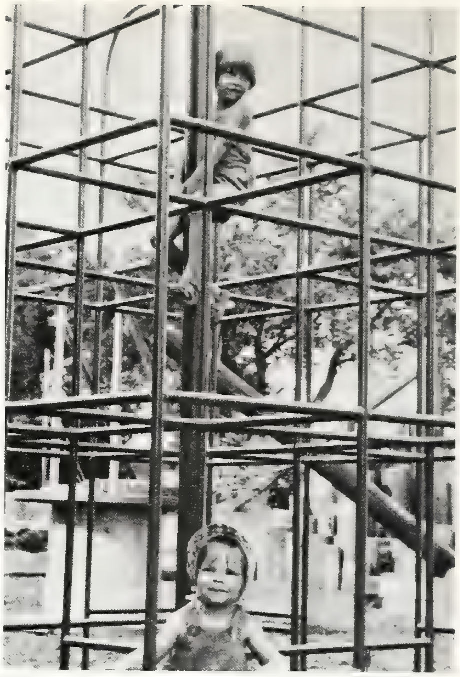
What brought about the project? The vision came from the staff of the Sharing Community in Rosedale—three churches whose pastors, five community workers, and a research associate form a team ministry in the area. The three churches are Rainbow Boulevard Mennonite Church, Rosedale United Methodist Church, and Rosedale Christian Church. They also cooperate in the use of their buildings for church functions, and in community programs such as daycare facilities, a food club, a nutrition center for senior citizens, a tool bank, an after school drop-in center, and office space.

The Whitmore property, originally owned by the Kansas City Board of Education, was bought in 1974 by the Methodist and Mennonite congregations. A park committee was formed with both church and community representatives. Two neighborhood groups put their community development money into park construction, authorizing expenditures up to $55,000.

A young community planner, working for the city, took initiative from the beginning to design a park which incorporates recycled and donated goods. Cable spools, railroad ties, telephone poles, pipes, volunteer time, energy, and money were the ingredients for the transformation from desolation to beauty. High school and college students came to weekend work camps.

Participants agree that it was a healthy experience for all, particularly in church-community relationships. The transformation of the site has been an example for other areas in Kansas City. It has sparked renewed enthusiasm for what a community development group can do. One group is seriously considering purchasing another vacated school site for a similar project. Inquiries have come from other churches and community organizations.

Although there has been no marked spiritual spin-off for the three churches, it has "improved the image of the church in the community" says Frank Ward, pastor of the Mennonite congregation.



This might be a daily scene for Mennonites in California, but since the sun never sets on the worldwide Mennonite family there are some children who will have to wait some months before the snow melts and bare arms are pleasurable. This is true even at Whitmore Park in Kansas City, where this photo was taken last summer.

Fundamental changes proposed for Communications Act

New York—Permanent licenses for television and radio stations, subject to revocation for unsatisfactory performance, and strict standards of behavior for government officials who regulate broadcasting, telephone, telegraph, cable TV, and other means of telecommunications are among scores of sweeping changes in the Federal Communications Act proposed by the Office of Communication of the 1.8 million-member United Church of Christ.

The proposals, more than two years in preparation, are designed to put into law protection for consumer interests that are not now covered by the Communications Act, according to Everett C. Parker, director of the Office of Communication.

"The updating of the Communications Act is one of the most important issues before the Congress. Telecommunications permeate every facet of our lives to the extent that almost half the labor force is employed in some phase of communication. The regulation of this vast enterprise is not something to be decided in private negotiations between members of Congress and the industries that now control broadcasting, common carrier, and other means of storing and distributing information. The people must have a say and a big one, especially so the next generation can enjoy freedom of speech through modern communication technology on terms other than those laid down by communication monopolies."

Under the church agency's plan for broadcast regulation, every station license would be issued for an indefinite period, instead of the three years which licenses now run. However, an individual or a group could file a petition to revoke the license at any time.

Stations would be required to report to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) annually on their programming.

Any public representative that filed a petition to deny a license would be given the right to discover facts in the possession of the station that are relevant to its petition. Such discovery is routinely allowed in federal and state courts, but the FCC has denied it to people who challenge stations.

The Office of Communication proposals strongly uphold freedom of speech and other First Amendment rights. They would prohibit censorship of messages sent by satellite, and would open up access to satellites to the public at large instead of, as now, restricting it to a small class of "authorized users" such as the Radio Corporation of America, International Telephone and Telegraph Company, and the American Telephone and Telegraph Company.

The Communications Act, passed in 1934, makes no mention of cable television. The Office of Communication would require cable systems to have at least thirty channels, would establish FCC performance standards for cable similar to those for broadcasting, and would prohibit pay cable unless the operator provided governmental, educational, and public access programming.

FCC commissioners would be isolated from the businesses they regulate. No more than three of the seven FCC members could have had a substantial financial interest in a regulated industry. "Because of its intimate relationship with the telecommunications industry, the FCC has excluded or minimized public participation in its doings," Parker said. "It has willingly been the spokesperson and protector of broadcasters and other businesses it regulates and has been largely indifferent to the interests of the public it has sworn to serve and defend."

Words & deeds

The annual workshop on worship convenes at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries January 30 to February 3. The theme for this year is "Sources for Renewal in Christian Worship" and is designed especially for pastors and other congregational worship leaders. Special attention will be given to what can be learned from house church experiences as well as from the charismatics. Registration is twenty-five dollars for the entire week plus lodging and meal costs. Inquiries may be directed to Erland Waltner, Director of Continuing Education, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana 46514.

"The church wouldn't cheat nobody," said a young man recently during a hearing into urban problems by Episcopal bishops in Newark, New Jersey. When he was asked, "What makes you so sure?" the young man's answer came easily: "Well, you know, the church is representing God. And I believe in God. And I believe God wouldn't cheat me. So I'm saying I have faith in you. So don't do me wrong."

The church in Sweden has been challenged to practice what it preaches. The churches cooperate annually in a nationwide appeal for funds for development in Third World countries. This year the cooperating churches released a document calling for a new economic world order, increased taxation, and a cutting down of luxury consumption in Sweden. Politicians have reacted angrily to the document because Sweden is struggling to maintain an economic balance in the face of rising unemployment. And there have been more serious criticisms. Critics ask if it is right for the church to ask wage earners and the employed to cut down on spending when the church itself shows no noticeable signs of any such actions. One churchman has declared that Swedish Christians were eminently qualified to lead the way to a simpler life-style because they were reasonably well off and fully understood the necessity to cut down on senseless spending. Now the critics ask: Why does not the church, which started the debate, take the lead? Why ask the secular structures in society, the politicians for instance, to do the job when it is the duty of the church and its members to set the pace?

Winnipeg—Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) has begun a model library of carefully selected materials about the native people of North America. Among the functions of the library is to provide a bibliography for church and school libraries who want books about natives, and to provide reference material for students and MCC volunteers.

World Leprosy Day was observed January 29, marking the twenty-fifth annual observance of this day, originated by M. Raoul Follereau in France, to call attention to the disease and the fifteen million persons who have leprosy. For information about leprosy write to: American Leprosy Missions, Inc., 1262 Broad Street, Bloomfield, New Jersey 07003, or Canadian Leprosy Mission, 67 Yonge Street, Suite 1128, Toronto, Ontario M5E 1J8.

Altona, Manitoba—Five students from Elim Bible Institute are participating in a study-work situation at Koinonia Farms, Georgia, during the January interterm. The remaining forty-two students at the school are part of an on-campus intensive study program which includes courses in hymnology, the Sermon on the Mount, and native ministries.

"Out of the mouths of babes. . . ." Irene Klassen, correspondent for First Mennonite Church, Calgary, Alberta, reports that during a traditional Christmas Eve program a four-year-old lad offered a voluntary item. She writes, "He stood at the microphone, and without a quiver or hesitation, recited the complete Christmas story according to Luke 2:1-20. Some of the words were difficult for him, and I am sure he didn't fathom the meaning of each word, but for us who listened it was a complete sermon. We all sat there breathlessly, and I wondered if ever a preacher had such a captive audience."

Another Christmas impression, shared by Mary Ellen Shoup of Hemet, California, describes her reactions after returning to the United States after eleven years in Algeria. "The day I decided to go shopping I was overwhelmed by commercialism. Everyone seemed so burdened as they sifted through possible gifts and endless stacks of appliances to fry hamburgers, make doughnuts, or what not. How can any of us manage without a microwave oven? I turned and left the store thinking of all the people in the world who have nothing to cook—either rapidly or slowly."

Washington, Illinois—Calvary Mennonite Church recently extended its local mission efforts with the purchase of a building near Harrison Homes, a low-cost housing project of 1,000 apartments in Peoria. Peoria, a city with a population of about 140,000, is ten miles west of Washington (population, 7,000). The two-story building, purchased for $28,000, is the home for Stan Maclin. Maclin provides leadership in a program which includes family counseling, Sunday school classes, Good News Clubs, and teacher-training workshops. Other programs by the Calvary Church in the Harrison Homes area include a used-clothing center and a Boys Club. The latter has been effective in bringing decisions for Christ. Although there are a multitude of social agencies working in Harrison Homes, the area has the highest crime rate in Peoria. Harrison Homes is a multiracial neighborhood of low-income families.

"More-with-less" is more than a catchy phrase. It is first of all the name of the cookbook written by Doris Janzen Longacre which has passed the 100,000 mark in sales. Further, it is a Christian philosophy. But there are also more-with-less workshops being held by special arrangement in the Midwest (mainly Kansas). The Newton (Kansas) Mennonite Central Committee office has worked together with the area hunger committee on presentations treating subjects like "Entertaining Simply," "Building a Simpler Diet," "How Busy Homemakers Get More with Less," and "Theology in the Kitchen." Persons interested in planning one of these workshops are encouraged to get in touch with the MCC office in Newton, Kansas.

Several aspects of peacemaking were explored at recent conferences. In Washington, D.C., T. Canby Jones from Wilmington (Ohio) College examined the religious pacifist theme in the Old Testament, citing examples of radical trust in God's power to deliver, rather than reliance on war. ("Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord" Zechariah 4:6.) Several common themes emerged from small-group meetings held during the conference. Two of these were the need to see biblical and societal approaches to peacemaking as complementary, and the need to define "peace" and "peacemaking" as broader than an absence of overt conflict and more than just relating to military service. Economic values, racial attitudes, and justice were mentioned as necessary parts of a definition. Another conference brought people together in the Goshen-Elkhart (Indiana) area who were concerned about teaching peace and justice in the family setting. Charlie Lord led the group in a biblical study of affluence, materialism, and competition. There was also discussion about the distribution and use of the world's resources, and how affluence affects other people and causes violence. Good models for children were emphasized because if parents can handle a different life-style, children can too.

Record

Deaths

Edmund J. Miller, pastor of Grace Hill Church, Whitewater, Kansas, for the past fifteen years, died January 16 at the age of sixty-eight. He had served as a pastor at Community Church, Portland, Oregon, Menno Church, Ritzville, Washington, and First Church of Christian, Moundridge, Kansas; as director of public relations at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana (1946-48); as president of Freeman Junior College, Freeman, South Dakota (1948-51); and as director of development and a Bible instructor at Bethel College, Newton, Kansas (1957).

Workers

David G. Lutz, Hereford Church, Bally, Pennsylvania, has begun a three-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee on Mindoro Island, Philippines. The first long-term worker in MCC's new program effort in the Philippines, he will be helping farm families with crop and animal production problems and management of physical and financial resources. Lutz recently completed a three-year term with MCC as manager-advisor to a land-leveling project in Pakistan.

C. Smucker

I. Smucker

Carl and Irene Smucker, First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, will begin full-time work with Mennonite Central Committee US Ministries in June as resource persons in aging ministries. They will be available to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregations, colleges, and seminaries to assist in identifying the needs of the aging and to help local groups to develop their own programs to meet those needs. In additon, they will identify resource materials on the subject and write articles. Carl is retiring in the spring as chairman of the sociology-social work department of Bluffton College. He has done research in retirement planning, psychological and spiritual aspects of retirement and myths about aging, and has served as a resource to institutions serving the elderly. Irene is a retired schoolteacher with special interest and background in health, nutrition, and exercise for elderly persons.

Calendar

February 10-11—Mennonite Disaster Service annual all-unit meeting, Phoenix

February 10-14—Council of Commissions, Newton, Kansas

Canadian

February 10-11—Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia annual sessions, Eden Church, Chilliwack

February 17-18—Conference of the United Mennonite Churches of Ontario, annual sessions, Leamington

February 24-25—Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba annual sessions, Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg

February 24-25—Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan annual sessions, Zion Church, Swift Current

May 6—Manitoba Women in Mission annual meeting, Winkler

Eastern

March 3-5—Seminar on "Professionalism: Faith, Ethics, and Christian Identity"; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; speakers, Gordon Kaufman, John Eby

Northern

March 30-April 1—Schmeckfest, Freeman, South Dakota

Letters

Janitors are worthy, too

Dear Editor: Gary Veendorp's thoughtful article in the November 29, 1977, issue of *The Mennonite* recalls for me what janitors serving our congregations have meant to us. Among that host of faithful janitors I think of three.

One was Jesse Smucker—pastor, president of the General Conference, and editor of *The Mennonite*—who in retirement served for a time as janitor of the church where my parents were members, the Eighth Street Mennonite Church of Goshen, Indiana. The other two were Paul and Adah Wenger, missionaries for many years in India, who served us so well as custodians at the First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

Gary has helped me to remember with gratitude that throng of janitors who have made our congregational life more pleasant and comfortable, who so often have served well beyond the call of duty, and who have not been listed when we have written our conference histories. *Robert Kreider, Box 365, North Newton, Kansas 67117*

December 30

Teaching positions open

Eastern Mennonite College has teaching positions open for the 1978-79 academic year in the areas of nursing, music, physical education, and business. For further information, contact the Dean's Office, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801

Notice of vacancy

Dean of academic affairs

Bluffton College invites applications from qualified persons for the position of dean of academic affairs. Qualifications: doctorate, college teaching and administrative experience, and basic agreement with the purposes and values of Bluffton as a Christian liberal arts college. Beginning date: September 1.

Send application, resume, and credentials to: Elmer Neufeld, President, Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio 45817.

Biblically, we are encouraged to work with one another and to appreciate the gifts each person has. No one is of lesser importance; all are needed to build the body of Christ.

Stan Bohn

A proposal about pastor votes

Many times severe problems and lingering bitterness have been created through voting on whether or not to continue a pastor's term. It becomes a negative witness to people the church wants to reach and it turns off youth who might consider the pastorate.

There are alternatives that we should consider. One Iowa congregation recently used a fifteen-point questionnaire. It asked which gifts of the pastor should be encouraged, what problems were not being met, and if there were specific problems in relating to the pastor. Two deacons met with the pastor to interpret the results and later reported to the congregation. They did not vote and record a "score"; instead, they arrived at a consensus on what action would be taken.

It would seem best to do such an evaluation before the end of a pastor's term. This makes it possible to arrange for some special training or to recruit some lay workers who can supplement the gifts of the pastor. If a change seems best, it allows time to plan for it.

If a group wants to vote, a vote of confidence in the church council or the board of deacons might be in order. If supported, then they could be authorized to work out arrangements with the pastor. It would prevent the polarization of whole congregations which now often occurs. And it would encourage a much closer working relationship between the pastor and immediate supervisors. Currently, the pastor may be getting positive signals from the board, but when the whole congregation votes, the totals may be negative.

Studies of church boards have shown that the boards often don't represent the congregation. Board members are usually middle-aged, married, successful persons. What about the elderly, the youth, singles, low-income people, those dealing with severe problems, and new members? This doesn't mean that the board members aren't good; but they may not adequately represent the total congregation. If the pastor is advised by an unrepresentative board, he may not notice the silent, unmet needs either. One way to cope with this is to have all interests or subgroups represented on the board.

Some problems we could solve

A vote on the pastor implies that all responsibility finally rests there. Because pastors know this, they often become keen managers, trying to maneuver congregations positively. The pastor becomes less a team worker and more an isolated administrator. Such burdens lead to pastor burn-out much sooner than if there was a team that the pastor could work with and be accountable to.

Putting a vote of confidence on the board would put greater responsibility on the lay leaders, a concept which is biblical and Anabaptist. Such a vote would encourage a team model at the leadership level, which could be an example for the whole congregation. We do vote on public school boards and entrust them with the administrative details.

To vote on a pastor's term without assessing the individual's needs or accomplishments, stunts rather than aids the growth of all concerned. The congregation is pressured to judge and the pastor may feel like a victim.

Biblically, we are encouraged to work with one another and to appreciate the gifts that each person has. No one is of lesser importance; all are needed to build the body of Christ. It is almost impossible to affirm gifts and state the needs through votes. A process of sharing, praying, and working through is required.

The pressure of pending votes can turn pastors into politicians. They dare not offend people lest their votes will be lost. Basic problems are then avoided or evaded. Other by-products are unresolved frustrations (a vote doesn't clear up your feelings); anger (the vote may not go your way); a humiliated pastor family (caught by surprise); and disappointed young people (they expect adults to deal with problems, not vote them out).

Who makes the first move

1. There are processes and tools available from the conference offices to assess gifts, face problems, and plan for ministries that can result in congregational growth rather than in tension and bitterness.

2. Pastors need to share their concerns over this issue with their church councils. Bring it into the open.

3. Concerned laypeople must speak up for more mature ways of dealing with those who make themselves vulnerable by daring to be leaders.

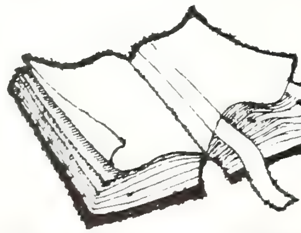
The problems won't all disappear but we can do better than we have been doing.

Women in the Old Testament

Images of women in the Old Testament are more diverse than memory often allows: Queen Jezebel, a force opposed to Yahweh; the delighted lover in Song of Songs; the proverbial wife who nags "like a dripping faucet"; Jael who kills an enemy soldier with tent peg and mallet; Hannah who sings of Yahweh, God of the oppressed; Jehosheba who saves a future king.

The fact that there is no single image of woman in Old Testament confessional history is due in part to continuing development in the life of the Hebrew people over a period of at least 1,000 years—years that brought radical political, economic, and sociological change. In the movement from slavery to freedom, from nomadic life to monarchy to exile, and from rural to urban life, the Hebrews listened for the special word of God for their time. Images of women and men in relation to God changed in the process. For example, while women apparently played broader religious leadership roles in Israel's early formative period (Miriam, Deborah), the rise of kingship and increased contact with foreign powers tended to foreclose such involvements. This change likely reflects an anti-Canaan reaction (Canaanite religion used female prostitutes in its cultic practices) as Israel asserted both the uniqueness of its God and its own national identity.

But in spite of this diversity of women's roles in the Old Testament, some general observations can be made. Perhaps most obvious is that an overwhelming majority of women serve as adjuncts to men. Although Jewish women had a measure of freedom, initiative, and power, legally and economically they had no independent rights. Women as well as children and livestock were considered property, though valuable property to be sure. Religious and social obligations were addressed primarily to males: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife." In this context three images of woman predominate—woman as wife, as mother, and as foreign woman.



Open your Bible

Images of foreign women are almost always negative and emphasize the dangerous sexual snares non-Jewish women set for Hebrew men. Images of mothers, on the other hand, are clearly positive. As a mother a woman achieved social (though not economic, legal, or religious) recognition equal to that of a man. At the same time, women who could not bear children were failures; they were not blessed by God. Images of wives are more ambiguous. As Proverbs 12:4 puts it, "A capable wife is her husband's crown; one who disgraces him is like rot in his bones." In general, women are seen almost exclusively in subordinate or supporting roles—as mothers, nurses, and saviors of men; as seducers and destroyers of men; as objects of miracles performed for or by men; and as witnesses to the wisdom of men or God's presence in men.

Such images of women have caused some contemporary men and women to reject the Old Testament as sexist and others to point to supporting roles as the only appropriate model for Christian women today. Two important guidelines for interpreting the Old Testament provide another point of view. One, crucial for Christians, is to qualify Old Testament views of women in light of New Testament understandings. (We'll look at New Testament images of women in subsequent articles.) A second guideline is to focus not only on isolated references to women but to look at the Old Testament texts as a whole asking what central themes have special relevance for our understanding of God and women. At least three themes have striking implications for women in the church in our time.

1. *God is active in history.* God continues to unfold in the historical experience of Israel in new ways. God broods over the waters of the deep like a mother hen, leads Israel like a warrior-king, chastises like a judge, groans like a woman in labor, and is mysteriously present in a suffering servant. The faithful understand God's will in new ways as their historical experience changes. Old Testament practices of polygamy and concubinage were consistent with Israel's understanding of responsible living in their time. But God's will could not be bottled from one historical period to another.

2. *God is a champion of the oppressed.* The Hebrews testified again and again that their God defends slaves and widows, breaks the bows of the mighty, raises up the poor from the dust. Convinced that God's revealed will was justice for the downtrodden, the laws of the community outlined in Exodus ensure that abuses the Hebrews experienced in Egypt would not be inflicted on strangers, widows, and orphans. As Old Testament scholar Paul Hanson notes, God's new dynamic of liberation was poured into the male-dominated vessels and metaphors of the time, but God's uncontainable and active spirit breaks through the crust of limiting structures and metaphors, including those that bind women and men in exploitive relationships.

3. *God chooses unlikely people* to perform his work—Israel (a small nation among nations), Joseph (the youngest son), Rahab (a woman and a prostitute), and finally Jesus, not a worldly king but a suffering servant. Many in the Old Testament did not expect women to be primary agents for God; for many people, women remain among the unlikely people today.

Careful examination of specific Scriptures with others in the Christian community checks the generalizing tendency of this thematic approach, while the dynamic seed of God's ongoing revelation keeps us open to new words of justice and liberation for our time. As Israel's God spoke through Isaiah: "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" (Isaiah 43:18 f.). *First in a series of three. Gayle Gerber Koontz, graduate student, 27 Fairlawn Street, Everett, Massachusetts*

Gayle Gerber Koontz

Meditation

No small gift

Carl Sandburg, outstanding US poet, troubadour, biographer, historian, and storyteller, who seemed capable of writing about every human experience or happening, wrote only one novel before he died in 1967. It is called *Remembrance Rock.* But that epic of US history contains a passage about babies which is classical. Here is what it says:

". . . a baby is God's opinion that life should go on. A book that does nothing to you is dead. A baby, whether it does anything to you, represents life. If a bad fire should break out in this house and I had my choice of saving the library or the babies, I would save what is alive. Never will a time come when the most marvelous recent invention is as marvelous as a newborn baby. The finest of our precision watches, the most supercolossal of our supercargo planes, don't compare with a newborn baby in the number and ingenuity of coils and springs, in the flow and change of chemical solutions, in timing devices and interrelated parts that are irreplaceable. This baby here is very modern. Strictly. Yet it is also the oldest of the ancients. This Joe Stilwell here doesn't know he is a hoary and venerable antique—but he is. Before man learned how to make an alphabet, how to make a wheel, how to make a fire, he knew how to make a baby—with the great help of woman and his God and Maker" (pages 7-8).

Verney Unruh

Lord, deliver me from mimosas

A friend is fighting mimosas. For years she has been waging her personal war on mimosa trees. Finally I asked her why she had to uproot every tiny seedling she saw.

"Because they grow so fast," was her immediate answer. "If I don't pull them up when they are small, they will get too big to pull up."

Why she doesn't want mimosa trees to grow, I never learned; but I did learn a lesson from her.

While there are seedlings of evil—jealousy, envy, and depression—that need to be uprooted before they become too big to manage, most of us spend a fair amount of time uprooting unnecessary seedlings.

Perhaps the most common seedlings are the "what ifs." What if Billy gets sick? What if Allan loses his job? What if the house burns down? And on they go.

Lowell said, "The misfortunes hardest to bear are those which never happen." Very few "what ifs" grow to tree size.

I looked in my dictionary for a definition of "what if." I found it under worry. This is it: "To harass with or as if with continual snapping or biting; also, to shake and mangle with the teeth. To torment, fret, trouble, plague." To shake and mangle, to torment—that truly is what happens to a worrying person.

Most of us know what worry will do to us, yet we continue to reach for those seedlings. Someone has said, "Why worry when you can pray?" But most of us turn that around and it becomes, "Why pray when we can worry?"

Some "what ifs" need to grow and become beautiful. The fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and faith—if these seedlings were allowed to grow into healthy trees, there would be less mimosas to worry about.

Let's ask God to show us what seedlings need to be uprooted in our lives. Then we can pray: Lord, deliver me from worrying about mimosa trees or anything else. Give me the grace to accept those things that need to grow and bear fruit. Amen.

Anna Purviance

Solid as a rock

"Solid as a rock" was what the local authorities reported about the Toccoa Dam in Georgia two hours before it collapsed and took thirty-seven lives. It was a man-made dam. When will we learn that nothing made by man is "solid as a rock"? "On Christ, the Solid Rock, I stand. All other ground is sinking sand."

Ward W. Shelly

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CONTRIBUTORS

William G. Johnson teaches in the Department of New Testament, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49104.

Joyce Shutt, Route 1, Orrtanna, Pennsylvania 17353, is a free-lance writer.

Stan Bohn, 217 Grove Street, Bluffton, Ohio 45817, is the Central District conference minister.

Meditation writers are Verney Unruh, General Conference's secretary for Asia under the Commission on Overseas Mission, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Anna Purviance, Corryton, Tennessee 37721; and Ward W. Shelly, 109 East Adams Street, Washington, Illinois 61571.

CREDITS

Cover, John Hiebert; 66, RNS; 68, J. C. Lejeune, 2657 North Burling, Chicago, Illinois 60614; 69, Linda Plett, Chicago; 71, 72, Vic Reimer; 77, Waltner, Freeman, South Dakota 57029. "Jesus—a revolutionary?" is reprinted by permission of the author and Liberty magazine, 6840 Eastern Avenue Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20012.

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Christian familial relationships—3

The spiritual family

A little book (twenty-nine pages), first published in 1973, has not received the attention which it should have among Mennonites.

Paul M. Lederach in *The Spiritual Family and the Biological Family* writes, "I know what it is to share Bible stories with little children . . . how hard it is to get a diverse family (four children ranging from seventh grader to college sophomore) to enter meaningfully into family worship, and to go to church willingly . . . the anguish when children appear to reject the values of their parents and of their church . . . to pray fervently for children. I know, too, the joy of seeing children move toward the life of Christian discipleship" (page 5).

Lederach says that, in his experience, the church has not been "very helpful when it comes to family living" and that it is "almost naive in its unwillingness to face up to the problems and conflicts of family living" (page 6). Honesty seldom breaks out in church discussions about familial life.

His booklet is an attempt to honestly look at what the Bible says about familial relationships.

The author distinguishes between the biological family—God's creative activity; and the spiritual family—God's redemptive activity. Christians need to look seriously at both.

In the biblical account of the beginning, human beings are created in God's image—the crowning act of creation. They are created sexual and needing each other for fulfillment, familial or relational. Sexuality is regarded as a gift of God and is dealt with "specifically, frankly, and openly" (page 10). The biological family is in God's will.

The most significant part of *The Spiritual Family and the Biological Family* is Lederach's statement about the continuity and discontinuity between familial living in Judaism and Christianity. It is from Christianity that we must take our model. He suggests three New Testament premises: 1. The church of Jesus Christ is not an ethnic group. 2. Entrance into the church is on the basis of repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. 3. Believers, often referred to as the family of God, are the new reality. "In terms of being born again, one's relationship to the state (or nation) and to one's family are radically altered. . . . Jesus taught that to be born from above not only means a new family but also a new kingdom" (John 3:3, 5), (page 14). The spiritual family is also in God's will.

Lederach writes that, if we take seriously the biblical teaching about believers becoming a spiritual family, then this will affect our biological familial relationships. He names twelve specific ways: 1. In the spiritual family those who are married and have a family do not have an edge over those who are unmarried. 2. The spiritual family encourages securing a wife in purity and in honor. 3. The spiritual family is also interested in the quality of relationships in biological families. 4. The spiritual family observes the role of males and females, both in the church and in the biological family. 5. The spiritual family is concerned that persons learn how to be parents, how to train children in the fear and nurture of the Lord. 6. The spiritual family underscores the biblical emphasis on the permanency of marriage. 7. The spiritual family encourages sexual expression by married couples. 8. The spiritual family maintains absolute fidelity within the marriage bond. 9. The spiritual family does not make room for deviant behavior among its members. 10. The spiritual family is not surprised when the biological family is fragmented. 11. The spiritual family encourages honesty in facing problems of family living and in giving help to one another. 12. The spiritual family takes its responsibility to teach the children of believers in its midst.

Translate "spiritual family" into the congregation that you are a part of. How far have you come in making your life together into a familial life?

The more that our congregations will become like the biblical spiritual family, the more we will see biological families and other familial groups able to cope with today's world.

In 1978 we might not agree with all of Lederach's conclusions, but we would do well to seriously examine and discuss them. BW *Third in a series of four.*

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93: 6 FEBRUARY 7, 1978

In this issue: Is it really love?
Father died at home
Women in the Gospels
Marriage Encounter

Is it really love?

An article for searching young people and for adults concerned to give support and guidance.

"Wow, am I in love! But he doesn't even know I exist."

"I love her; I hate her. She loves me; she loves me not. And I'm talking about the same person. I really don't know how we feel about each other."

"When we're parked, I'm positive that I love him. But I am never as sure as I am when we're necking."

"I'm in love with a wonderful girl. We're going steady. But last year I was going with a different girl and I was sure that I loved her, too. How do you know when it's really love?"

How do you know when what you feel is really love? The question is a difficult one to answer, even for persons who have been married for many years. Saying what love *is not* is far easier than saying what love *is.*

Love is not "just for fun." Love is not an escape from a lonely or boring situation. Love is not an arrangement made for convenience. Love is not a one-way feeling.

Love is many, many things though, and all of them are personal. Love is delicate, elusive, and spontaneous. Love thrives on honesty, sincerity, naturalness, mutual responsibility, and concern.

Let's look at the way Samson and Jacob felt about love. Samson was moved largely by physical desire when, seeing a woman he wanted, he simply said, "Get her for me." The end result of such a relationship was misery and death (Judges 14:1-3 and 16).

Jacob was moved by such a genuine love that he "served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her" (Genesis 29:20).

A good marriage is based on enduring love shared by two persons, a love that grows out of their own choice and desire. But whether or not marriage is the end result, to love and to be loved is an experience that can be treasured all your life. Genuine love has the power to shape and to bless and to change the whole course of your life.

Love's checklist

When you think the feeling you have toward another person is really love, take a moment to ask yourself some questions. What you learn about yourself and about your loved one may be enlightening. Here's a checklist to help you determine how sincere you are.

—Do you feel the awakening of sexual attraction?

—Are you really interested in all that he or she says and does?

—Do you share common tastes, ideals, and standards without serious clashes?

—Do you share a genuine comradeship and a willingness for both of you to give and take?

—Are you eager to consider his or her opinion before you act?

—Do you feel proud of your special friend when you're out in a crowd?

—Do you find a wealth of things to say and do when you are together?

—Do you bring out the best in each other?

—Have you told each other how you feel?

—Have you known each other for at least a year?

—When you are separated, do you maintain your love and devotion to each other?

—Are you willing to compromise?

—Do you each take pride in having the other meet with your family?

—Do you both show genuine consideration and concern when the other is sick or troubled?

—Do other persons think that you are experiencing real love—your parents, for instance?

—Do you enjoy being at each other's homes and being with each other's friends?

—Have you discussed and agreed upon mutually acceptable standards in regard to sex?

—Do you go to church together? Are you sympathetic to each other's ideals?

—Do you discuss your goals in life with each other?

If your answer has been yes to most of these questions, chances are you share a love that involves genuine caring and offers both of you room for growth.

Courtship

When a boy and girl find out that they share love, they may or may not want to consider marriage. When you're high school age, marriage may well be the farthest thing from your mind.

Courtship, though, is a valuable prelude to marriage. Courtship is a period when attraction blossoms into more mature love. Courtship is an important time for both of you. It's a time to discover what each of you has to give the other, a time to determine whether you have enough in common to be happy living together.

Linda and John cruised along in love. Their plans included marriage. Then Linda's father died suddenly. She went through a period of shock and sadness. She expected to draw from John's strength during this period. She wanted him to be with her, to cushion the blow, to talk to her, and to hold her hand. John, though, didn't know how to help her. He stayed away. He sat a few rows behind the family at the funeral. He couldn't handle the situation and withdrew from it. Linda and John found that their love wasn't as strong as they had hoped. Linda had serious doubts about John's dependability. John was frightened by the responsibility involved in loving another person.

Bill and Jeanne loved each other. They were together almost constantly until Jeanne's parents decided to take her to Europe for a summer's tour. At first, a letter from Bill waited at every hotel on her itinerary. But Bill discovered as time went on that he wasn't thinking of Jeanne as often, didn't miss her as much. Jeanne was bitterly disappointed when the letters became irregular, and began to flood the mail with postcards and messages. Bill decided Jeanne was not as sure of his love as she should be. He began to doubt his own feelings, too. What happened when Bill met Jeanne at the airport? He found her immature, jealous, demanding, possessive. She found him arrogant, selfish, uncaring. They both were confused. They thought absence made the heart grow fonder. In this case, it did not.

Keith and Mary were going steady. He liked her because she was "easy"; they ended every date parking and petting. He said he loved her and Mary was convinced. One night, they lost control in their lovemaking. Keith felt no real conscience. Mary thought the experience proved even more that Keith loved her. When she missed a menstrual period, she confidently went to Keith, seeking his avowal of love and offer of marriage. Keith felt no compunction to propose. Luckily, she was not pregnant. Mary learned that sex is not love.

Sherry accepted Mike's ring, telling herself she could probably do better—but a boy in hand is better than five in the bush. Her part of the relationship never was based on honesty and true affection. Mike, though, was sincere. When the breakup finally came, he suffered greatly. Sherry admitted a guilty conscience. Neither person was happy.

Courtship is a time for serious thinking. It is a time for finding out each other's expectations of the love relationship, as well as a time for enjoying each other's company.

Breaking up is hard to do

Boys and girls in their teens often go steady and fall in love with several different persons.

When a romance or friendship does break up, some of the consequences are painful. The person who calls off the relationship usually suffers from feelings of guilt. Nobody enjoys hurting another person. The rejected party feels pangs of jealousy, self-pity, heartbreak. Physical cuts heal themselves. Emotional cuts do not. You must learn to cope with them.

Be consoled when you are in the middle of a heartbreak by knowing that genuine love has the capability of enduring. Some problem or problems may have been present in your relationship. Search these out.

Be consoled, too, knowing that love in itself is a good thing. When you give love, you grow as a person. Your emotions are no longer self-centered. You find depth in your being that perhaps had not been touched before. Don't be bitter if love ends too soon.

The real thing

We've been conditioned to think that love hits persons right between the eyeballs. The smitten parties hear bells ringing and firecrackers exploding. Then their eyes light

You cannot fully give yourself to another person until you love yourself and respect yourself and believe that you do have something special to give.

Courtship is a time for serious thinking. It is a time for finding out each other's expectations of the love relationship, as well as a time for enjoying each other's company.

up like pinball machines and they hotrod off into the sunset together to live happily ever after. True? The following tale provides a more realistic outlook (adapted from *Love Is a Feeling to Be Learned* by Walter Trobisch).

Debbie knew exactly what she wanted in a husband. She was convinced that he would be tall, dark, handsome, outgoing, athletic, older than herself. He would be a college graduate, a man who could command respect in the business or academic world.

She pictured herself the socially prominent, attractive, intelligent wife of such a man: perfect homemaker, effective parent, successful career woman.

Debbie met Kenneth one day. She knew he was not the one; he didn't fit her picture at all. Kenneth was not particularly attractive. He was quiet, maybe a little dull. He wanted to build things, to be a construction engineer. He was something of a loner. Kenneth usually was down-to-earth, sober, unassuming. Occasionally he was impetuous and enthusiastic, but more frequently he was solemn as a judge. He didn't bring her roses. He usually didn't bring her anything at all. But one day he gave her a book on building high-rise apartments.

Debbie couldn't figure him out. So even though Kenneth definitely was not what she wanted in a husband, she didn't send him away.

Six months passed, and Debbie came to the realization that a young man who gives her a book just might be more serious than one who sends roses.

Debbie discovered one day that she could look at a skyscraper under construction and see it as a work of art. She wanted to share those feelings with only one person—Kenneth. She learned that sometimes one has to give up dreams when they stand in the way of happiness.

Where love starts

We all yearn for love. We put love in different categories, and we give love many names—companionship, availability, sharing, sex. Love of any kind has to start somewhere. Do you know where that somewhere is? Love starts with you.

You cannot fully give yourself to another person until you love yourself and respect yourself and believe that you do have something special to give. Invest your teen years in seeking love, but look for it and find it in your heart as you meet new friends and build new relationships. Feel good about yourself. Forgive yourself when you think you've failed in some way. Don't hold a grudge against yourself.

Suppose you've wanted to approach a certain person to get that person to notice you. Your opportunity comes at last, and you really flub it! You now are a complete idiot. You turn your head every time you see him or her coming your way. You make a point not to be around him or her. You remember what you said, and what he or she said, and how silly your reply was, goading yourself every time you think of the other person. You hold a grudge against yourself. You rob yourself of getting to know that person. You cheat both of you of what could be a special friendship. You deny yourself feelings of self-worth, self-respect, and other positive feelings.

Checking-in system

Be in control of you. Try the checking-in system. This technique can help everyone—adult or teenager—learn to put themselves in control. At any given moment you can check-in without anyone knowing what you are doing. Step out of your body and stand away from yourself. Observe. Look at yourself when you are having a great time. Listen to what you are saying, what you are doing, how you are doing it. Acknowledge how you act, without condemning yourself or commending yourself. See yourself and say, "This is me. I'm human. I can be hurt. I fail sometimes. But I have strong points, too. I'm me. God made me. There is no one else on earth quite like me. I'm unique. I'm special. I'm one-of-a-kind."

Check-in on your physical self. See what you are doing with the muscles of your face, your neck, your abdomen. Are you relaxed or tense? Are you smiling because someone else expects you to smile? Who is in control?

What are your emotions at this moment? Are you calm? Anxious? Guilty? Angry? What is your attitude? Are your thoughts negative or positive? Do you accept other persons as they are, or do you pass judgment? Remember, you choose how you think and feel. You are in control.

Listen to the way you talk. This is the way you let others know your thoughts and feelings. What tone do you use? What language does your body use?

When you are with someone who is important to you, step out of your body and check-in with yourself. Are you straining to find out what he or she expects of you so that you can comply? Are you trying to manipulate him or her into doing or saying something you want? Are you vaunting your intelligence or beauty to attract his or her admiration? Check-in!

This suggestion may seem trite, but another way of showing your love for yourself is to take care of your body, mind, and spirit. Eat right for your physical health. Feed yourself spiritually, too. Study the right kinds of things to improve your mind.

Now is the best time in your life to make changes you feel are necessary to your happiness. Changes may mean dieting, muscle-building, getting rid of pimples. Changes may mean cleaning up an unclean spirit, breaking bad habits like swearing or smoking, avoiding traps such as drugs and alcohol.

Love starts with you. Love yourself first.

What is love, really?

Erich Fromm says in his book *The Art of Loving*, "If I truly love one person, I love all persons, I love the world, I love life. If I can say to somebody else, 'I love you,' I must be able to say, 'I love in you everybody, I love through you the world, I love in you also myself.'"

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Father died at home

Gwyn Whilsmith

My father died in the bed in which he had been born, among his familiar possessions and with his children beside him. Although there was loneliness and pain for him and us, in that final watch there was also peace and comfort.

Many people believe that when their loved ones are fatally ill they must be cared for in the sterile atmosphere of a hospital. Yet most of the dying would prefer to end their days in the solace of their own surroundings. We found there is a way this can happen.

Three months almost to the day before dad died, he and I stood in the specialist's office viewing the latest X rays. It was evident even to our laymen's eyes that the cancer we thought arrested was spreading.

"It's all right, you know," he comforted me later. "I've always said that after I reached eighty-five I would be content to die."

I was not content to let him go though. He and mother had gone to Saskatchewan as a young couple to farm. They had reared and educated their four children through the desperate days of the Depression. At the end of the Dirty Thirties, when some might have given up, he started a new life in Ontario, investing the money from selling the farm in a bankrupt business. With long days of hard work, plain common sense, and the help of two sons, he built it into a flourishing establishment few could have dreamed possible. At eighty-five he was vigorous and alert. It was hard for us to accept that his life was coming to an end.

After the diagnosis, he went to the hospital for special treatments. I saw his eyes begin to lose their sparkle. He was in an area where all were elderly and chronically ill. The room was small. The old man next to him, tied to his bed, his mind almost gone, constantly rattled the bedrails to attract the attention of the overworked nurses. In despair I watched my father quietly retreat into a shell.

There had been talk of a series of cobalt treatments. But after further examination the specialist shook his head. They would serve no purpose, he said, and only add to dad's discomfort.

I was surprised to find that I met this news with profound relief. It was then I was able to release him by praying, "Take him if you must, dear God; but please, no more hospitals." So dad came home to stay.

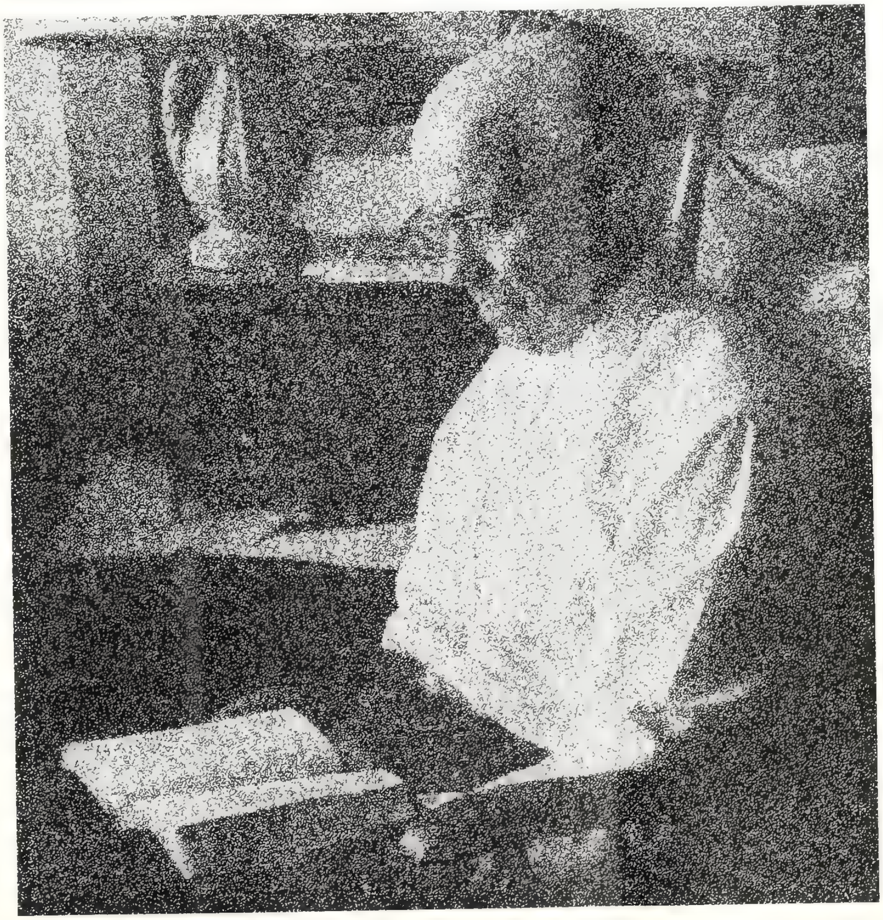
At first he functioned normally and happily. Except for some pain, a growing tiredness, and slow loss of weight, he carried on his usual routine—living alone, cooking his meals, visiting friends. Since I lived on the same block, and my brother Carfrey in the same town, we checked on him a couple of times each day.

On Father's Day that year we had a grand celebration. His four children, his grandchildren, and great-grandchildren gathered to shower him with love and esteem. He beamed with pride as he surveyed us all when he responded to the toast in his honor by a grandson. It was such a perfect day in every way, with such overflowing happiness and thanksgiving, that it was indeed a special gift from God.

As it turned out, it was dad's going-away party. Almost immediately he began to slip. Within two weeks we could scarcely believe the change. My sister Lola, a widow living 130 miles away, moved into his apartment. With my help and Carfrey's she took care of him for two or three weeks. My other brother, Arthur, who lives in another town, came as often as he could.

Each day found dad weaker and stiffer.

Most of the dying would prefer to end their days in the solace of their own surroundings. We found a way for this to happen.



Our own mother died in a hospital. But we found the experience of sitting with her in a hospital room far more draining both physically and emotionally than looking after dad at home.

Only with the greatest difficulty could we move him from bed to his favorite chair.

"What are you going to do with me?" he asked me one morning. "Perhaps you could find a nursing home."

"And what's wrong with this home?" I teased him. "Not satisfied with the help?"

"But it's too much for you."

I tried to ease his concern. "When it's too much for us, dad, we'll let you know." Inwardly I was beginning to fear we might not be able to manage much longer.

At first Lola stayed every night while Carfrey and I helped in the daytime. Later, I began to keep the watch every second night while she went to my home to sleep. Rest was almost impossible for both dad and whoever stayed nights.

Our family doctor, a friend for years, was away, but the young physician we called in his place was kind and sympathetic. Writing up prescriptions for pain and sleeping, he urged us, "Don't be afraid to use them. There's no need for your father to be more uncomfortable than necessary."

He did not mention hospital, but I was hesitant when I told him we were hoping to keep dad at home. To my relief he replied, "Good! Keep him here as long as you can, right to the end if possible. It will be far better for him and for you, too."

He explained that many old people become confused when placed in the confines of a hospital room and often all a doctor can do is to sedate them from bothering the overworked nurses too much.

So it was he who signed the necessary forms that entitled us to the government-paid services of the Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) and Home Care. The latter sent a pleasant, sympathetic young woman who stayed ten nights with dad while we got our needed sleep. She kept a close check on him, gave him his medication, changed bedding, and massaged and moved him to make him comfortable. She saved the day for us.

Enough cannot be said in praise of the VON nurses. There were four, each one kind and considerate, who took turns coming once a day for three weeks to bathe dad and advise us in so many ways on how we could better care for him ourselves.

During those last three weeks, Lola took over from the night help around 7:30 a.m., Carfrey relieved her after lunch, and I went on duty after dinner and stayed until midnight, when the nurse came. For the last few nights, when it seemed dad might slip away at any time, we hired a registered nurse, a wonderful woman experienced with the dying who we knew would care for our father with gentle hands.

The night before he passed away he slipped into a deep sleep from which he never awakened. The body did not give up easily. It fought to contain the spirit, the breathing heavy and labored as the struggle went on.

My brother and I were alone with him at mid-afternoon, wiping perspiration from his dear face now filled with dark hollows, dribbling water into his mouth, praying his ordeal would soon be over. Suddenly his breathing and his color changed. Carfrey took his pulse. "It's going."

While I cradled his head in my hands and my brother held his body, the tired old heart finally ground to a stop and the precious face relaxed. "Thank you, God," we breathed, but our meeting eyes burned and brimmed over.

The family doctor, a neighbor for thirty years, arrived. His face mirrored sympathy and grief. "How fortunate we are," I thought, "that even the person who must perform this final check is someone who loved him."

The struggle was over. No more the painful turning in bed or the effort to swallow the pills or a few spoonfuls of food, or the agony of aching muscles and bones. He had been so patient through it all, never complaining, always trying to make it easier for us.

In the final weeks his voice almost left him. Yet he would express his love in so many ways. Once when I bent to kiss him good night, his eyes filled with tears. "Ever since you were a little girl. . . ," his whisper trailed off but I knew he was saying he loved me.

Another time he beckoned weakly for my brother Carfrey to come closer, then lifted tired arms to enfold him in a weak hug. To my other brother and sister, too, he expressed how much he cared about them.

So he went with no regrets. For him it was a welcome release to a new life he was certain would be his. For us it had been a joyful task to ease his passing from this world to the next.

I write this to let others know it is often possible to have your loved ones die at home in their own beloved surroundings. I know it is not always possible. Certain illnesses require more care than others. Our own mother died in a hospital. But one experienced nurse told me recently that a high percentage of aged persons could die at home if their families knew how to cope, and knew what help is available through Home Care, the VON, and other organizations. We found the experience of sitting for hours with mother in a cramped hospital room far more draining both physically and emotionally than looking after dad at home, once we got the extra help.

The VON nurse said good-bye that last morning with tears in her eyes. "I want you to know that if we have to go through something like this with one of my folks I hope we can do the same as you."

As we watched the hearse pull away, Carfrey summed it up for all of us, "As far as I'm concerned, this has been the greatest privilege of my life, helping to care for our wonderful father during his final days on this earth." The burden had been light, the reward tremendous.

Women in the Gospels

Jesus' relationships to women struck early Christians as unusual. Just how unusual is clear only in contrast to the prevailing images of women held by others in his time.

As a rabbi, one learned in the law who taught correct living, Jesus might have been expected to respect women as wives and mothers but to consider them inferior in mind, function, and status. Although rabbis were usually monogamous and took seriously the welfare of women in their families, negative attitudes toward women greatly outweighed the positive. A threefold daily prayer illustrates this accent on the inferiority of women: "Praised be God that he has not created me a Gentile! Praised be God that he has not created me a woman! Praised be God that he has not created me an ignoramous!" Other traditional sayings reveal social values—"At the birth of a boy all are joyful . . . at the birth of a girl all are sorrowful" and a woman is "a pitcher full of filth with its mouth full of blood, yet all run after her."

Rabbis, like other Jewish men, linked women with children and slaves—all were less than full Jewish citizens for they were all subordinate to a master. Women had virtually no legal independence; generally they were not allowed to bear witness since it was believed that they were lighthearted, brash, and had a tendency to lie. Most women had little or no formal education since formal study focused on the Torah or Law, study which was not encouraged and in some cases discouraged for women. One rabbi, whose extreme opinion carried significant weight in the first century A.D., noted that "if any man teach his daughter Torah it is as though he taught her lechery."

Although women in the country moved about more freely than in the city, urban and wealthy families kept their women more secluded. A woman transgressed Jewish custom if, as one tradition states, "she goes out with her hair unbound, or spins in the street, or speaks with any man." Men, especially rabbis, were expected to see, listen to, and speak with women as little as possible. Even in private it was thought better not to speak too much to a wife or female relative; to converse with a woman in the street was especially unbecoming for a scholar. Although they helped prepare food, women were absent from meals when there were guests; they were not permitted even to serve guests.

Most women married, often as early as age twelve or thirteen, but double standards in divorce practices could make life difficult. Although there were some, primarily financial, limits on a man's right to divorce, he could divorce his wife for almost any reason. A bodily defect in a woman he married that must have been present before betrothal, such as a mole, offensive breath, or a harsh voice, was considered adequate reason for divorce. While a man in Jesus' time could give a writ of divorce to his wife at will as long as it was before two witnesses, a woman could claim the right to divorce only before a (usually unsympathetic male) Jewish court for acceptable reasons such as childlessness and certain diseases.

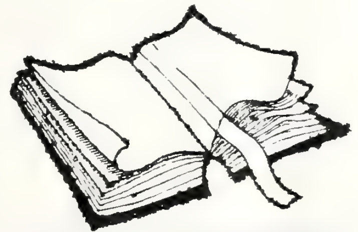
Religiously, women were continually reminded of their inferior status. They were not required to fulfill all the laws and study of the Torah, like men. In the temple, the meeting place for prayer and study of the Law, the women's court was five steps above the heathens' court but fifteen steps below the Jewish men's.

Ritual purity as a religious ideal especially affected women. Three main causes of pollution were leprosy, dead bodies of certain animals, and issues from sexual organs. Because of menstruation and birth restrictions, women were unclean for longer periods more often than men. Entrance to *any* temple court was denied women if they were menstruating, within seven days of the end of menstruation, forty days of the birth of a boy, or eighty days of the birth of a girl. Whoever and whatever she touched during such times was also unclean for a day. Increasing limitations in rabbinic days forbade even a priest whose wife, mother, or daughter was menstruating to recite the priestly benediction in the synagogue.

In this context, Jesus' actions involving women are striking. A woman entered a meal room, unbound her hair, washed his feet, and he accepted her. He took marriage seriously in the face of arbitrary divorce. He encouraged Mary's desire to learn and commended her for choosing "the good portion." Disregarding convention, he not only spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well but engaged her in religious discussion. Unconcerned about his own rabbinical cleanliness, he touched the dead body of Jairus' daughter and did not flinch from the woman with the issue of blood. And when a woman impressed with Jesus' teaching paid a typical compliment, "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that you have sucked," Jesus rejected the primacy of this body image insisting that "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it."

Women were among Jesus' listeners and he spoke to them. Parables include not only images of mustard seeds but of widows searching for lost coins as well as men sowing fields. And women, typically thought unreliable, were the ones to first bear witness to his resurrection.

Jesus' message to women seemed to be clear. While many earlier Jewish teachers had concluded that the status of women's relationship to God was primarily through their fathers and husbands and that a woman's self-worth was based largely on her ability to bear children, Jesus called individual women beyond their bodies to faith in a new kingdom. The Gospel accounts testify that God worked not only through the expected vessels of the time, the male disciples, but also by challenging attitudes toward women, which many regarded as God-given. Jesus' attitude toward women is a sprouting of the Old Testament seed of liberation, that first Hebrew faith in God who defends the downtrodden. *Gayle Gerber Koontz, graduate student, 27 Fairlawn Street, Everett, Massachusetts*



Open your Bible

Gayle Gerber Koontz

Project Teach 1978

Towards creative Sunday school teaching

Wedding experience and theory to new and creative patterns in teaching Christian curriculum is what Project Teach is all about.

This year the in-service training program for church school teachers of the General Conference will take place in Rosthern, Saskatchewan, Monday through Friday, March 27-31.

It is a live-in experience. About eighty teachers from across North America are expected to come to Rosthern to learn about The Foundation Series and the Uniform Series, curricula which are commonly used in Mennonite Sunday schools throughout Canada and the United States.

Last year 110 teachers traveled to North Newton, Kansas, for a similar week-long workshop. Herta Funk, staff person with the Commission on Education and one of the resource persons for Project Teach, noted that Canadian Mennonites were well represented at the North Newton conference. "I hope," she commented, "that American Mennonites are as adventurous as their Canadian friends and travel north to Rosthern."

Eighty dollars is the tab for tuition, board, and room for the week. Many congregations pay expenses, including travel, so teachers can attend. Classes will be held at Rosthern Mennonite Church, and lodging will be at Rosthern Junior College.

During the five days of learning all participants meet jointly for Bible study, a course in Anabaptist history, and a course on the development of the person. In other sessions teachers are grouped according to the age of the students they are interested in teaching. This includes nine divisions from nursery level to adult. There is also a section for Sunday school superintendents and Christian education committee members. All participants will be involved in worship experiences, planned each day by a different group.

Among the purposes for Project Teach are skill development in teaching, deepening individual commitment to Christ, understanding more of Anabaptist theology, and acquiring basic understanding of children and adults.

Waldemar Janzen and David Schroeder from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba, will lead the Bible studies. Walter Klaassen from Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario, will teach Anabaptist history and thought.

Other resource persons include specialists in music, drama, art, worship, and audiovisuals. In addition to these, three staff persons from the Commission on Education will be present, writers and consultants who contributed to The Foundation Series, and teachers who live in Saskatchewan.

Growth through service: Work Camps 1978

Every person has a need for a new experience. Summer vacation is a good time for adventure and a change of scene. This summer 250 young adults are expected to combine these needs with an opportunity for growth through service in the name of Christ.

From the Pacific Ocean to the Great Lakes, and from the Canadian Shield to Oklahoma Indian country, the General Conference is sponsoring seventeen work camps for persons sixteen to eighteen years of age. The camps are two to six weeks long.

Each is different. In Winnipeg, Manitoba, ten persons will have an opportunity to learn radio and TV production. In Seattle, Washington, volunteers will experience work in three different environments: inner city, ocean, and mountain forest. Seventy-five persons are needed to assist in the Mennonite World Conference, Wichita, Kansas. Twenty-five of these will be international teens. In other camps there are opportunities for cross-cultural ministries, work with retarded children, vacation Bible school teaching, neighborhood improvement projects, drama for the elderly and handicapped, recreational staff, and a variety of others.

Christian service is only one of the goals of work camps. The other focus is on group living. This means that participants come expecting to work as a group. Groups will take time to participate in Bible study and discussion of religious questions, issues, or experiences appropriate to the situation. Everyone participates in household tasks.

Work camps are for persons willing to follow Jesus Christ, who want to learn, and who will accept discipline. A desire to work closely with persons from different backgrounds is an asset, as is a willingness to share through Bible study and discussion.

Campers pay their own transportation, and also a boarding and lodging fee which is about $2.25 per day. The registration fee for each camp is $4.00. Direct inquiries to Lois Bergen, Work Camp Coordinator, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114, or telephone (316) 283-5100.

Expense figures released for CHM, COE, and COM

Newton, Kansas—Data released by Ted Stuckey, treasurer of the General Conference Mennonite Church, show that the three commissions—Commission on Home Ministries, Commission on Education, and Commission on Overseas Mission—which are administered from Newton underspent their 1977 budgets, but overspent actual receipts.

Reserve funds were used to cover the difference between receipts and expenditures. The commissions are expected to keep 20 percent of their annual budgets as a cash reserve, primarily to eliminate or at least minimize borrowing during the summer months when receipts are usually low. By the end of 1977 these reserves stood at approximately 14 percent, as compared to nearly 24 percent a year earlier.

During 1977 the Commission on Home Ministries spent 96.4 percent ($562,129) of its $583,168 budget; the Commission on Education spent 98.6 percent ($230,735) of its $234,048 budget; and the Commission on Overseas Mission spent 95.9 percent ($2,074,686) of its $2,164,626 budget.

In total, the three commissions spent 96.2 percent ($2,867,548) of the $2,980,842 budget. Actual receipts for this work were $2,587,340, or approximately $280,000 below expenditures. Hence, more than one-quarter million dollars came from cash reserves.

In addition to the receipt figure above, a further $252,527 was donated for Mennonite Biblical Seminary, as compared to a budget of $280,968. Hence, total giving was $2,839,867 in 1977.

Action on energy

Newton, Kansas—Action to encourage better stewardship of energy resources has been initiated by an energy stewardship committee of the General Conference.

At the end of December a letter to all congregations requested each church to appoint a contact person or committee to take local leadership on energy issues. One month later forty churches had already made their appointments.

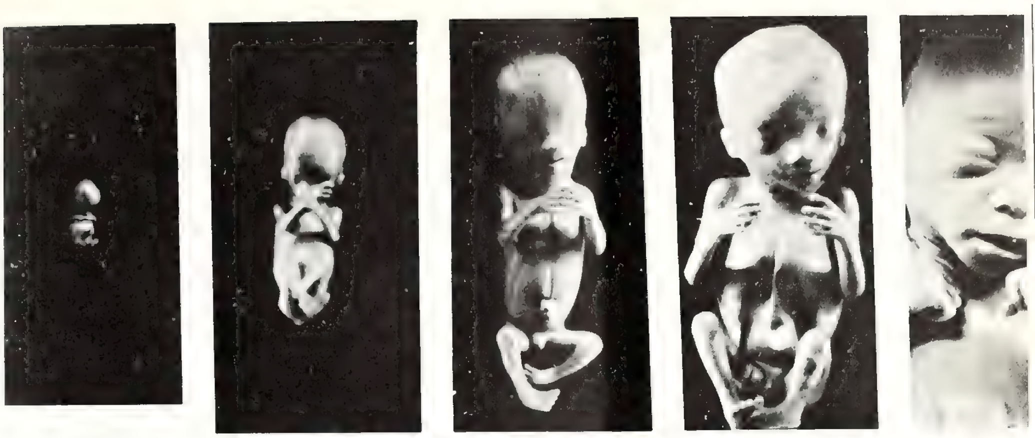
The main thrust at this time is to make a bibliography about energy resources available to each congregation. This bibliography will include titles and sources of books, pamphlets, and audiovisuals. Dwight Platt, a committee member, is also writing a guide whereby energy use in homes and church buildings can be monitored with a view toward reducing consumption. He has been able to effect a 30 percent reduction in energy use in his own home.

Another action will see the formation of regional energy committees which will more closely identify issues, resources, and arrange for seminars. These will be centered in Winnipeg, Manitoba; Newton, Kansas; and Indiana. The Newton group will also act as overall coordinator for North America.

A third response to examining life-styles and consumption patterns as they relate to energy use is a project to write about thirty short news items which deal with particular issues, such as a theology of energy stewardship, practical tips on energy saving, life-style and the consumer economy, and energy-saving measures in use by Mennonites.

A Schowalter Foundation grant of $1,900 has been given to the committee to help finance its organizational and educational efforts. There is an inter-Mennonite dimension to the work. Representatives from the Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Brethren Church have attended meetings of the committee. Members from the General Conference are Dwight Platt, Emerson Wiens, Tom Lehman, and Harold Regier.

This initiative by the church on issues related to energy was mandated by delegates attending the forty-first triennial sessions of the General Conference which met July 28-August 3, 1977, at Bluffton, Ohio. The resolution called for each General Conference congregation, as well as individuals and families, to responsible stewardship of energy resources, and to witness to government and industry about the same concern. To promote this activity, the resolution instructed the Commission on Home Ministries to provide leadership and resources.



Abortion

These are views of the human fetus at various stages of development. On January 22, the fifth anniversary of the US Supreme Court decision liberalizing abortion laws, many religious groups representing both sides of this controversial issue observed the anniversary with ceremonies and demonstrations. Thousands of antiabortionists converged on Washington, D.C., January 22-23 to proclaim their sentiments with posters in support of the "March for Life." The demonstrators were told by Nellie Gray, president of March for Life, that her group met with White House aides January 23 but got no promises of help.

Faculty resignations shock Columbia Bible Institute

Clearbrook, British Columbia—Two resignations precipitated by differences of opinion regarding administrative procedures have shocked and saddened the constituency of Columbia Bible Institute.

President Samuel Mikolaski resigned effective January 12 after a brief tenure of four months. He became president in September 1977. His resignation was preceded somewhat earlier by that of dean of students Sig Polle.

A statement issued on behalf of the school board by chairperson Edward Dyck said that "Mikolaski's resignation was precipitated by differences of opinion regarding administrative procedures. His preaching and teaching ministry was well received in both school and constituency. He had a strong vision for CBI, and his brief tenure was marked by positive trends and developments in school life."

Sig Polle had been at the school for six years, and was much appreciated both for his work as an instructor and as basketball coach, said the board statement. The statement wished him well in his future ministry.

Walter Unger, academic dean, is acting as interim administrator of the school. Columbia Bible Institute is operated jointly by the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia (General Conference), and the Mennonite Brethren Conference of British Columbia. It has sixteen faculty serving 240 students in a three-year Bible school curriculum.

The release by the school board continued with the observation that Unger, who is in his eighth year with the school, "knows the school well and carries a deep concern that CBI continue to provide students with Christian education. He is committed to training young people who will understand and love the church and be eager to serve both church and society."

Canadian Conference near 94 percent of budget

Winnipeg—Frank Dyck, treasurer for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, reports that 93.7 percent of its $851,900 budget for 1977 was received from congregations. Reserve funds of $27,183 (3.2 percent of budget) and other income (2.43 percent) enabled the conference to meet its obligations.

The budget of $851,900 was underspent by $4,633, or 0.5 percent. The Congregational Resources Board was the only board to overspend its budget, which it did by $13,876. The CMBC board underspent by $865 and the Native Ministries board by $17,643.

A marked trend of recent years is that the various boards of the Canadian Conference have been spending a higher percentage of their budgets.

AUCECB reports 1977 rich in happy events,

but some Christians question new Soviet constitution

A baptism in the Vorskla River of new members in the Church of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in the city of Poltava, Ukraine, occurred during the summer of 1977. The Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of USSR reports that more than 6,000 persons were won for Christ during 1977. A large number of young people were among those baptized.

Moscow, USSR—A year-end report from The Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of USSR (AUCECB) states that 1977 was "rich in happy and exciting events in the life of our brotherhood."

More than 120 new pastors of local churches were elected and ordained in 1977. Many churches of Khazakhstan, the Ukraine, and Byelorussia did reconstruction of old buildings and built new prayer houses.

Furthermore, the report states that in certain areas of the Russian Federated Republic, the Ukraine, and Byelorussia, new congregations of Mennnonites, Pentecostals, and Evangelical Christians-Baptists were begun.

A June 1977 conference on peace and disarmament underscored the serious threat to the world situation in the potential production of the neutron bomb by the United States. A more recent statement from the AUCECB calls upon leaders and believers all over the world not to be indifferent, but to share their concern.

The year-end report also notes that on October 7, 1977, a new constitution was adopted by the Supreme Soviet which guarantees "the liberty of conscience of citizens." The report does not comment on this clause.

However, a September news release from the Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism at Keston College, England, states that some Soviet Christians strongly questioned this clause.

In a June letter to Premier Brezhnev three members of the Christian Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights in the USSR state that Article 52 of the new constitution, which reads: "Freedom of conscience, that is, the right to profess any religion and perform religious rites or not to profess religion and conduct atheist propaganda, shall be recognized for all citizens of the USSR," does not differ significantly from Article 124 of the old constitution. They are alike in denying believers freedom of religious preaching.

In their closely argued letter, the Christian committee pointed out that the ideological base of the new constitution is drawn from the Marxist-Leninist ideological base of the Communist party, despite the fact that membership in the Communist party is voluntary and that not all Soviet citizens share its ideological views. The constitution, which is supposed to regulate society as a whole, is being used to foist the ideological views of one section of the population, the Communist party, onto the entire population of the USSR.

For example, the program of the Communist party states unequivocally that communism and religion are incompatible, and calls on all its members to "wage a decisive struggle with religious survivals." However, this has now become a policy propagated not only by the party, but also by the state, which is supposed to represent the whole Soviet people, not just communists.

The writers of the letter pointed out that the constitution "has binding power over all citizens." They argue that all Soviet citizens, "including millions of believers," are legally obliged "to participate in building a communist society, a society of total godlessness, which is completely unacceptable for a religious conscience."

Crackdown on Christian human rights activities

Keston, England—The Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism at Keston College reports that the Soviet KGB has launched a fresh attack on members of the Helsinki monitoring groups in Ukraine and Armenia. The police action coincides ominously with the ending of the present session of the Belgrade conference reviewing the Helsinki Agreement.

Among those affected by the KGB hostilities is Peter Vins, son of Baptist pastor Georgi Vins, who is presently serving a sentence of five years in a labor camp and five-years exile for his religious activities. Peter Vins, an associate member of the Ukrainian monitoring group, was arrested December 8, 1977.

Vins was taken off a Kiev-Moscow train, charged with hooliganism, beaten up, and sentenced to fifteen-days detention. Bibles found in his possession were confiscated. He has since been sentenced to a further fifteen-days detention, allegedly for refusing to work, although prisoners held in prisons (as opposed to those sentenced to labor camps) do not work. Friends report that his injuries have made him unfit to work, and it appears that on this pretext he could be held for an indefinite period.

Peter Vins, born May, 1956, is probably one of the youngest members of the monitoring groups. He has been particularly concerned with the religious situation. He has been informed that a criminal case is being prepared against him.

On December 12, 1977, police raided the Vins's home in Kiev and more Bibles and foreign-manufactured tape recorders were confiscated. The house search coincided with searches at the homes of five other members of the Ukrainian monitoring group. Two of the five, Oles Berdnyk and Lev Lukyanenko, have also been arrested. Lukyanenko, a fifty-year-old lawyer, has already served fifteen years in a labor camp where he also became a Christian. His previous arrest was in 1961. It is also reported that two members of the Armenian Helsinki monitoring group, E. Arutyunyan and Robert Nazaryan, have been arrested.

Meanwhile, in Moscow, the leader of the Christian Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights, Father Gleb Yakunin, has been told by the KGB that he too will face criminal charges unless he ceases his human rights activities.

Brazil missionaries experience two kinds of missions

Editor's note: Erwin and Angela Rempel, General Conference missionaries working in Gama, Brazil, describe, in the report which follows, two mission scenarios, one of which they say has "tremendous romantic appeal to the sending churches in North America" and another which has "much more potential for church growth."

Scenario 1: Picture a small town on the edge of a great river. There are two hundred kilometers of dirt road to the nearest paved highway. Up on a hill at the outskirts of the town is the mission station. The mission homes are spacious, combining the best of local building materials and styles with American features. The station has its own generator to provide electricity at night, and on Monday afternoons for the women to wash their clothes with imported wringer machines. A well and plumbing provide an adequate supply of water. The missionary children study correspondence courses with their mothers as teachers. A medical clinic on the station is the only facility for medical treatment in the area. Nearby is the mission-operated school offering the only decent educational facilities for the local children.

Houses are mostly made of mud and tile, with the poorest ones constructed of straw and thatched palm branches. Mud floors are common, and most everyone sleeps in hammocks. Water is either brought up by bucket from hand-dug wells or carried from the river where most everyone washes dishes, clothes, and bodies. Electricity is spasmodically supplied according to the whims of the politicians. The climate is hot and humid. Life is slow. Some families go out to nearby plots of ground where they work hard to produce a few things. The town is dying for lack of commerce, and because the young people are moving to the big cities to find jobs.

To minister to the spiritual needs of the area missionaries travel up and down the river by boat to other small towns. To reach a town inland the Missionary Aviation Fellowship airplane is used. Landing strips are rough dirt fields and the pilot often needs to buzz the strip several times to chase off cattle or sheep. In this area the potential for church growth is limited. There are four churches (Catholic, Nazarene, Assembly of God, and Mennonite—not to mention the strong Spiritist centers). The dwindling population of the town is at present 2,000. In the Mennonite church started twenty years ago attendance is slowly dropping as well.

Scenario 2: Four-lane highways connect several good-sized cities. Crowded buses carry up to 150 people to and from their jobs. Telephone service includes direct dialing; there is a constant supply of electricity; and hospitals, schools, sewer, and water are supplied by the government. There is a year-round abundant supply of fruits, vegetables, dry goods, furniture, appliances. Families work to improve their homes and yards as they move up the economic ladder. Missionaries live in rented houses that were designed and built by nationals. Missionary children attend local Brazilian schools. The missionary goes by car to several other areas for preaching and Bible study. People come to hear the Word of God preached and to experience the community of the Spirit. Young people participate in church activities and witness to their friends. Decisions for Christ are made and baptisms follow. People are in transition and generally more open to the message of forgiveness and hope in Jesus.

Scenario 1 represents an area where we recently visited. Scenario 2 is where we live. We were struck with the great amount of financial resources poured into a town of 2,000 people over the last twenty years. In Gama we probably have at least 2,000 people living in just twelve small city blocks that make up our quadra, and there are 150,000 people living in our city alone. In our area 79,000 new homes will be built in the next two to three years with a new population growth of about 400,000.

Scenario 1 represents the approach of missions in the past and certainly it has continuing validity. However, there are so many more people in the mushrooming cities who don't know about Christ's redemption, particularly in comparison with the small remote towns. A good number of the people in the Gama congregation moved from the area we visited. It was a good experience to see where they had come from. By leaving their families who were strong in either Catholic religion or Spiritism and coming to a new city, they became open to accepting the gospel of Jesus Christ. In some cases the seed of the gospel was sown in their hearts before they left; however, several question whether they would be Christians today if they had remained there.

Scenario 1 has a tremendous romantic appeal to the sending churches in North America. Scenario 2 has less romantic appeal but much more potential for church growth.

Erwin Rempel (left background) participates in a service with a visiting youth group in Gama, Brazil.

Words & deeds

Green Lake, Wisconsin—Plans are taking shape for the national New Call to Peacemaking conference to be held here October 5-8. The conference will climax the two-year historic peace church program which seeks to reactivate a Christian peacemaking witness among Brethren, Friends, and Mennonites. It will be a working conference, consisting of approximately 100 representatives of each of the three peace churches, plus thirty delegates from other peace groups, Europe, Japan, and the Third World. The gathering will focus on the biblical basis of peacemaking, peacemaking as a life-style, and building institutions of peace. Speakers at the sessions will include Dale Brown, Duncan Wood, and Ron Sider. The conference will include small-group meetings.

Winnipeg, Manitoba—At a directors' meeting in December the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada (MHSC) appointed Lyle Friesen as full-time research assistant to Frank H. Epp, who is authoring the book *Mennonites in Canada, Volume 2.* Several chapters have been written, and the involvement of Friesen, a masters' degree graduate from the University of Waterloo, is expected to allow completion of the book by December 1979. Five provincial Mennonite historical societies were also represented at the meeting. Significant aspects of their activities are a possible expansion of the museum on the Rosthern Junior College campus by the Saskatchewan-Alberta society, and the construction by the Manitoba society of a private schoolhouse on the Mennonite Village Museum grounds at Steinbach. In Ontario a Mennonite Information Centre has been set up on the University of Waterloo campus. The executive members of MHSC are Ted Regehr, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; George Groening, Chilliwack, British Columbia; Sam Steiner, Waterloo, Ontario; Ted Friesen, Altona, Manitoba; and Art Driedger, Winnipeg. The 1978 budget for MHSC is $14,200.

The Food Bank program of MCC (Canada) received 53,000 bushels of grain with a cash value of $135,000 during its first year of operation. In addition to these gifts by farmers, the Canadian International Development Agency contributed $2.50 for every dollar's worth of grain donated by farmers. This cash financed the purchase of a further 111,000 bushels of wheat. The first shipment from the Food Bank left port in December. Eleven thousand bushels were sent to Calcutta. Although the Food Bank is an MCC venture, and has received support mainly from Mennonite farmers, it is hoped that it will become a program with a wider base. Representatives from the United Church of Canada and the Lutheran Church have been present at board meetings as observers.

Scriptures in seventy-eight languages were distributed in Canada in 1977 by the Canadian Bible Society. Total distribution exceeded six million copies. Distribution in French showed a dramatic increase and reached 856,000. One reason for the increase in the demand for the Bible is the greater use being made of it by members of the Roman Catholic Church. In a forty-eight-hour period at a Catholic conference in Montreal, 10,000 French Bibles were sold and orders for a further 10,000 were placed. During 1977 the fifty-nine Bible societies in the world distributed 400 million Scriptures in over 1,600 languages.

Looking for theologically loaded entertainment? Norman and Sandra Dietz, a playwright and his wife, are beginning their sixteenth year of tour performances coast-to-coast in the United States and Canada. The *New York Times* says, "Their theologically tinged humor skips happily down a line separating secular skepticism and churchy gush." Their cross-country tours are in April and October. There is a fee, of course. To get in touch with them write to Box 218, Orient, New York 11957 (516-323-3602).

A "How to Form a Fellowship" kit is available from Mennonite Broadcasts, Box 1252, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801. The information packet contains a brochure on how to organize a fellowship, several resources to get started, study helps, and access to a fellowship newsletter that shares insights and resources to keep groups alive and growing. David Yoder, director of follow-up ministries for Mennonite Broadcasts, says the groups are a way to facilitate caring relationships in an impersonal society, provide affirmation and support, and are ways to introduce friends to Christ.

Shipowners are being urged to rescue "boat people" in distress on the high seas off the Indochina coast. The appeal has been made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and notes that while 2,652 boat people were picked up at sea from the end of 1975 until early September 1977, "there appear to have been instances where distress signs were not heeded by passing ships." UNHCR is making continuing efforts to ensure that boat people, who obviously do not possess documentation, are allowed to disembark without delay at Asian ports. Permission has sometimes been refused. Governments normally want assurance that the persons landed will be able to resettle in a country of durable asylum, and that meanwhile their care will be underwritten. Such assurances are being given by UNHCR, and by the government under whose flag the rescuing ship is registered. More than 13,000 have left their homelands by boat. Eight thousand of these are living in camps in Thailand, mostly people from the Lao People's Democratic Republic. About half of the boat people have been placed in various countries, particularly the United States, France, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada.

Gadgets, paraphernalia, and the gospel seem to be part of the modern missionary's style. A Mennonite Brethren missionary shares this reflection: "The jeep was loaded for a two-week itinerary to the villages. A quick mental check was made of all the things I needed. Sleeping bag? Stove? Fuel for the stove? Books to sell? Drinking water? Tape recorder? Teaching supplies? Slide projector and screen? Public address system? Guitar? Lantern? String for hanging up the mosquito net? Tools? First-aid kit? Extra gas? Books, sermon notes, songbooks? What about my Bible? A quick trip to the house to pick up my Bible. Suddenly in my mind the Apostle Paul stood beside me, carrying a scroll and a walking stick."

In God We Trust may be a motto of the past if Madalyn Murray O'Hair is successful in her suit to have the inscription removed from US coins and currency. The atheist leader has filed suit in the federal district court in Austin, Texas, and has named the secretary of the treasury and the director of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing as defendants. "The suit should not be taken lightly," says Floyd Robertson, secretary of public affairs for the National Association of Evangelicals, "because the law requiring such inscriptions will not be easy to defend in light of the criteria developed by the Supreme Court to test the establishment clause of the First Amendment." The criteria require any law to have both a primary secular effect and purpose which neither inhibits nor promotes religion.

The church is also aging. Fewer babies are being born and fewer people are dying in the United States. In the United States, half the total population will be over thirty within two years, and half will be over thirty-five only twenty years from now. This is a big shift from the "half under twenty-five" just a few years ago, and will have marked effects on who will be making up the church, who will be available for leadership, youth groups, etc.

Record

Calendar

February 10-14—Council of Commissions, Newton, Kansas

February 10-11—Mennonite Disaster Service annual all-unit meetings, Phoenix, Arizona

March 27-31—Project Teach, Rosthern (Saskatchewan) Church

March 30-April 2—Central District Conference annual sessions, Wooster, Ohio

May 4-6—Eastern District Conference annual sessions, Deep Run Church, Bedminster, Pennsylvania

June 15-18—Northern District Conference annual sessions, Dawson County High School, Glendive, Montana

June 15-18—Pacific District Conference annual sessions, Flagstaff, Arizona

October 27-29—Western District Conference annual sessions, First Church, Newton, Kansas

Published

Findings of the Vietnam Study Project, directed and written by Luke Martin, are now available from Mennonite and Brethren in Christ college libraries and mission board offices. Commissioned in March 1976 as a joint project of Mennonite Central Committee, MCC Peace Section (International), and the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, the study evaluates Mennonite mission, service, and peacemaking in Vietnam as well as the implications of this experience for North American presence in Asia and other parts of the world. Individuals may request a copy of this evaluation from MCC with a $3.00 contribution to cover costs.

Parables of the Kingdom, a study guide in six lessons prepared under the auspices of the Mennonite World Conference, can now be ordered from Mennonite and Brethren in Christ publishing houses. Since the theme of the tenth Mennonite World Conference is "The Kingdom of God in a Changing World," the MWC presidium authorized a study based on parables of the kingdom. It is recommended that the guide be used uniformly throughout the world during Lent (February 8-March 26). An international edition is also being published. Orders for the fifty-six-page guide may be placed with Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114, at $1.35 each. The other publishers are Evangel Press, Nappanee, Indiana; Mennonite Brethren Publishing House, Hillsboro, Kansas; and Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pennsylvania. Orders may be directed to them also.

An *International Songbook* has been published for the tenth assembly of the Mennonite World Conference to be held July 25-30 in Wichita, Kansas. The sixty-five songs selected for the book represent twenty different language groups. Almost all of the songs have been translated into the five official languages of the conference and at the sessions each song and the translations will be sung simultaneously. The *International Songbook* is included in the registration packet supplied to all who preregister for the tenth assembly. Registration forms are available in local congregations or from the Mennonite World Conference Office, 528 East Madison Street, Lombard, Illinois 60148.

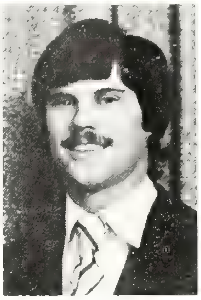
Amos and Jonah, a study guide written by La Vernae Dick particularly for ninth- and tenth-grade youth, has been published by Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kansas. The thirteen-lesson booklet is intended for Bible study and Sunday school groups who wish to have an alternative to the Youth Bible Study Guide. It is a leader's guide for the study of the prophets Amos and Jonah, and elicits inductive study of the two biblical books. It is available for two dollars from Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. The texts of Amos and Jonah are also available for twenty-five cents in Today's English Version published by the American Bible Society.

Workers

Hulda Banman, First Church, Newton, Kansas, left January 10 to begin a ten-months assignment under the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission. She will be working at the Mennonite clinic in the village of Nuevo Namiquipa, north of Cuauhtemoc, Mexico. She is replacing *Margaret Dyck* and *Marsha Sprunger* while they are on furlough. Banman served a similar assignment at the clinic in 1975. She has most recently been employed as a midwife at a hospital in Kingsport, Tennessee.

Duane and Ramona Smith Moore, North Manchester, Indiana, are serving with Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pennsylvania, as resource persons for world hunger, poverty, and population concerns. They are available to congregations, camps, and other groups or seminars in the Great Lakes region. The Moores previously served for three years with MCC in Bangladesh.

Dwight Stoltzfus has been serving as chief executive officer of Mennonite Mutual Aid since December until a new president is named. Harold L. Swartzendruber, executive officer of MMA for the last twenty-four years, resigned in September. Stoltzfus has served as director of field services for MMA since 1971. *James Kratz,* director of office services, has been named acting vice-president.


Kissel

Stoltzfus

Ministers

Timothy Kissel, pastor of the Apostolic Church, Trenton, Ohio, was ordained November 27, 1977. He is currently serving as coordinator of the fund drive for the rebuilding of Grace Church, Chicago. Kissel is a 1976 graduate of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana.

Gerald Mendenhall resigned as pastor of Calvary Church, Aurora, Oregon, on January 31 after serving the congregation for four years. He had previously served as pastor of a Friends congregation in Kansas City, Missouri. Mendenhall is a graduate of Friends Bible College, Haviland, Kansas, and Western Evangelical Seminary, Jennings Lodge, Oregon. His future plans are indefinite.

Harry Spaeth has resigned as pastor of First Church, Nappanee, Indiana, after serving the congregation for ten years. His future plans are indefinite.

Benno Toews, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, has begun serving an interim pastorate at Calvary Church, Liberal, Kansas.

Ernest Wiebe was installed as pastor of the Springstein (Manitoba) Church on November 6, 1977.

Wayne Yoder is serving as associate pastor of the Oak Grove Church, Smithville, Ohio.

Letters

Interested in Latin America

Dear Editor: I was very happy to read the December 13, 1977, edition of *The Mennonite,* especially the *Encompass* on Latin America!

Having lived in Central America and Mexico, I know of the struggles and work involved in these countries.

It's good to read and know that work is being done with our neighbors to the south.

Hope to read more about the missions and all the people. Keep up the good work! *Fern Gonzales, Summerfield Mennonite Church, Summerfield, Illinois 62289*

December 14

Bible gives information

Dear Editor: I read in the November 1, 1977, issue (page 630) "Homosexuality Information Called For." We have all the information in Romans 1:21-32 that we need—what it is and also why it is. Jesus says that if we continue in his Word, we shall know the truth and the truth shall make us free (John 8:32).

If we are not interested in how the Bible relates to our everyday problems, then let us not spend our money, time, and energy in finding a solution to our problems.

If we are interested in how the Bible relates to our current issues, then as a "believers' church" let us use the Bible as our guide in "faith and life." *J. T. Rempel, Henderson, Nebraska 68371*

December 28

Blank space left me blank

Dear Editor: I wonder how many other readers felt the way I did when I turned to the meditation page (December 13, 1977, issue) and saw half of the page blank. I thought for a moment that it must be a printing error. Then I saw Anne Rupp's name and the title of the blank space "Dead Love" and a black base at the bottom. So she must have tried to convey something.

Anne's messages usually have very good, positive ideas, but this was beyond me; it left my mind blank like the paper! *Helen Wiens, 9851 Herbert Road, Richmond, British Columbia*

December 30

The Lord saved my life again

Dear Editor: It's Christmas Eve! Am celebrating the gift of life in a special way this evening. You see, it truly is a gift because yesterday about 5:00 p.m. my life was miraculously saved from instant death.

The accident left my car a total wreck. As far as I can tell tonight, I came out without a scratch from a car that overturned and then skidded on its top for 123 feet.

My car was hit by a brother who had celebrated Christ's birth by drinking and then wove his pickup at high speeds in and out of cars on the highway between Goshen and Elkhart. I pray for him that his life too may be redeemed by this tragedy.

Tragedy, yes, but even more, a victory for the protection and care of our Lord. Life has been prolonged once again (it happened to me before in another car accident).

I write you and all the readers of *The Mennonite* to celebrate life with gratitude and praise. May his purposes be fulfilled in each of us.

Some of us are seeking to give ourselves to prayers and action for peace in the world. Tonight we plead that peace may emerge through the Sadat and Begin talks scheduled for Christmas Day in the "Unholy" Land where the common people cry out for peace and justice. *Hedy Sawadsky, 2001 Stevens, Elkhart, Indiana 46514*

January 3

Disagree about canal

Dear Editor: Ever since reading Delton Franz's article in the November 22, 1977, issue regarding the Panama Canal I have been deeply concerned and infuriated.

The simple truth is that nearly everything he said is in fact the direct opposite.

Research shows that the majority of the Panamanian people are quite satisfied with the way it is operated by us and with the large revenue we pay to them.

Radicals, communists, and troublemakers are behind the movement to get our canal. Furthermore, they couldn't operate without our help, any more than Africa or other countries liberated from white rule have done.

My wife and I have been through the canal more than once and have seen firsthand as well as discussed the problem with world travelers.

I surely did write Senator Hayakawa in Washington but I requested the opposite of what Franz recommended. I also pledged money to support the fight.

We feel that the issue is far too important to be handled by our bungling politicians. It should be put on the ballot for the people to decide for themselves. *Milton and Jessie Staufer, 20069 East Clayton Avenue, Reedley, California 93654*

January 4

About letters: To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Brevity is encouraged. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations. Editor

To miss you

Ruth Naylor

To miss you
Is a pain
Of love,
Meaning
Our commitment
Is alive.

To miss you
Is a dream
Of hope
Grounded in memory,
Continued
In faith.

To miss you
Is a test
Of courage—
Believing that you
Are worth
The wait.

To miss you
Is a constant
Prayer
For God to guide
And keep you
Safe.

Meditation

Streets and a footprint

When I first told friends I was planning a six-week trip to India, a few commented, "Why India? Why not try something easier for a first overseas trip?"

My answer was not always clear, yet my goals became more defined each day I traveled in that ancient land of forts and religious festivals, poverty and palaces, exquisite handicrafts and grime, modern buses and coolie-drawn rickshas.

With me traveling across the land were many tourists come to "do" India. I also saw and talked to Western devotees of Hare Krishna. They offered a strange contrast to the young people I saw later in Nepal, equipped with hiking gear ready to conquer some mountain peak. Here and there I spotted a few slightly aging leftovers of the hippie era.

I wanted to see the church of Jesus Christ in another culture. When stripped of its Western trappings, what does it look like? Can it thrive without Gothic architecture and gowned choirs? Might I only find it swaddled in Eastern culture?

I was also interested in the progress of Christian mass communications in an overpopulated country. And I wanted to learn firsthand what development means in Third World countries—its relationships to missions and evangelism.

India will not be mastered by the novice traveler in six weeks. My answers were all beginnings of answers.

I saw people of all ages herding cattle, goats, and buffalo to pasture. Behind them followed women or children with large shallow baskets, collecting the fresh dung. Deftly the women rolled it in the soft dust before scooping it into the basket. Later, mixed with straw, formed into patties and dried, it would be used as fuel.

In a small city I watched the shopkeepers sweeping the ground in front of their tiny shops. Coolies stood before their rickshas waiting for an early fare. Children eyed me curiously. Women carried heavy brass pots of water on head and hip to their homes. Across the street a mother, a child on each hip and several clinging to her skirts, began preparations for the morning meal. At a nearby well men bathed by pouring water over themselves. Cows and chickens fed complacently along the roadside. A heavily loaded truck thundered through the moving mass of people, bicycles, and animals on the road, horn blaring, edging pedestrians and animals to the side.

Roads are for travel, but they are also a place to live out one's life. In the cities, large families of the lower castes live in *bustees* (cell-like hovels of mud, woven bamboo, or straw, often leaning against a wall).

Streets are a good place to sleep if you have no *bustee*. Driving home late in the evening, the moonlight cast shadows over the reclining figures on the cement.

A street in India is a place to carry on one's craft, whether it is mending shoes, giving haircuts, or frying pastries. It is a place to hawk goods, usually carried on the head in a basket. It is a place to set up a *pandal* (shelter for an idol), to hold parades and celebrations.

It is a place to beg, sometimes to root through garbage looking for bits of food, paper, or cloth. If you are a child, it is a place to play, all day sometimes if you aren't one of the fortunate ones who go to school.

For many the street is a place to sit back on one's haunches and converse. Sometimes it is a place to only sit. But it is also a place to die when disease and malnutrition have finished their work. Some who lie down on the street to sleep never wake again.

But fascinating as life on the street was to me, I did not find my answers there. One day as I walked to the local church, scuffing the dusty ground, before me were the clear imprints of bare feet. Though thousands had walked this road, to know India I had to learn to know the individual, like the one who had walked here just before me.

So I began to talk to individuals, those born into Christian homes and those who had left behind Buddhism, Hinduism, or the Muslim religion to choose the Christ way. Their stories were often tales of suffering. I found a church that is alive, hopeful regarding the future, and ready to take responsibility for its growth. Because of their witness, India became one of the more meaningful experiences of my life. *Katie Funk Wiebe*

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CONTRIBUTORS

Wanda Dionne, formerly a newspaper reporter, is a homemaker and free-lance writer in Houston, Texas.

Gwyn Whilsmith lives in Exeter, Ontario.

Ruth Naylor, Route 2, Box 151, Bluffton, Ohio 45817, is a free-lance writer.

CREDITS

Cover, 83, Family Filmstrips; 82, David Hiebert, Box 301, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 85, Paul M. Schrock, Box 200, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 86, Strix Pix, Newville, Pennsylvania 17241; 89, RNS; 90, AUCECB; 91, Angela Rempel.

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Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Christian familial relationships—4

Marriage Encounter

Marriage Encounter (ME) is a name and an experience that you will hear a lot about in the General Conference. At Bluffton last August we voted to adopt an adapted Mennonite version of ME in our conference.

The beginnings have not been noisy. However, several Newton staff persons and spouses, together with other Kansas and Nebraska couples, have participated in the Quaker version of ME. Canadian couples have been "encountered" in the Catholic ME. Together, they have begun to design a Mennonite Marriage Encounter.

Norman and Janil Schmidt of Quakertown, Pennsylvania, have already been running several retreats in their community.

In the meantime, the family life committee of the General Conference's Commission on Education is compiling a list of Mennonite couples who have been "encountered." We (I am a member of the committee) are also collecting information on dates and locations of existing ME programs and advising interested couples to participate as soon as possible. A slide-cassette package is being prepared to give more information on ME.

The aim of the family life committee is to run some Mennonite ME programs by the fall of 1978, in both Canada and the United States.

What is Marriage Encounter? ME is a system of spiritual retreat for the basic renewal of married couples, or singles who live in intentional groups. ME is intended for couples who want to experience growth in their relationships. ME is not a set lecture, not a sensitivity group, not a marriage clinic, not a gimmick or pop psychology, and not a last resort for troubled marriages.

ME began in Spain around 1950 through Father Gabriel Calvo. It came to the United States in 1967 and to Canada in 1968. Over half a million couples have had marriage encounters in North America. Although begun in the Roman Catholic tradition, ME has been translated into Jewish, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Quaker faiths, among others.

ME differs from most marriage enrichment programs in focusing on the couple rather than on a larger group. The encounter occurs between partners, thereby providing a foundation for ongoing growth. Leadership is by team couples who have been "encountered" and together have designed a weekend program of sharing their own marital pilgrimages.

While ME is not intended to patch broken marriages, it can help couples who are willing to grow, no matter how young or how old they are.

ME deliberately helps you to understand yourself, your partner, and God in terms of everyday living relationships. There is no pressure other than a setting of caring Christian leadership couples who invite you to a weekend of special commitment to ME. The setting is either a motel or retreat place, usually from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon.

There are presentations, music, and dialogue. The dialogue is based on a "ten and ten" approach. Each partner gets ten minutes to write down responses after a presentation. These written words become the basis for beginning a dialogue.

Several Mennonite couples volunteered their impressions about ME to the family life committee. One couple writes, "Each writing was like a love letter, something we hadn't written to each other since courtship days. It was a beautiful and romantic way to begin our encounter." Another shares, "The ongoing emphasis on the spiritual dimension reminded us that God also has a stake in our marriage. We are never alone in it. We told each other things that we had never discussed before. And the setting was romantic, prayerful, and well-ordered." A couple who had earlier filed for divorce write, "We had spent $5,000 for counseling help and were told to express feelings. After one ME weekend, we are actually doing it."

ME is not the answer to all Christian familial relationship problems. But it is a way in which your relationships can be strengthened and renewed. The weekend is an experience of moving through I-We-God-World stages, beginning with a fresh look at yourself, then you as a couple, the couple and God, and concluding with how God's love motivates you to share your love with the world. Christ gave us this mandate, "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

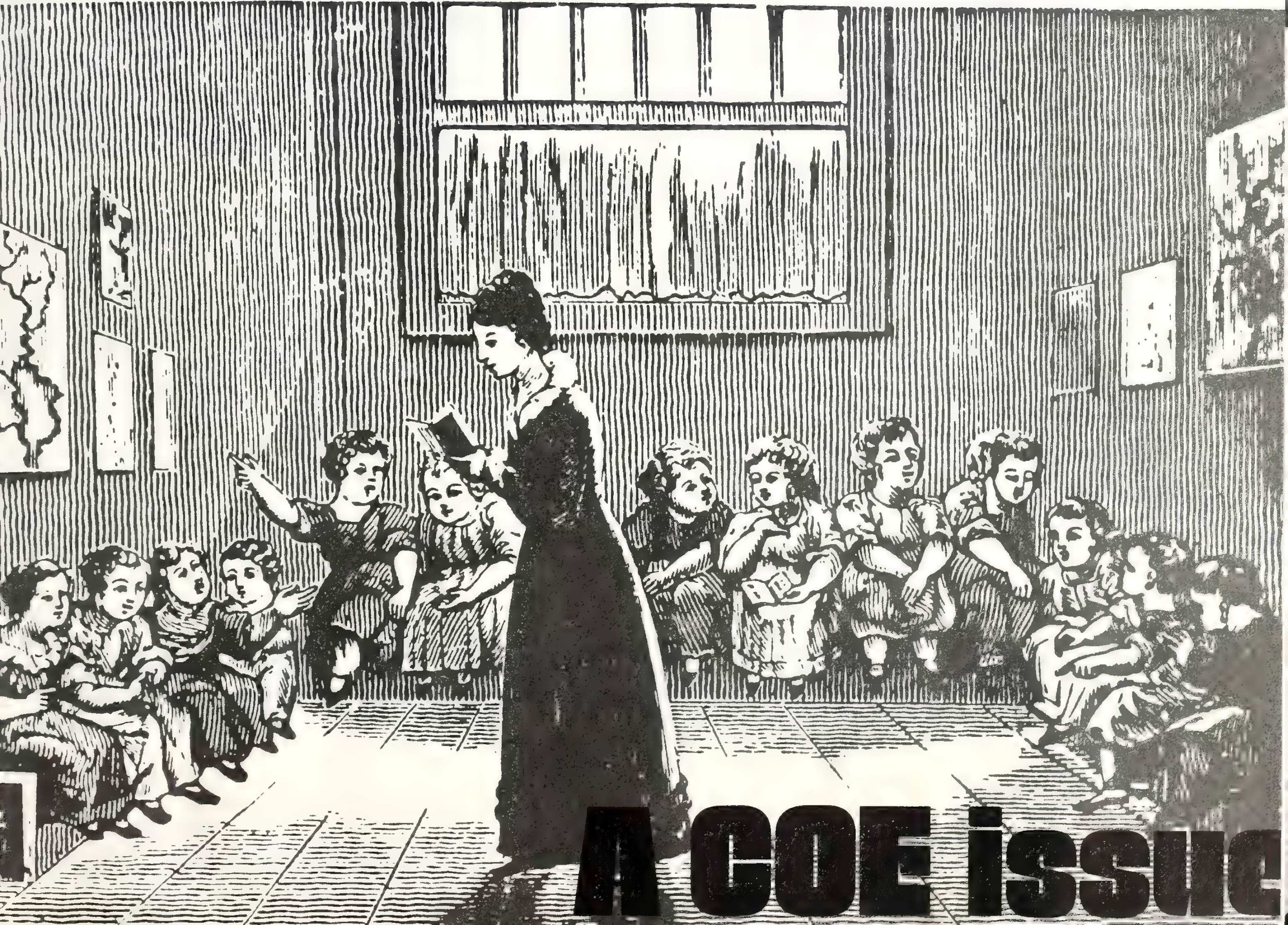
ME is intended to strengthen the biological family and the spiritual family. In some congregations, it is already beginning to leaven the whole loaf. BW *Last in a series*

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93: 7 FEBRUARY 14, 1978

- We asked for it
- An ME weekend
- Foundation Series update
- Sunday schools are down



A COE issu

We asked for it

A hundred and thirty-five delegates to the Bluffton conference told COE what they consider important for Christian education in our congregations.

Mary Lou Cummings

When the Commission on Education asked Bluffton delegates for their ideas last summer, it got them! Sifting through the stack of 135 thoughtful replies, I noticed several themes of concern.

First of all, Mennonite parents, like those everywhere, seem to be more concerned about their young people's education than about their own. The longest and most thoughtful answers responded to the query, "What general themes or topics would you like to see dealt with in the proposed youth curriculum?"

Take two. Two main concerns were obvious. Number one was the need for specifically Christian training in building a family. This was expressed as marriage preparation (forty-one suggestions), human sexuality (twenty-three), and the study of marriage and singleness (twelve). Young people's role in the family, dating counsel, male-female roles, family themes, and understanding the family of God were also included as suggestions. A final entry opted for converting the conference lectures by J. Winfield Fretz into a lesson series. This perhaps reflected the overall conference focus and the awakened concern delegates were feeling at the increasing fragmentation of family life.

The second main theme concerned the Mennonite church, Anabaptism, and our unique theology. Forty-three suggested that youth study Mennonite theology and history. Peace and nonresistance studies were suggested by twenty-one, the meaning of church membership (nine), nonconformity (eight), and finding one's identity in the church also seconded the concern that our young people understand clearly what direction we have come from and how our history is relevant to who we are today.

And more ideas. A focus on specific Bible studies and biblical interpretation studies was suggested by thirty-eight responses. Personal growth themes, including the specific decision to follow Christ, general decision-making, values, careers, discernment of gifts, and self-acceptance emerged as other emphases to be included.

Some 390 ideas were submitted by the obviously concerned persons who replied to this question. Twelve replies requested that youth material be more colorful, creative, and interesting, using a variety of involvement techniques.

Youth and adult curriculum. This advice from the constituency comes at a time when a new editorial council has just been formed to map out a new youth and adult curriculum envisioned for 1981.

What general themes or topics would adults like to see dealt with in the proposed new adult curriculum? Here the ideas dropped by 100 answers and there was less unanimity. Nevertheless, parallel thinking emerged.

Focus on family. The family life-style was again up front. This included such subtopics as parenting, divorce and remarriage, human sexuality (seven requested this for adults as opposed to twenty-three for youth), concern for singles, widows, the divorced, parenting and family themes woven into the Bible lessons, the extended family, and growing older.

Closely related to these seventy-three suggestions were another seventy-one replies on personal growth issues such as stewardship of selves and resources, economic life-styles, conflict resolution, stages of life, decision-making and values, death and dying, nonconformity, communication skills, and vocations.

Most of the above areas are the building blocks for coping as a family in our society, and thus seem to point toward a need felt by adults for constructive help in the practical issues of living.

Adult concerns. Fourteen pointed to a need for doctrinal emphases, which included obedience to God and civil disobedience, living in the Spirit, servanthood, belief, faith and doubt, or doctrinal studies.

Forty-one wanted church and theology studies, including nonresistance, Anabaptist history, war-tax study, gifts in the church, mutual aid, etc., over against ninety-three who wanted this for their youth.

Thirty-six suggested in-depth Bible study and techniques of biblical interpretation for adults, compared with thirty-eight for youth.

There seems to be a shift among adults away from the theoretical, doctrinal, theological approach to more specific skill-oriented lessons. "Give us the *tools* to interpret the Bible," they seem to be saying. "Teach us Christian approaches to decision-making and teach us communication skills."

What about a commentary? An extracurricular issue related to COE is a proposed Bible commentary to be written by Anabaptist scholars. "Would this be a worthwhile undertaking?" delegates were asked.

"Yes," said 116 replies; "No," said seven; and eight were undecided. "Urgent . . . definitely of great value . . . needed now . . . excellent . . . endorse wholeheartedly . . . great idea . . . the time seems ripe . . . high priority," commented some of the delegates.

Those against the project questioned the stewardship—whether it was worth what it would cost in light of other priorities. Would

(and you gave it to us)

HERE?
TAKE ONE
CHURCH
"Not to be served but to serve"
THE BEATRICE MENNONITE CHURCH

The Beatrice Church poster is put up in Founders Hall. It speaks of the church's goal as "not to be served, but to serve." Each congregation was asked to bring a poster to the General Conference sessions at Bluffton, Ohio. The aim of the COE request for ideas from delegates was to get a reading on how to better serve the congregation.

WIVES
FRIENDS
WORK
CHILDREN
SINGLES
MYS
WOMEN'S MISSION
CHM
TAIWAN
ZAIRE
MDS
MCC
HONG KONG
COE BRAZIL BOTS

The Halsey-Taylor Seven-Peace Band perform a skit on marriage as part of the Commission on Education presentation at the 1977 Bluffton conference. Bodies on the floor are commission members symbolizing the many "down and out" people around us. They need the "building blocks" which are part of the total conference program as they look for Christian families to find new and living answers for everyday relationships.

it be too scholarly, too ingrown? Weren't good commentaries already available?

Those in favor of the project cautioned that the work should be of high quality, should be intended for lay readers such as Sunday school teachers, and suggested that Third World writers be included. "A commendable ten-year goal," said one. "We have something unique (Anabaptist) to contribute," affirmed another.

This and that. In other responses, delegates made suggestions as to how COE could help congregations in family life resources and in education. Strengthen marriages, begin Marriage Encounter weekends, produce studies in premarriage counseling, advised thirty people. Help us with teacher motivation and training, said twenty-four others.

COE was especially affirmed for its work during this past triennium on The Foundation Series and *Builder* magazine. These projects were seen as being especially helpful to congregations.

~~63145~~
3342

Foundation Series update

Muriel Stackley

Evaluations from 129 Sunday school teachers tell us that The Foundation Series is being favorably accepted and effectively used.

The first quarter's use of The Foundation Series was completed last November. Each quarter of sessions has an evaluation form that teachers are asked to complete and send in so corrections and changes can be made. To date (January 9, 1978), 129 evaluation forms have been returned to General Conference editorial offices by users of the new Sunday school curriculum. Mennonite Publishing House (Scottdale, Pennsylvania), Evangel Press (Nappanee, Indiana), and the Church of the Brethren are also receiving responses.

The editors and staff welcome and treasure all feedback regarding The Foundation Series. Over these first 129 evaluations we have given thanks, we have chuckled, and we have sighed. We have been amazed, exhilarated, inspired, and corrected. Mostly, we feel affirmed by the users. You are telling us that the Holy Spirit is able to use The Foundation Series in the teaching of children. We feel commissioned by you to complete the editing and production of this huge project. A teacher in Altona, Manitoba, said: "Generally I enjoy working with this new material. Keep up the great work and may God continue to give joy and wisdom." Not every respondent answered every question. Some included specific suggestions or compliments. Seven persons wrote additional letters.

The Foundation Ser.
The Foundation Series

Kansas and Saskatchewan reported the largest number of responses with twenty-five each. This was followed by seventeen from Manitoba, seven each from British Columbia, Indiana, and Nebraska, five from Ontario, three each from Alberta and Illinois, two each from New Mexico and South Dakota, and one each from Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Washington. Several responses also came in a workshop with Cornelia Lehn in British Columbia.

Statement number one on the evaluation form is: "Everything essential for teaching this quarter is included or suggested in the teacher and student resources." A hundred and eleven teachers said yes; nine said no.

A hundred people said that teaching aids were "a significant part of the session," one

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teacher bracketed the word *significant.* Twenty thought they could have got along without the teaching aids.

One person thought the session was unclear and hard to follow; one hundred and fourteen people felt the parts of the session were clearly identified and easy to follow.

A hundred and six teachers were able to use the teaching methods suggested; eight were not—one stated that the difficulty was "not enough time." One teacher of grades seven and eight expressed special appreciation for the drama suggestions.

Responses to the fifth section of the evaluation form showed that The Foundation Series sparked adaptation and creativity at the local level. Many teachers used flannelgraph or "more singing." An Ontario teacher stated that they shared personal experiences. An Illinois teacher (of grades three and four) said they made posters of memory work "to cover a wall." From Manitoba came this idea (for grades three and four): "I took an old shirt and ripped it into twelve pieces to illustrate the Prophet Ahijah's message to Jeroboam." A Saskatchewan teacher said: "I ask for concerns and prayer requests. We discuss a few local happenings first and then have a prayer session." In Minnesota, a fifth and sixth grade class "sat on a blanket on the floor and sampled the symbolic foods" when they studied the Passover story. A seventh and eighth grade teacher in Kansas enclosed a class-created litany entitled "The Community of Faith Is Alive and Growing." In Saskatoon, the students' contributions to the newspaper project (grades seven and eight) became part of the church's newspaper.

One teacher, in answer to section six of the evaluation form, said that the sessions were not Bible centered, feeling that they were too scientific for grades three and four. A hundred and fifteen teachers felt that the sessions *were* Bible centered (built upon a biblical idea or story).

Ninety-seven teachers felt that the biblical interpretation for this quarter was adequate. Seven disagreed.

Forty-three teachers said that their students' interest in the material was high, seventy-two said "average," and four said "low." One of the last four said the classroom was too small for so many children, and another of those four said that students had difficulty because many of them had Spanish-speaking background.

Fourteen people said The Foundation Series student material could be more visually attractive, mostly by the addition of full color throughout—although one of these added, "I realize this would be expensive." Ninety-six people stated the material was visually attractive.

In evaluating the amount of material offered for a session, twelve respondents indicated there was not enough student material, sixty-seven said the amount was about right, twenty-six said there was too much. In evaluating the amount of teacher material, four said there was not enough, eighty said the amount of teacher material was about right, and fifteen thought there was too much.

The teachers were asked how long their class periods were. One teacher accurately described them as "such a few minutes each week." Seven classes meet for the intended sixty minutes; seven for fifty-five minutes; ten for fifty minutes; forty-one classes reported having forty-five minutes; twenty-one have forty minutes; three average thirty-five minutes per session, and eight Sunday school classes meet (for actual study) *only thirty minutes per week.* One British Columbia teacher mourned, "... We always ran out of time."

Eighty-nine teachers felt that "the quarter included sufficient practical applications suitable for the students. Eight disagreed, one adding honestly, "But my students seemed very interested in history."

Two teachers said that the reading level for the student material was too easy, seventy-five said it was "about right," and twenty-two said it was too difficult. One said that the reading level for the teacher material was too easy, ninety-nine judged it "about right," none said it was too difficult.

Eighty-one teachers said that they would recommend The Foundation Series to others, fourteen said yes but with reservation, four said no they would not. One of those four negatives was an astounding commitment: "No, not until I have taught two years. One quarter isn't enough to judge." (We said, "Praise God!") One distressed teacher said, "The questions are stated in such a way that they cannot be answered in one word—a yes or no." On the positive side, from Nebraska came the lilting affirmation: "I like the Genesis-through-Revelation Foundation Series."

The Foundation Series is a miracle. Never before have four denominations worked together in such a way. Carefully, prayerfully, and skillfully, the participating four historic peace churches planned and outlined, and then hired editors, writers, and consultants from within our ranks, to prepare a curriculum that speaks slearly of God coming to people. Added to that are stories of our heroes, our missionaries, and stories from Anabaptist history.

God's Word through Jesus continues to live among us, spoken and heard and enfleshed, as teachers and parents and children come together to the Scriptures to learn.

Members of the Commission on Education lead delegates in the dedication of The Foundation Series at the Bluffton conference. The first quarter of the series was used during the months of September, October, and November in 1977.

News

MCC (Canada) annual meeting

Policy set on budget, relationships, northern development

Regina, Saskatchewan—MCC (Canada) intends to determine what percentage of constituency contributions should go to domestic program.

Board members, meeting at the Parliament Community Church (Mennonite Brethren) January 19-21, want to have the policy in effect by December 1979. It would set guidelines on how much could be spent on provincial MCC and MCC (Canada) domestic programs. The new policy was approved despite concerns that it could blunt local initiatives. Members also approved a 1978 budget of $4.3 million which is close to 1977 expenditures.

Critiquing MCC (Canada)'s affiliations to interdenominational and government agencies was facilitated by a paper on theology of relationships. Cooperation with agencies having similar purposes was affirmed, as was the principle of selectivity. Associations with other organizations should not become a distraction to MCC (Canada) program. Board members said it was all right for MCC (Canada) to serve as a liaison for Mennonites in relating to other denominations.

Applying these principles to a particular situation was more difficult. The issue was government money. Through CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), MCC (Canada) has been accepting grants for nongovernmental agencies. These grants are controlled by MCC (Canada). However, CIDA is also encouraging nongovernmental development agencies to enter into bilateral contracts. Under this funding, MCC (Canada) would be directly responsible to the Canadian Government for carrying out a project. Although questions were asked, no decision was made, except to leave the initiative for drawing up a project to field personnel. Members want to see a contract before making a definite decision.

The strongest criticisms of MCC (Canada)'s association with other organizations came from the Evangelical Mennonite Conference (EMC). They view with "deep concern any attempt on the part of MCC aligning itself with churches or organizations that militate against our concept of evangelism and social action." The statement named Project North, Plowshares, and the Canadian Council of Churches as examples. The EMC concept of evangelism and social action referred to "our Christian responsibility to minister to the total need of man—body and soul—maintaining a strong emphasis on the need to be reconciled to God through personal encounter with Jesus Christ."

A position statement on northern development was narrowly approved. Five board members abstained from the vote, seven voted against, and fifteen were in favor. The statement, in circulation for eight months, calls for consideration of native rights in land claims, hunting, and fishing; for protection of the environment; and for energy conservation.

The executive committee of MCC (British Columbia) sent a response on the statement. "We believe," they said, "that the native people should be helped to become self-sufficient members of society, but we do not believe that this statement identifies how this can be done. We further believe that MCC involvement should be on the basis of 'helping people to help themselves' and we therefore recommend that MCC (Canada) encourage the native people in practical ways to become involved in agriculture, industry, and education."

A theological paper which accompanies the statement identifies the biblical basis in terms of humankind's dominion over creation, human justice, and the simple life.

Two programs, the Food Bank and *Die Mennonitische Post,* were strongly affirmed. The Food Bank was begun in 1976 and the *Post* in April 1977. Diedrich Gerbrandt, chairperson of the publishing board for the German-language paper, said the newspaper office is swamped with letters every day, and that the subscription list continues to grow. Problems of distribution, particularly to the *Umsiedler* in Germany, have been worked out.

Leaders of the five provincial MCC organizations confronted the board about constituency confusion on material aid. MCC has warehouses of certain items because there are no requests for them, yet missionaries writing to their home churches identify a need for these same things.

Why isn't MCC responding to these needs? Reg Toews, associate executive secretary for MCC (US-Canada), said a policy is being worked out. He observed that there is not agreement on whether material aid should be purchased in the country where it is needed or prepared in North America and shipped overseas, but there is agreement that material aid should be used where appropriate.

From left to right, Newton Gingerich, J. M. Klassen, and William Snyder consult during the MCC (Canada) annual meeting. Gingerich is chairperson of MCC (US-Canada), Klassen is executive secretary of MCC (Canada), and Snyder is executive secretary of MCC (US-Canada).

Board members reminded staff to stress the spiritual dimension of MCC work. Related to this was a concern to pray for government.

Hugo Jantz, campus minister at Mennonite Brethren Bible College, Winnipeg, was elected chairperson, replacing Newton Gingerich who served two three-year terms.

Gingerich was elected to the executive committee and reappointed as one of MCC (Canada)'s representatives to the MCC (US-Canada) board. He is chairperson of the latter board. Other MCC (Canada) representatives on MCC (US-Canada) are Larry Kehler for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, and the five provincial MCC chairpersons: Siegfried Bartel, Edgar Boettger, John Neufeld, Peter Peters, and Ross Nigh.

Indian treaty rights under fire in US Congress

Three bills introduced by Washington state representatives Lloyd Meeds and Jack Cunningham seek to cancel all treaties with Indian tribes, and to severely curtail tribal jurisdiction over Indian affairs, including hunting and fishing rights.

The Friends Committee on National Legislation and Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section have issued memos which analyze the issues. The White House is expected to decide on an Indian policy statement during February, and congressional hearings on important Indian legislation have already begun.

More than 350 treaties exist today between the government of the United States and Indian tribes. Many state and local governments also made treaties with Indian nations.

Betsey Beyler (MCC Peace Section, Washington, D.C.) says treaties are international agreements between two or more sovereign entities, and notes that Indian nations gave up their aboriginal rights to huge areas of the continental United States. The US Government, recognizing the sovereignty of the various tribal nations, accepted the right of Indian tribes to control remaining land according to their own systems of government, and also entered into "trust" relationships with the tribes. Lands not ceded by tribes are held by the US Government in trusteeship for tribal use. Further, in return for the ceded lands the US Government acknowledged special obligations to Indian people in the form of such services as education, food, and medical care. Hence, although Indians are US citizens, they are also citizens of tribal nations which made treaties with the United States, and this gives them rights which other US citizens do not have.

Since 1778, the US Congress has acted many times to "clarify" the status of Indian nations. Sometimes these clarifications eroded the treaty-guaranteed rights of Indians, sometimes they were beneficial. In 1975 the American Indian Review Commission was established to review the erratic Indian policy. Its report was brought to Congress in May 1977. It upholds the principles of self-determination for native groups and the preservation of Indians' treaty rights.

However, non-Indians, particularly from states with significant Indian populations, are exerting pressure to abrogate Indian treaties and have tribal government stripped of any jurisdiction. These groups view the question as one of unequal rights and responsibilities. But many non-Indians, particularly those who live on or near reservations, would lose privileges which previous government acts have given them if Indian tribes succeed in being recognized according to their treaties.

Beyler suggests the dilemma could be solved in a two-step approach. First, the United States must recognize and guarantee the superceding rights which Indian people have through treaty and negotiation, and second, non-Indians affected by such actions should be compensated so that the "sins of the fathers" are not visited on their children.

In September 1977 an Indian reparations bill expected to pass easily was defeated. Jack Cunningham (Democrat, Washington) has introduced the Native Americans Equal Opportunity Act, which actually is a bill intended to end all Indian treaties. It is not expected to get far in Congress. A more substantial threat to Indian rights is expected from a bill introduced by Lloyd Meeds (Democrat, Washington) which addresses the extent of Indian jurisdiction over non-Indians.

Israel's unsettling settlements

Construction men are shown at work on one of the disputed Israeli settlements in the Sinai. About 100 Israeli settlements have been built, many of them recently, in occupied Arab territory since the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war. They have emerged as a central issue in Egypt-Israel peace talks. The building of three more Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank, announced two weeks ago, brings the total Jewish settlements in the West Bank region to thirty-nine. Although described as "military outposts" by Israeli Government sources, most of the 100 civilian settlements in occupied Arab territory began as military outposts. Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin has said that after the Sinai is returned to Egypt the settlements would remain under Israeli military protection. In taking the contrary view, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat stressed that "not a single Israeli soldier or civilian" would be allowed to stay after Egypt regained its territory. US President Jimmy Carter has made clear he considers the settlements "illegal."

Report documents South African repression

New York—Political imprisonment in South Africa is documented in a 108-page report released January 18 by Amnesty International.

The report describes a legal system in which detention without trial, political imprisonment, and "banning"—restriction on an individual's freedom of movement, expression, and association—have become commonplace. It examines the Terrorism Act and other security laws which are used to suppress black opposition.

The release of the report coincides with the start of a world-wide campaign by Amnesty International for the release of prisoners of conscience, the repeal of repressive legislation, and the end to torture in South Africa.

Copies of the report may be bought for two dollars from Amnesty International, 2112 Broadway, New York, New York 10023.

How do churches grow?

Pasadena, California—Is there a secret to church growth? Almost 300 persons, including a dozen Anabaptists, traveled here to find out.

For five days (January 9-13) they listened and debated. They learned that 70-80 percent of church growth is through friends and relatives. Other factors in growth are walk-in persons, congregational programs, work of the pastor, visitation evangelism, and Sunday school.

Other statistics were given. The growing church has 40 percent of its members as leaders focused inward, about 20 percent outward, and less than 40 percent as consumers. By contrast, the active, surviving church—the typical church— has about 33 percent of its members as leaders focused inward, 2 percent outward, and 60 percent of the congregation are consumers.

Donald McGavran, founder of the Institute for American Church Growth, outlined why churches grow. "Churches grow," he declared, "because members believe God wants their church to grow. Growing churches intend growth. It takes hard work."

"A growing congregation creates substructures for belonging of seven to ten persons. Congregations which grow to fifty or seventy-five and remain one fellowship unit will not grow larger unless they create new substructures of belonging."

Mennonite and Brethren participants met at the end of the seminar to evaluate it.

The dozen leaders saw good points. It certainly is biblical that God wants his church to grow. Another positive emphasis was the maturation of believers, not simply counting converts. They also underscored the fact that only 10 percent of church members have the gift of evangelism. Training for these persons could be provided without laying a load of guilt on the other 90 percent.

It was helpful to hear that barriers to congregational growth are not peculiar to the Mennonite Church and the Church of the Brethren.

But Anabaptists observed contrasts to the believers' church stance. McGavran strongly emphasizes growth through homogeneous units, which means growing naturally within social, economic, and cultural groupings. Persons are most apt to become Christians when they can relate to like-minded people. Jumping cultural barriers is not a prerequisite to becoming Christian. However, the Mennonite and Brethren participants said the homogeneous principle does not seriously face the truth that redemption in Christ breaks social barriers.

In their criticism of the seminar, some thought the relationship between discipleship and evangelism needed analysis. It was said the church growth emphasis needs to consider the kind of evangelism offered, and how it helps persons making decisions for Christ know something of the obedience involved.

And Pacific Mennos echo 'Count us in'

Mennonites want to reach out, but how does it happen?

Two weekend seminars and five evening meetings with twelve General Conference churches in the Pacific District didn't flesh out the answers, but they did kindle the response, "Where do we go from here?"

Leaders in the Pacific District wanted church growth training. The peace and social concerns committee wanted seminars on discipleship. The two were put back-to-back, and Floyd Bartel and Perry Yoder of the conference's Newton office teamed up to do it. "It was extremely helpful," declared Elmer Friesen, pastor of Peace Mennonite Church in Portland, Oregon.

Bartel and Yoder taught in Idaho, California, Washington, and Oregon for twelve intensive days, January 11-22.

There was good interest in the meetings. Although Mennonites want to reach out to others, there are ambivalent feelings about what this means. "Generally," said Floyd, "the people we met felt community-wide evangelism campaigns are not very productive, and yet they feel guilty if they don't support crusades."

Questioners wanted to know how to promote church growth through the congregation. A beginning was made on this question. Barriers to church growth were identified. A key obstacle, referred to in several meetings, was a high level of unresolved conflict within the local congregation.

Relationships within the church need to be worked out before the congregation can move into evangelism with assurance. And even though Mennonite churches are nurture oriented, relationships of caring and fellowship are sometimes not strong enough to do outreach, except at a distance.

Participants in the seminars also perceived the peace position as another barrier. However, Floyd Bartel notes that the rapid growth of the Anabaptists during the sixteenth century was not hindered by their peace principles.

More important is the high percentage of seasoned believers in the typical Mennonite congregation. The leaven of new adult converts, openly sharing the difference Christ makes in their lives, is not present.

"The format was tremendous," observed Elmer Friesen. "Putting church growth and discipleship together spoke to all the people because church growth is not simply counting decisions, but teaching disciples."

Four congregations attended the weekend workshop in Oregon. At the close each met individually and spontaneously to consider their response. Where do we go from here? "They really took hold of that question," commented Friesen. He thought that the next step could be a consultation on the personal aspects of winning persons to Christ.

'Nominate a president,' says MMA

Goshen, Indiana—Suggestions for a new president for Mennonite Mutual Aid are being sought from the church-at-large.

Both nominations and applications may be sent to William Zuercher, who is chairperson of the presidential search committee. His address is 604 South Main Street, Harlan, Kentucky 40831. The next meeting of the committee is February 25.

What are the qualifications? Sensitivity to Mennonite values, including the theological concept of mutual aid, is one. Candidates need the ability to manage a large organization, and knowledge about financial services and insurance is helpful. Skill in communication is also a major qualification.

"It will be helpful," Zuercher said, "if correspondence for the position includes biographical and employment data."

Inquiries and suggestions may also be directed to other members of the search committee. The committee includes William Dunn, Bloomington, Illinois; Wayne Clemens, Souderton, Pennsylvania; George Dyck, Newton, Kansas; Miriam Weaver, Harrisonburg, Virginia; Edwin Karber, Fairview, Oklahoma; and Gordon Schmidt, Henderson, Nebraska, all MMA board members; Tilman Smith, Goshen, Indiana; Marvin Hein, Hillsboro, Kansas; Abram Hallman, Akron, Pennsylvania; and Elmer Ediger, North Newton, Kansas.

End of ACTS is in sight

Newton, Kansas—Mennonite Voluntary Service is closing its three-year-old ACTS unit (Artists Communicating Through Service) within four months. The unit is composed of artists pursuing personal quests in the arts, and being of service to the church and community. It is located at 7839 South Shore Drive in Chicago.

"There are several major reasons for terminating the program," says Charles Neufeld, associate director of MVS. One of these is a lack of interest in the program. Artists are not applying for placement in the unit. Since its inception in June 1975, eleven volunteers have been in the program.

The other reasons are interdependent. Contrary to normal MVS guidelines, the ACTS unit was not connected to a local congregation. Since the concept of artists in service was innovative, an unusual amount of direction and leadership was needed. In the absence of local congregational sponsorship, the MVS directors had insufficient time to provide ongoing counsel and support to the volunteers.

Lacking leadership and support, the participants in ACTS were unable to find a niche in the church and community which would give the unit a strong focus. The lack of an effective, unifying ministry had a debilitating effect on morale.

Although this effort has failed, Charles Neufeld says MVS has a continuing concern for the arts. And Peter Ediger, director of MVS, asserted, "We are not backing away from integrating art into the church." Both directors think there is a need for a volunteer ministry by artists.

But the model may have to change. Ediger thought one possibility would be the dispersion of artists into some of the twenty-one other voluntary service units. Neufeld said ideas on how a service program involving artists could be organized would be welcomed by MVS.

When ACTS was organized three years ago it was seen as a place for artists to live in community, sharing economically, spiritually, and artistically, and as a place for artists to serve the community and church. There appeared to be a need for an urban ministry of this type.

ACTS members have been involved in children's theater, art teaching in a parochial school, performing guitar music at the Cook County jail, services with Chicago area churches, and personal pursuits related to music, painting, poetry, and photography. They have also rehabilitated the unit house. Income to support the unit came from full- and part-time employment by the members.

Farmer asks US authorities to bear witness to the wrong

President Jimmy Carter
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mr. Robert Bergland, Secretary
US Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20013

Dear Gentlemen: At his trial, when Jesus was struck in the face by a policeman, he called attention to the injustice of unnecessary police brutality by asking: "If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness to the wrong; but if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" In the same spirit this is calling attention to another injustice.

Every federal administration since the beginning of "foreign aid" has given in to the lobbying pressure of the military-industrial complex and sent a very high percentage of the so-called "aid" as military hardware, purchased on a cost-plus basis, returning enormous profits to the manufacturer, and paid for by our taxes to supply needy countries with the last thing on earth that they need.

Their real short-term need is food. This food the American farmer has produced, under the most severe economic pressure, as efficiently and economically as modern science and technology allow in order to stay alive financially. This food was available to our government, not on an inflated cost-plus basis, but often even at a loss to the producer. Sharing this food could have produced worldwide goodwill for our country instead of arming the world for war. But it was ignored because the farmers had neither the finances nor the moral irresponsibility to "buy off" their elected officials.

If the American farmer has done wrongly, then bear witness to the wrong; but if they have done right, why do you strike us?

I have finally gotten the message. Therefore I will raise no more food this year than my family needs and what we can give away. I will pay my property taxes and support my family by working one-half as many hours per day for three times the pay at a job off the farm. I am still concerned about where food for nonfarm people will come from. Are you concerned? Perhaps you have the answer.

Respectfully, Daniel Slabaugh, Sun Valley Farm, 8265 M-36 Whitmore Lake, Michigan 48189 January 12, 1978

'Give arms, abortion equal attention'

Newark, New Jersey—Catholic efforts for peace are "ambiguous and confused," said Catholic sociologist Gordon Zahn, who called for the Catholic church to mount an attack on the arms race equal to its attack on abortion.

Zahn spoke January 14 to cardinals, bishops, and more than 300 laity gathered at St. Lucy's School here for a World Day of Peace observance. Conference sponsors were the Newark archdiocese and Pax Christi, the international Catholic peace movement.

"All of us here, I am sure, take pride in knowing that a strong witness is being made in support of the right to life," he said. "Would it not be possible to mount a similar attack upon the arms race, which in its way is equally, if not potentially more, destructive of human life?"

The crowd applauded when Zahn declared instruction and training in the arts of war, such as ROTC programs at Catholic colleges, should be "as unthinkable as instruction and training in techniques of abortion."

"Our church authorities have not been reticent about denying the use of Catholic facilities for abortions, or instructing Catholic doctors and nurses of their moral obligation," he said.

Church authorities should also protest the operation of industries in their dioceses "that profit from the diabolical capacity to produce arms of every size and shape, all designed to slaughter men who are our brothers," he said, and should "counsel their flocks not to cooperate with or engage in the production of such weapons or invest in industries which profit from the merchandizing of death."

Zahn criticized the pope's most recent peace messages as "ineffective communication."

"The messages themselves seldom address specific or direct condemnations of a given nation or weapon by name," he said.

Zahn suggested the bishops attend in May a special five-week United Nations session on disarmament. "How impressive it would be if a delegation from every diocese, led by its bishop, were to come to New York as a demonstration of approval for the principles set forth by the Holy Father over these past eleven years," Zahn said. *Rita Jensen in the* National Catholic Reporter, *115 East Armour Boulevard, Kansas City, Missouri 64111. Reprinted by permission.*

Words & deeds

Winnipeg—Jacob Kleinsasser, leader of the Crystal Springs Hutterite Colony near Ste. Agathe, Manitoba, is the first Hutterian to be appointed to an MCC board. Although the Hutterites are not members of MCC (Manitoba), they have contributed funds and material aid on several occasions. They contributed $6,000 to the MCC Guatemala earthquake reconstruction program, and are at present contributing to the rehabilitation program in India.

An assembly on conflict and conciliation is scheduled for April 6-8 at Park College in Kansas City, Missouri. It is sponsored by MCC Peace Section. The assembly will tackle the theological understandings of justice in conflict situations, techniques of mediation, a discussion of community disputes, and prospects for a Mennonite conciliation service network. Resource persons for the gathering include John Howard Yoder of Notre Dame University and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, James Laue of the University of Missouri, and John Adams of the United Methodist Church's Board of Church and Society. Adams has much experience in mediation involving violent conflict. The consultation is open to persons with serious interest or experience in community conflict. For registration write to MCC Peace Section (International), 21 South 12 Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

Philippines—Some Anabaptist ideas have taken hold among Filipinos. In December 1977 fifty young persons gathered in Laguna Province to discuss "The Role of Mennonite Youth in the New Society." (New Society is the common political term for the martial law regime of President Marcos.) One young man explained why the Christian must "turn the other cheek" even when national security is at stake. Another told the story of Dirk Willems, the sixteenth-century Anabaptist who stopped to rescue his pursuers who had fallen through the ice on the river. "We must see the politics of Jesus as moral, social, and economic revolution," said Mennonite leader Felonito Sacapano to Mennonite pastors and lay leaders who met simultaneously with the youth. Participants came for two weeks of study in Bible, music, and agriculture. Local pastors, MCC workers, and missionaries provided biblical input.

A bimonthly newsletter for MCC alumni is scheduled to begin publication in March. Among the purposes are to keep alumni in touch with MCC, provide lists of employment opportunities for returning workers, promote local and regional alumni organizations, and provide opportunity for sharing experiences and problems, particularly focusing on readjustment. An address list is being compiled of those who will complete their terms in a half year or less and those who returned home within the past three years. Inquiries may be directed to MCC Alumni Newsletter, MCC Personnel Services, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

Lohrenz

Lohrenz and Wiebes will lead tour to USSR. Gerhard Lohrenz, Winnipeg, who has led thirteen tours to the Soviet Union, and Bernie and Marg Wiebe are hosting another Discover Your Heritage tour to Germany, Switzerland, and Russia. It is scheduled for August 6-27. Five days will be devoted to an overland tour through historic sites in Germany and Switzerland. There will be visits to those sites in Russia (from Zaporozhye) where the Mennonites used to live, and to Alma Ata and Tashkent where Mennonite groups are living today. The tour is designed for personal enrichment and for personal leisure. Lohrenz says this will probably be his last visit to the USSR. Interested persons are encouraged to apply early to Menno Travel Service, 851 Henderson Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2K 2L4; or to Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

A lawsuit against the use of infant formula in developing countries has been settled. Bristol-Myers Company, New York, was charged by the Sisters of the Precious Blood, a Roman Catholic religious order, that the company's promotion of infant formula in developing countries tended "to contribute to the use of formula by poor people" under unsafe conditions. The company has declared that its policy is to promote infant formula only through physicians and hospitals and that it does not permit advertising of infant formula in any country overseas. Both sides of the controversy will be presented to stockholders in a special report. The Sisters will be permitted to present their recommendations to the company's board of directors. A federal district court had dismissed the suit in May 1977, but an appeal was launched, and this has now been withdrawn by the Sisters as part of the settlement. As a result, the company and the nuns have agreed to "consult about ongoing solutions to the problems in the Third World of bottle feeding and the distribution by Bristol-Myers of its infant formula." The company says that it recognizes that breast feeding is best for most infants and should be encouraged whenever possible.

For women only. If you are willing to contribute insights and gifts to church organization boards and committees, the Mennonite Central Committee task force on women in church and society would like to hear from you. They are preparing a resource list of women which will be made available to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ colleges, mission boards, and other agencies. The listing will include a brief resume of training and experience. To be listed, send your resume by April 1 to Task Force Resource Listing, Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

Stiller

Youth for Christ (Canada) has appointed Brian Stiller to a second three-year term as president. He has served with YFC for ten years. He has also accepted responsibility for developing YFC in Chile. Canada is one of fifty-two countries in which YFC is active, in a ministry which began in the early 1940s with Billy Graham as first full-time staff member. It has specialized in Campus Life (high school) and Youth Guidance (troubled youth). YFC (Canada) has initiated a new resource program to train and supply church youth leaders with creative ideas for church youth ministry. During the past three years YFC has almost tripled its Canadian staff to 100.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer is the subject for a documentary motion picture planned for release this year. Bonhoeffer is considered by many as one of the most quoted and researched of contemporary theologians. The film project, produced in Fresno, California, and on location in Europe, began as an adjunct to a study trek to Germany by

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary members in 1977. John Boogaert, filmmaker and ordained minister, has been given a special appointment by a United Methodist bishop to direct the film. To facilitate the necessary planning, the Bonhoeffer Film Project was formed. A cassette tape of Bonhoeffer's life is presently available from them for three dollars. Inquiries regarding film schedule, content, and support, or for the cassette, may be directed to Joseph Bridges, Bonhoeffer Film Project, Box 1, Fresno, California 93707.

Sponsors are urgently needed for twenty Polish farm trainees who will arrive in March for a year of work and learning. They are part of an MCC cultural exchange program. Twenty-two to thirty years in age, they have special interests and abilities in most types of farming. Congregations are encouraged to "adopt" a trainee. Many of the trainees hold positions of responsibility in Poland and are on leave of absence from their work. They come to North America to learn new methods of working. Sponsors enjoy a unique exposure to international living and know what it means to be ambassadors for Christ without leaving their homes. Since the program began in 1971, 160 Polish agriculturists have participated. Persons interested may write or call MCC Visitor Exchange Program, Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501 (717-859-1151), or Mennonite Central Committee (Canada), 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8 (204-475-3550).

An evangelism seminar is scheduled April 5-7 at the Mayfair Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Resource persons are Floyd Bartel, Don Yoder, Lynn Liechty, and Dennis M. Oliver. Registration fee is $15 with traveling bursaries available. Write Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Teacher needed

A teacher for the upper elementary grades (four through eight) is needed in Taiwan at an English-speaking school for missionary children. This salaried position is for a two-year term under the sponsorship of the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference. Write or call us immediately if interested.

Commission on Overseas Mission
Box 347
Newton, Kansas 67114
(316) 283-5100

Record

Ministers

Walter Dyck is serving as interim pastor at Menno Church, Ritzville, Washington, from February through May while Nick and Barb Kassebaum study at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana. Dyck was part of a team ministry at the Carlock and Danvers congregations in Illinois, 1971-77.

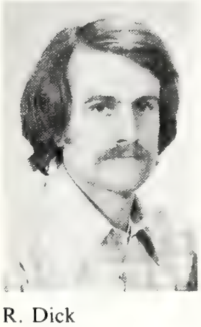
Martin Fry, pastor of the Church of the Good Samaritans, New Holland, Pennsylvania, resigned in October after serving the congregation since 1976.

Deaths

George C. Bohrer, Zion Church, Souderton, Pennsylvania, died December 18, 1977. He had served as administrator of Camp Men-O-Lan, Quakertown, Pennsylvania, for the past three years. He was also a member of the Eastern District education and publication committee.

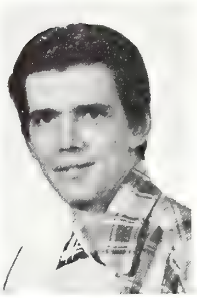
Workers

Richard and Linda Dick of Mountain Lake, Minnesota, have begun a three-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Noakholi District, Bangladesh, in agricultural development. Linda holds a BA in child psychology from the University of Minnesota. She is from South Baton Rouge Church of Christ. Richard holds a BS in agronomy from the University of Minnesota and an MS in soil science from Louisiana State University. He is a member of First Church in Mountain Lake.


R. Dick

L. Dick

Harold and Marianne Penner, Arnaud (Manitoba) Church, have recently arrived in Bangladesh for a three-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in agriculture. Harold has served previously with MCC for three years in India.


H. Penner

M. Penner

Bernard and Ruby Thiessen, General Conference missionaries to Japan since 1952, left Los Angeles February 1 for Kobe, Japan. The Thiessens were on North American assignment since June 1976 and lived in Newton, Kansas. During the past 1½ years they have been active in itineration. Their work in Kobe involves evangelism and outreach with the Baba Cho Church. Bernard also teaches English, and Ruby organizes meetings for Bible study and homemaking skills with women. The Thiessens have worked in Kobe, a city of more than one million people, since 1965. Emmaus Church, Whitewater, Kansas, is their home congregation.

B. Thiessen

R. Thiessen

Calendar

March 27-31—Project Teach, Rosthern, Saskatchewan

July 10-21—Council of Mennonite Seminaries summer school, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas

July 25-30—Mennonite World Conference, Wichita, Kansas

Western

February 17—Forum on farm and energy issues, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kansas; speaker, Paul Longacre

A Marriage Encounter weekend

Bernie Wiebe

In baseball, a .300 (30 percent) hitter is considered exceptional. On those terms, marriage is still a super success. About two-thirds, over .600, of all husbands and wives in the United States and Canada do stay together until "death doth them part."

Marriage is not dead. In baseball, a hitter is considered exceptional if he performs at .300 (30 percent). On those terms, marriage is still a super success.

Much is being said about rising divorce rates and remarriages and people living together without being married. There is special stress on families.

About two-thirds, over .600 (60 percent) of all husbands and wives in the United States and Canada do stay together until "death doth them part." And of the divorced people, about 80 percent marry again.

Familial life will continue; it is still the most popular and most satisfying way of living.

Marriage is hurting. While marriage is still the number one choice for living, the state of many marriages is tragic. Bill Cosby, the comedian, says that as one of nine children, until the age of eleven he thought his name was "shut up." Marriage counselors agree that less than 20 percent of marriages grow into creative, dynamic, growing relationships. With today's atmosphere of individualism, many marriages become duels instead of duets.

A sense of failure. Most of us who are married sense our own failures. It's terrifying to know in how many ways we fail. I have learned, in being a father and a husband, the ongoing sense of inadequacy.

I too seldom catch exactly what is on children's minds until it's too late. My scoldings and other punishments often happen on occasions where I realize later that it was not the time or thing to do. And the children get away with murder that I don't recognize as murder until it's done. How do you assess the right times for love and affirmation instead of criticism?

And I too seldom seem to know what would be most helpful toward the relationship between my wife and me. After twenty-one years of marriage, I still find myself second-guessing her and neglecting her in my decision-making. How do you keep romance and fire in a long-term commitment between two people who are uniquely differing individuals?

The words of Paul have become words I think of often, "For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do" (Romans 7:18-19).

There is hope. Many denominations have introduced marriage enrichment programs to their congregations. These are designed to help families develop parenting skills, effective communication, spiritual growth, self-acceptance, and greater understanding. Most of these programs are helpful.

A program new to the Mennonite churches is Marriage Encounter (ME). (See editorial page of *The Mennonite,* February 7.) It is designed for the married couples who will stay together.

Marge and I spent a weekend at the Villa Maria retreat center in Winnipeg. We expect to "tough out" our marriage. At the same time we realize that our relationship could stand maturing.

The word *encounter* might frighten some people. Webster defines it as "to meet as an adversary or enemy; to engage in conflict with." A better understanding of ME is to read Webster's definition of the term *encounter group,* "a group that seeks to develop the capacity of the individuals to openly express human feelings and to form close emotional ties by more or less unrestrained confrontation."

Throughout the weekend, we heard talks from other couples who had been "encountered" earlier. There was also a priest who kept on relating the topics to the Bible. These people freely shared of their own live experiences. Together they focused our own thinking and feeling about dialogue, self-awareness, awakening hope for a better marriage, love, sexuality, justice, friendship, romance, Christ's love in our marriage, and spirituality of marriage.

Our experience was three-dimensional. We were encountered to know our own selves better and to accept our being as a gift from God intended for good. Then we moved to the "We" phase. We were reminded that our partners are also vital creative acts of God and that there is potential beauty and goodness in each person. That took us to step three, "We and God." God created us, he created us for each other, and he can enable us to discover new hope for never-ending renewal and enrichment of our marriage covenant. As part of this process, we recognized that marriage is part of our discipleship—our life for others in the world.

A happening. Our whole weekend was a beautiful happening. Marge and I talked more, and about more subjects, with each other in one weekend than sometimes probably in a whole year. We began to rediscover what excited our dating and courtship days.

It became an encounter. As we accepted the method of beginning a dialogue, by each writing a response to each talk and then handing it over to the partner for reading before speaking, we discovered again the multilevel process of human sharing. Feelings and thoughts go together, they are a part of the whole. We were able to discuss our feelings of failure and our feelings of strength.

An insight, important for all marriages, is that every legal divorce is preceded by a longer period of spiritual divorce. Symptoms of the latter are nagging, sadness, separation, withdrawal from honesty, and many others. We spoke of these symptoms in our marriage and how we could cope with them.

While marriage is still the number one choice for living, the state of many marriages is tragic. Marriage Encounter is one way for couples to experience new hope and joy in their relationships.

The lead couples shared freely from their own blowups and how they were finding some handles. They spoke of intimacy, love, and sexuality with an openness that was inspiring and challenging.

"Friendship means being able to speak without careful thinking sometimes," said one spouse. I wrote in my notebook, "Friendship is being able to share what's on my mind, heart, and soul." Marge wrote, "Friendship to me is being able to be open."

The priest said, "Romance is to continue courtship after marriage."

Christ's presence in our marriage equips us with extra resources too seldom used. He urges us to "love our neighbors as we love ourselves." As you do either one, the other also begins. Prayer and faith help us to stay "in touch."

Our writings became like love letters, a forgotten art for most married people. They were just as thrilling as those we wrote before marriage (and we still look at them again often).

And now. The weekend ended with an ecumenical service of communion. Our marriage vows were read for us as preparation. The human covenant becomes a sacred covenant as we invite God into our marriage.

We left Villa Maria just over a year ago. Now we are training to be a lead couple for others. No, the failures in parenting and marriage have not all been resolved. We continue to be human.

Our weekend of encounter was the most meaningful weekend for marriage development that Marge and I have ever had. Our vows of twenty-one years ago became fresh and exciting in a very special way.

Letters

Parenting must be learned

Dear Editor: My role in Mennonite Voluntary Service is as head teacher at a day-care center in Hutchinson, Kansas. This is a new role for me but not a new field. I have worked in child care for four years. Not much, right? Wrong, they have been four of my hardest years.

The reason for this letter is that as I sat and read *The Mennonite* tonight I finally got an idea on how I could speak for my twenty or so children. Lately I have faced inner turmoil because as a Christian there is much that is bothering me. And I don't know what to do about it. Sometimes I get one-sided. We do have some children who come from homes where they are well cared for and loved, and they will end up feeling good about themselves. It's the other ones I write for.

You could say that their folks in their own way love them, but sometimes you are left to wonder. Many of my children will never catch up with the rest of the world. And the world they belong to is filled with stares, whispers, and that horrid sweet flow of pity. These children come from families where the home life is such that they will grow up not feeling good about themselves unless someone starts caring.

But all people, no matter how small, need to feel good about themselves.

When two people get together and decide to marry and raise a family, they should have to take a test to see if they have some simple parenting skills. If these folks are to bring other human beings into the world, they should have to think about that. Sounds like I am a hard person to please. Maybe so, but I have children living in homes where parents don't know how to clean themselves or their children or even their homes. Their children come to us smelling bad, feeling hungry, and needing lots and lots of self-confidence. The most important human need is to be loved.

Somehow, we demand more learning to drive a car or fly a plane than to take care of a life brought into this rushed and confused world. Next August I will be twenty-three and marriage isn't close at hand. But one thing is sure, it makes me wonder what kind of parent I would make.

Now, do I talk about everything that is wrong and not about what I think should be done? This is my problem. As a Christian, I am safe. No earthshaking stands do I have to take. But that doesn't sit right with me, inside. So in some small way this letter is a starting point.

Both church and state, I believe, have to get together and decide on some kind of a course to be taken, perhaps even classes. Go back, start at high school and follow through to college, night school. Teach people what they will need to know so that they may care for the precious gifts God gives them in the form of children. Too many children are being scarred and damaged beyond repair. *Suellen Fenstermaker, 211 West 11th Avenue, Hutchinson, Kansas 67501*

January 4

The Panama Canal treaties

Dear Editor: This article is written for the sole purpose of enlightening the readers on the Panama Canal treaties, old and new. Some of my remarks may be in direct contrast to Delton Franz's (November 22, 1977, issue, *The Mennonite*).

Franz accuses Theodore Roosevelt of seizing an irresistible military and economic opportunity in Panama. The truth is that we never did operate the canal at a profit. But we did make several other purchases, sometimes unauthorized, to our advantage. Should we, for example, return the Louisiana Purchase or Alaska? That hardly sounds reasonable. Neither is the return of the Panama Canal Zone.

Franz mentions a number of grievances to prove how the United States mistreated the Panamanians. No doubt some of this is true. He makes it sound as if the people of Panama had dug the entire canal by hand at ten cents an hour. Panamanians have the highest per capita income in Central America as a result of benefits from the Canal Zone. But this is not now the question to resolve.

His first point is that the Treaty of 1903 did not give us sovereignty over the Canal Zone, partly because we pay a rental fee. This is a rather fuzzy point at best. The treaty does not contain the term *lease*, but the word *cede* is used four times in regard to the Canal Zone. The treaty which the National Assembly of Panama ratified states that the Republic of Panama grants to the United States in perpetuity the use, occupation, and control of the Canal Zone—all rights, powers, and authority as if it were sovereign. In the same treaty, the United States Government assumed the annual obligation of the Panama Railroad Company, a private company which had built a rail link across the Isthmus. Washington bought the entire stock and pays to Panama an annuity of $250,000 as compensation, not rent.

Second, Franz states that US military bases are not essential to the protection of the Panama Canal and US security. A State Department official is quoted to that effect. It could be a rather biased source. His appointment is in the hands of President Carter, and this perhaps affects his thinking. Look what happened to Arthur Burns.

Rather, let us quote independent sources. General V. Kulok, US Marine Corps (retired), "In truth, the canal is an essential link between the naval forces of the United States deployed in the Atlantic and Pacific." It is wishful thinking to believe that Castro or the USSR would not find an opportunity to seize the canal.

Franz would have us believe that the Panama Canal is outdated. "Only 16 percent of the total import and export tonnage goes by way of the Panama Canal," he states. I quote Phil Crane, representative from Illinois, "Nearly 14,000 vessels cross the canal every year with almost 70 percent of the cargo either originated in the United States or bound for it." Please, Delton Franz, let us see the whole picture. If the canal is of as little value as you indicate why does Omar Torrijos want it? Furthermore, isn't it the New York City bankers, who loaned huge sums of money to the communist ruler of Panama, who would benefit by the new treaty?

So, then, we are to give the Panama Canal away and reimburse the recipient to the tune of $50 million in military assistance. And that is not all. Has it ever paid off for the United States to buy friends? Check the voting in the United Nations. Torrijos seized power in a most cruel way in Panama. It could very well be that he would use the $50 million to terrorize and subjugate his opposition. Your tax dollars and mine might well be used to spill innocent blood or perhaps even yours or mine. When will we learn?

Please, give this treaty some prayerful consideration. Delton Franz, you have a great responsibility to enlighten us. At times, articles such as yours make it very difficult for many of us General Conference Mennonites to fully fund our programs. We feel that our leaders do not give us the real picture. Personal opinions do not interest us. We ask for the facts, and then let the decision be ours. *Anna G. Hofer, Route 2, Box 150, Bridgewater, South Dakota 57319*

January 6

Meditation

Catechism

I am much like Adam,
accepting the blessing with ease,
but finding some difficulty in recognizing responsibility.

I am often like Cain,
ministering in that way which seems acceptable to me,
rather than in the way mandated by God.

I am often like Esau,
organizing priorities foolishly.

I am somewhat like Moses,
perfectly content in the background;
appealing my lack of verbal skills,
suggesting that someone more fit be found.

I am sometimes like Jonah,
running from my assignment
because I may look foolish in its performance.

I am much like David,
mercurial in my appeals,
swooping from mountaintop exultation to valley of despair,
from "My soul doth magnify the Lord"
to "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

I am sometimes like Solomon,
asking for wisdom, then going my own way.

I am often like Gideon,
asking for a sign, and then for another sign.

I am much like Sarah, Rebecca, and Leah,
entertaining petty (however fleeting) moments of jealousy.

Again, I am like Naomi,
allowing bitterness to tinge and change my whole life.

I am somewhat like Zachariah,
though preaching God's power,
not quite believing a miracle in my own life.

I am much like Thomas,
doubting what I yearn to believe.

I am often like Peter,
denying my association with Christ,
if only by saying nothing.

Evelyn Minshull

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CONTRIBUTORS

This issue was planned in consultation with the Commission on Education staff. The special education articles were written by Mary Lou Cummings, Box 348, Quakertown, Pennsylvania 18951 (General Conference representative on the five-denomination youth-adult consultation); Muriel Stackley, part-time staff editor; Bernie Wiebe, member of the Family Life Committee; and John Gaeddert, COE executive secretary.

Evelyn Minshull, Route 4, Box 4256, Mercer, Pennsylvania 16137, is a free-lance writer.

CREDITS

Cover, Paul M. Schrock, Box 200, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 99, Gerald Loewen, GCNS; 99, 101, Lois Barrett, GCNS; 102, Lydia Penner, MCC; 103, RNS; 109, Gregg Burner, 307C-298 Beliveau, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2M 1T4.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Sunday schools are down

John Gaeddert

In this issue of *The Mennonite* the Commission on Education is reflecting on two evaluations that were asked for to help give direction to its work. One article pulls together what the delegates at the General Conference sessions in Bluffton said were important in curriculum development. The second summarizes what teachers experienced after using The Foundation Series for the first quarter.

It is important for COE to know what is needed in our congregations' education programs and how they respond to a new curriculum. Both the questionnaire and the evaluation of The Foundation Series indicated general affirmation to what is being done.

However, there is a disturbing trend in our Sunday schools—which are considered to be the basic educational institutions in our General Conference congregations—that indicates we're not doing very well.

Statistics in the General Conference *Handbook of Information* show the following:

	Adult Membership	*Children*	*Total*	*Sunday School Enrollment*
1966	53,735	28,208	81,943	56,158
1971	56,867	27,818	84,685	47,429
1976	59,018	24,882	83,900	40,115

In 1966 about 69 percent of our total potential was enrolled in Sunday school. Five years later that had dropped by 13 percent to 56 percent. By 1976, ten years later, less than half (48 percent of our total population) was enrolled in Sunday school. While our membership plus children held quite steady (even increased slightly), the enrollment in Sunday school has dropped drastically. Add to that the fact that midweek study programs are generally not well attended, and it becomes clear that Christian education is not doing well in our congregations.

The problem goes beyond a mere lack of interest. We're not sure how we should approach or study the Bible. Many views are held on interpreting the Scriptures, and certainly the many radio voices don't help to pull us toward one view. Materialism and secularism occupy our minds and dominate our activities so that we are too exhausted to give serious time to study the Bible. Many parents don't feel qualified for biblical training of their children. Our identification with the congregation as a people of God is fragmented, thus limiting our concern for a common faith.

Perry Yoder, who recently spent two years as Peoples' Teacher of the Word among our congregations, says that congregations on the whole are not organized for nurture and mission, but for control and regulation. More time is spent in running the congregation than in nurturing the members. The congregation is not geared to do in-depth, consistent, ongoing Christian education programming so that serious Bible study can take place. Most of the study done is short-term and on an "as time allows" basis.

How can we become a people of the Word? Do we want to? What structures are needed in our congregations to encourage serious Bible study? What resources do we need to become teaching, learning, caring congregations?

Is there any hope for Christian education in the church?

The parable of the soils (Mark 4:39) would encourage us to prepare the soil so that learning can take place. The seed—the gospel—is good, but production depends on the soil into which it falls.

Could we commit ourselves to some long-range goals of study through actual contracting in a group setting? Such groups would do well to begin with background knowledge to help make Bible study meaningful. David Schroeder's book *Learning to Know the Bible* could establish a general framework for such a study.

Congregations or study groups could work with one of our colleges' or seminaries' continuing education departments or with the Commission on Education to develop a study program. Such courses of study could be taught in our communities using resources that would be jointly agreed upon.

But basic to all of this is the fact that we must begin taking Christian education seriously. We need to think of the congregation as a base for teaching and learning. We all have that which we can learn from each other. Down through history the family has been the first teacher of faith and religion (Deuteronomy 6:4-9). Love for the Word, interest in studying, and human warmth all happen best in the family.

We need the support of each other in this. Let's start a renewal!

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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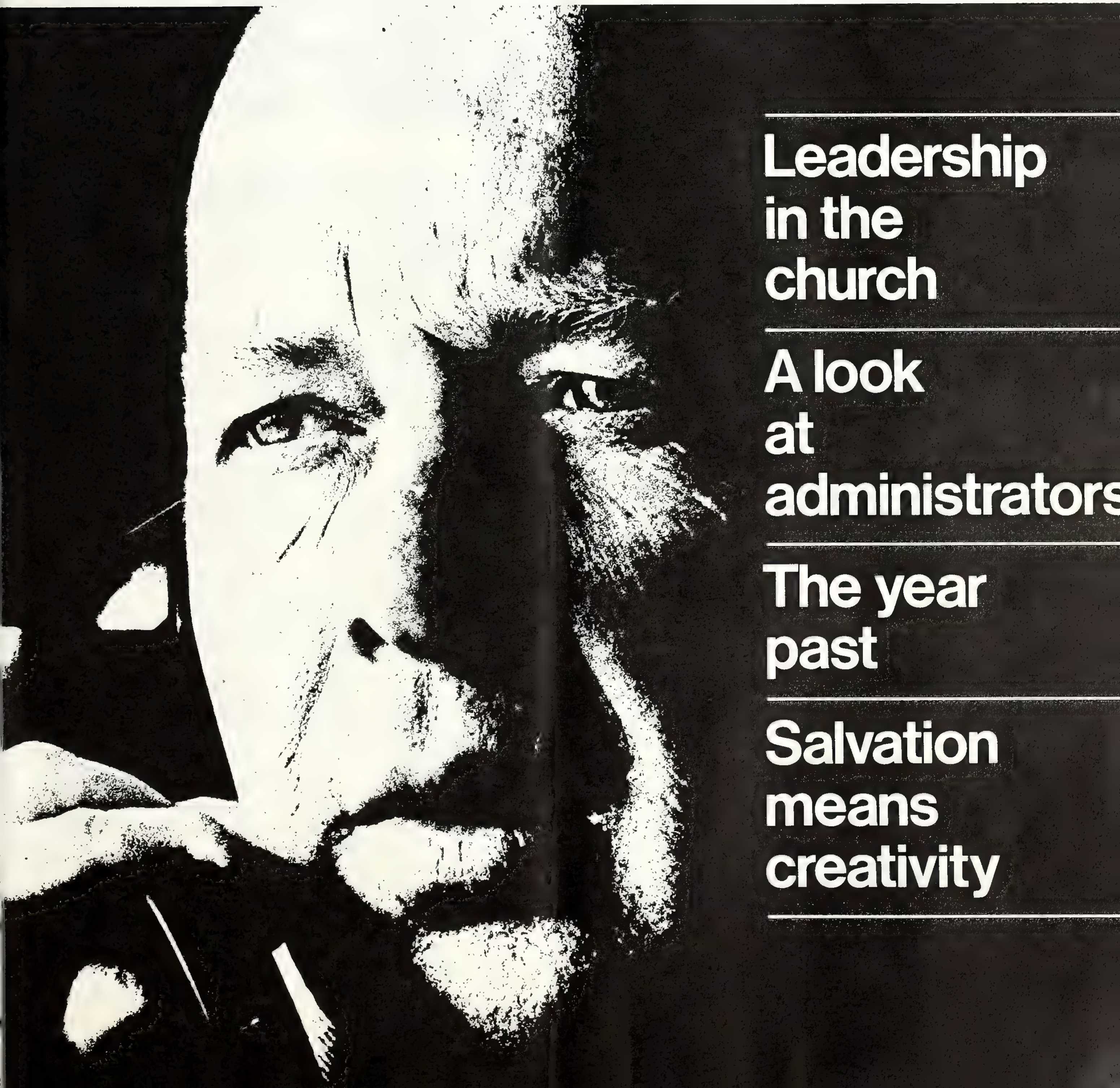
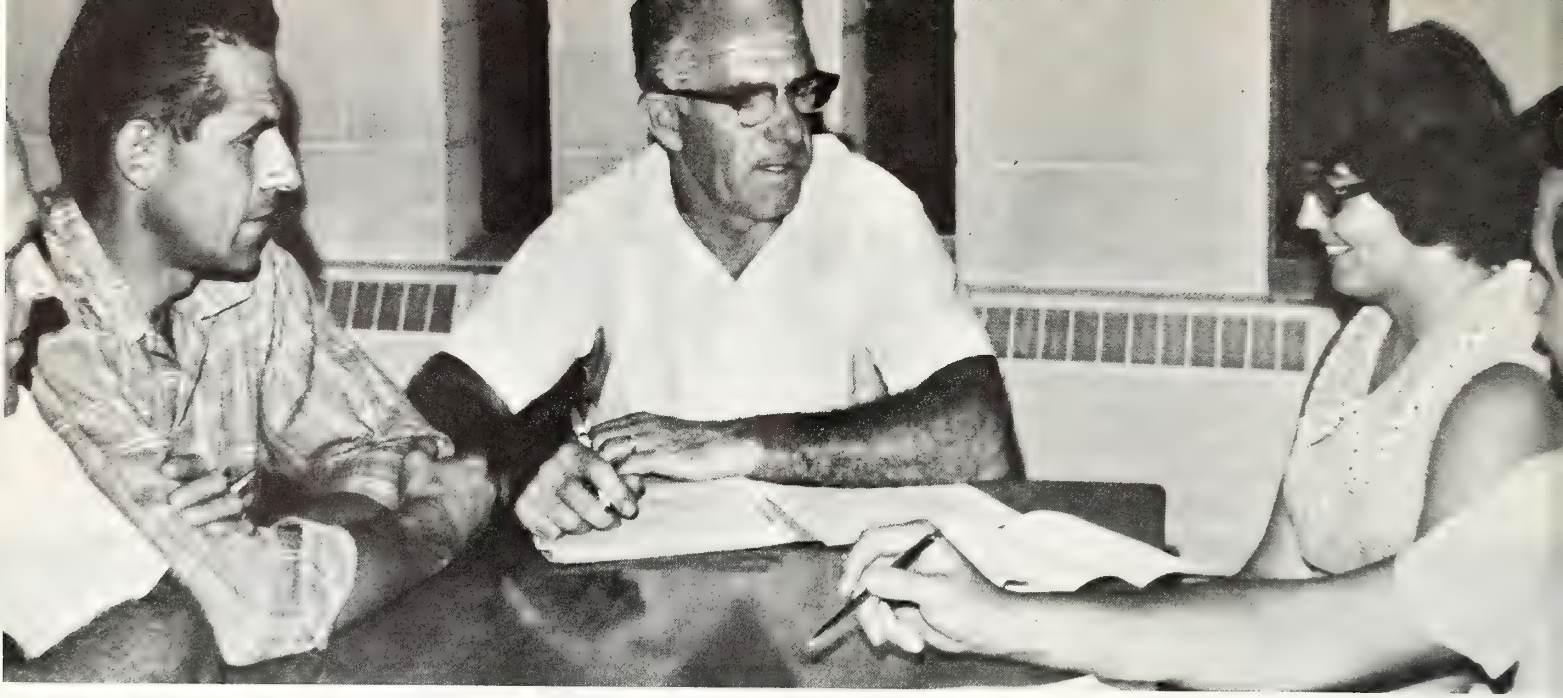


Leadership in the church

A look at administrators

The year past

Salvation means creativity



At annual church meetings, ministers are usually asked to submit a report for congregational review. It is a call for us to be accountable. I don't much like annual reports. The public tasks I've done are visible and shouldn't need reporting. Some tasks are confidential and can't be reported. And statistics somehow don't do justice to a minister's work.

However, the annual report can be an opportunity for dialogue between congregations and ministers about the presuppositions and role definitions which shape our work. Perhaps some of these need to be challenged and reshaped.

Leadership roles

The first three chapters of Paul's letter to the Ephesians highlight God's divine intention. God sent his son Jesus to redeem us. He invites us to become his children, sons and daughters. Those who accept this offer become God's family, the church.

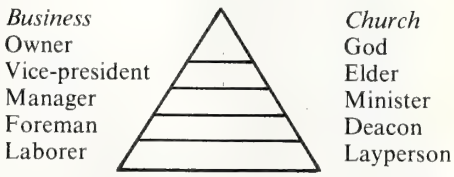
The entire family of God ministers to the world, witnessing of God's work of grace through Jesus, inviting other people to become children of God.

To help the church in its ministering process, some people are called to fulfill particular leadership functions. "And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature personhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ . . ." (Ephesians 4:11-13).

The key leadership functions are to equip, to build up, to facilitate. My primary task is not to do ministry for my congregation, but to better equip *them* to do ministry. Preaching, teaching, and pastoring are not ends in themselves. They are to help in preparing the total family for faithfulness.

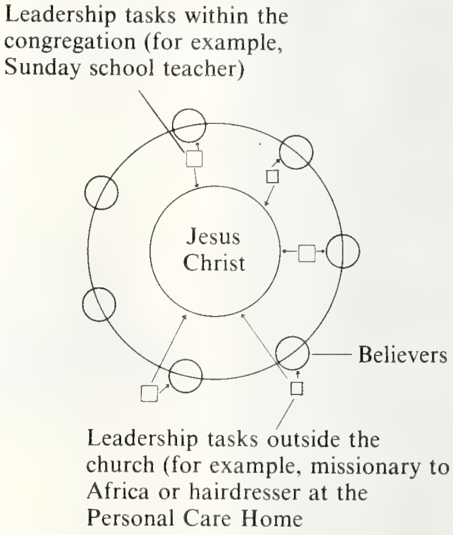
Leadership models

Most organizations, including businesses and churches, use a hierarchical model of leadership. It can be seen as a triangle.



In this model, authority and power increase as you move toward the top. You are accountable only to those above you. In such a model, it would make no sense for the minister to report to a congregation. Decisions are made at the top and filtered down for implementation. It is an efficient way to do things.

As I see it, Ephesians 4 presents a radically different model. I call it the congregational model. It can be seen like a large circle.


Leadership tasks within the congregation (for example, Sunday school teacher)
Jesus Christ
Believers
Leadership tasks outside the church (for example, missionary to Africa or hairdresser at the Personal Care Home

In this model, power, status, and authority are replaced with gifts, functions, and responsibility. There are no ladders to climb and no special status. The fellowship is a priesthood of believers—every Christian is a priest.

But we still need leaders to do certain functions. We discern the gifts and call these people to special tasks, many of which are within the congregation. Service, social action, missions, and evangelism tasks may call people to serve outside the fellowship.

Persons in leadership roles are always accountable to the congregation and to Jesus Christ.

Most leadership roles are for designated terms or specific tasks. Once completed, the process of gifts and functions discernment

LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH

Gary Harder

The Church (family of God) finds its reason for being in Jesus Christ. Persons in leadership roles are always accountable to the congregation and to Jesus Christ.

needs to move us elsewhere. Again, the primary job is to help equip the total family of God for ministry.

In the diagram, the blocks vary in size. Some leadership tasks are bigger than others.

Our Mennonite churches have largely moved away from lay ministry and adopted a professional ministry. Tasks assigned to the minister tend to be the biggest of all. The positive aspect of this change in style is that we can free a person to take the seven or eight years of post-high-school training required for developing the necessary competence for pastoral work. We can then also free this person to devote total vocational energies to ministry.

Nevertheless, there is a danger in this style of ministry. Because they are salaried professionals, we expect ministers to do more and more of our work for us. We expect their tasks to become larger and the tasks for the rest of the family to become smaller. And there is always the subtle temptation for the ministers, because their livelihood depends on the goodwill of the congregations, to speak what the congregations want to hear rather than to speak some of the hard, prophetic teachings from the Bible.

Leadership tasks

What is the minister's most important, overarching task? I believe that my primary task is to help the congregation think biblically.

Karl Barth said, "The Christian theologian (Christian minister) has to have the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other."

The newspaper mirrors our world. We live there—both in its outer and inner spaces—among the international, national, and local affairs, and among the mores, values, emotions, and personal identities of ourselves. We need to be aware and understanding of its reality. But then we must bring the reality of the world into dialogue with the Scriptures.

When a person is depressed what does it mean to think biblically?

There is no verse in the Bible that says "Thou shalt not be depressed." Nor does the Bible say, "When depressed, follow this simple formula."

But, since the Bible is about the real world, stories such as those about Job and Jeremiah do show us illustrations of how people have found victory over depression. Both expressed deep inner frustration to God, even accusing God of deserting them. Job also shares his misery with friends. For us, as we read the Scriptures, there comes a point of identification both in their struggle and in their hope as they "walk through the valley."

Someone in your department is doing a poor job and giving all of you a bad image. What does it mean to think biblically in such a situation?

The example of Jesus is that of confrontation and caring. Problems must be dealt with, ignoring them never really solves them. But confrontation must include Christian love. What is the reason for the poor job? Are there family, money, or personal problems?

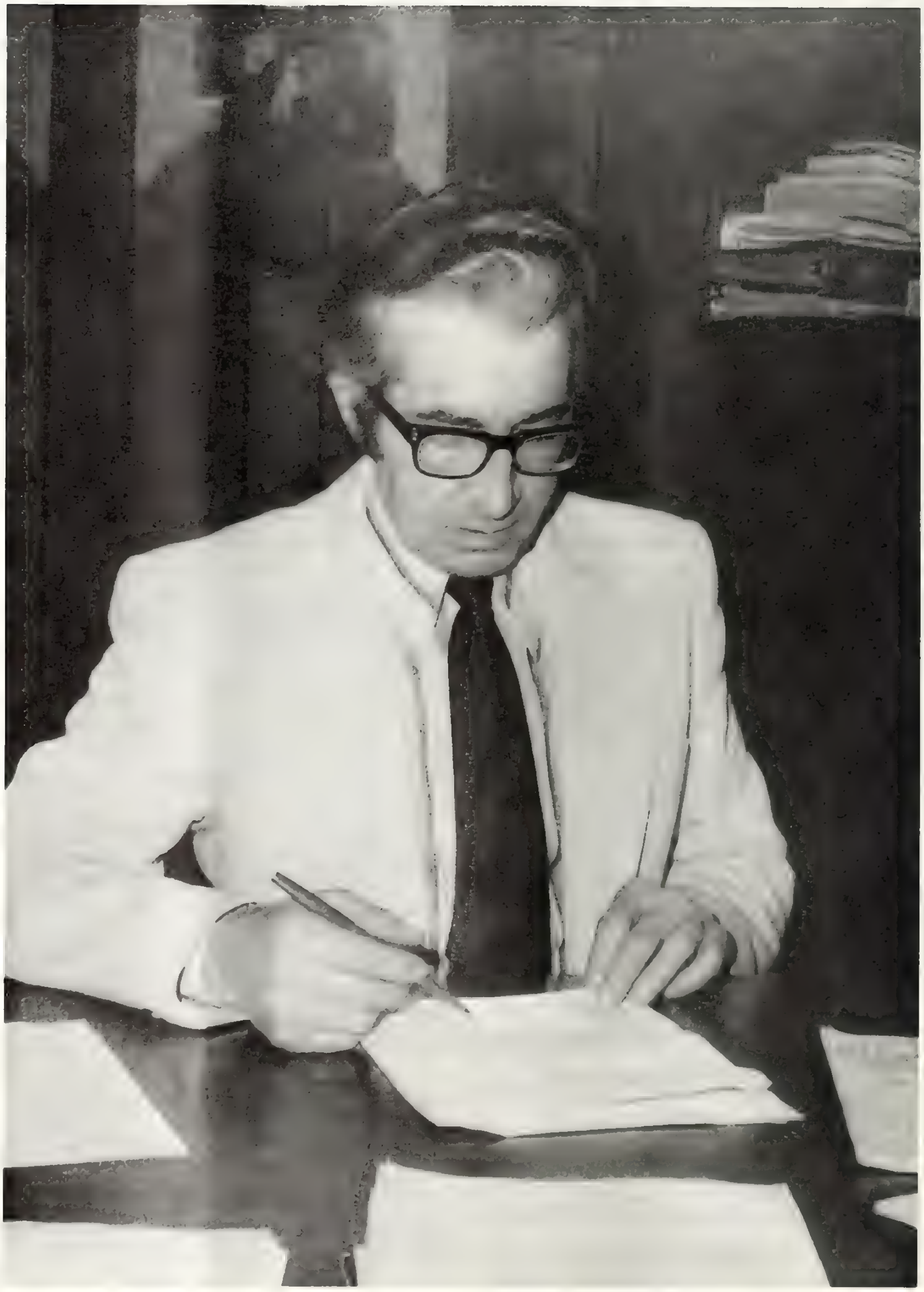
To think biblically is to understand, to capture, to catch the spirit of the way God acts in this world—to become more and more immersed in seeing life from that perspective. To think biblically means understanding our world, our values, our ethics under the searchlight of God's will.

There is a strange silence of the Bible in the lives of many Christians. We too easily give up the task of biblical thinking because it wants to change our lives. It could shape us into people who are "other worldly" even as we are "in the world." The seductiveness of this world, its values and its goods, often blind us to the Bible.

As a servant of the Word *(Diener am Wort),* I have a primary responsibility to put the Scriptures at the center of the life of the congregation—to bring our present real-life situations into a living dialogue with the Bible. All of my equipping tasks—preaching, teaching, counseling, administering—must focus on one central aim: to help people think biblically. It is by thinking biblically that the family of God finds God's answers to life's questions.

A look at administrators

Henry Landes



Administrators serve many different roles. They are financial managers working with many federal and state programs. They are program planners developing one-year plans, five-year plans, and working with planning agencies. They are also fund raisers, grantsmen, and organizers of human resources. They develop structures which efficiently develop and produce the services which their organization offers. They are labor relation specialists, maybe arbitrators—particularly if their business is undergoing union organization.

The roles of administrators are becoming more and more complex. They demand strong persons capable of dealing with a lot of flack. Being administrators is not unlike being experimental airplanes in Lockheed's or Boeing's wind tunnels. In wind tunnels they try to simulate the worst possible conditions that airplanes will face. There are updrafts, downdrafts, and sidewinds. There are many machines to measure stress which engineers observe. They watch for points of disintegration. As the planes fail under the test, new models are brought in and tested.

Administrators are like those experimental airplanes. Daily they face stress and testing from many different directions. There are downdrafts from board members who want to keep costs down. There are updrafts from the staff who want salaries increased. There are crosswinds with new medicaid forms, EEOC, OSHA, AID, etc. And then there are the headwinds of labor unions or malpractice suits.

Another similarity between the roles of administrators and experimental airplanes is that there are a lot of people watching. The board, wives or husbands, the community—everyone watches their performance.

Like some airplanes that Boeing tests, some administrators wash out and do not stand up to the rigors of the job.

There is, however, one key difference in the analogy. Administrators are not machines that can be cast aside when they disintegrate. Administrators, who are the focal point of all this pressure, are human

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Administrators are very lonely people. It has been noted that, "The buck stops here." Chief executive officers know and experience that every day. Unlike other persons in the organization, they have no peers.

beings. But what kind of human beings?

An image. Administrators are very lonely people. It has been noted that "the buck stops here." Administrators know that and experience it every day. The chief executive officers, by definition, stand alone. That's what they are hired for—to stand alone. Unlike other persons in the organization, they have no peers.

Administrators are forced to appear superhuman. I call it the "Batman" image. This image thrust upon them, often by others, allows them very little freedom to be that mixture of strength and weakness, of independence and dependence, of toughness and tenderness, which is what human beings are. We expect them to be what we are not.

Administrators are persons who have high achievement needs. This is not a function of the organizational structure; administrators personally tend to bring these high achievement needs to the job. That's why they are in the job. Administrators tend to set ambitious goals for themselves and for those around them and actively pursue these goals almost at any cost. Many tend to sacrifice other personal goals—family goals, church goals, Christian values—in order to be good administrators of Christian institutions. Many are quite willing to sacrifice personal health. They push their physical bodies beyond healthy limits. Stomach ulcers and hypertension are just a few symptoms for many administrators. The administrators, like the airplanes in the wind tunnels, buckle every once in awhile. The Batman suits don't hold up.

Expectations. We expect administrators to be good supervisors of their people. We expect them to develop good personnel management systems. We want administrators to be sensitive to the human needs of their subordinates, and rightly so. We expect administrators to keep abreast of the staff members' changing goals, interests, needs, and families. We expect administrators to provide regular feedback on staff members. We expect administrators to plan, with the employees, ways of improving persons and work performances.

We expect our administrators to develop organizational structures within which every employee has one, and only one, boss. I think it is an important organizational principle, almost an inalienable right, to have only one boss. You might say it's a biblical principle. Matthew 6:24, "No man can serve two masters." At the same time, boards supervise the administrators as groups; administrators don't have two masters, but twelve or seventy-five.

We expect administrators to develop performance appraisal systems for immediate staff and for the whole system. Boards provide backslapping appraisal. It goes something like this: "Well, I know I haven't seen you for three months (I haven't done my homework), but I know you're doing a good job. Thank you so much for the good work you're doing. . . ." In my work with administrators, I've come to understand how they despise unknowing praise almost as much as unknowing criticism.

Supervision. Administrators are the key to the whole enterprise. That is precisely why they need supervision, the absolutely best available. They are the key persons. It is their performance which determines the performance of the organizations. Boards must hire the best, then supervise them in the best way. They need to be nurtured as unique gifts of God.

Boards have three major functions. One is to establish the mission. It's an obvious one. You can't select chief executive officers for organizations that don't have a mission. The second function is to select the administrators, and the third is to nurture the administrators.

How do we best nurture administrators? How can we best support those whom we select to be our chief executive officers? Before we can manage administrators, boards must manage their own affairs. It's a biblical principle too. Before we can serve others and the church, we must manage our own houses. Too often, we ask administrators to manage both the organization and the board. That's really buying the "Batman" image. The job of administrators is big and getting bigger; it's already too big.

It is the role of boards to supervise the administrators, not vice versa. What does it mean to supervise? I don't mean the big-stick approach, which we all fear. I don't mean sloppy agape, a saccharine kind of backslapping support—I don't think that is support. Supervision is a tricky interpersonal process at any level. *It is not a group process.*

Boards must organize themselves for their most important management job—the supervision of administrators. This can be done by writing job descriptions and establishing criteria for the process by which boards will evaluate administrators.

Evaluation. The chief executive officers in organizations are the most valuable human resource, yet they are usually exempt from a realistic appraisal of their performance. Even the most frank, bravest subordinates don't talk to their bosses like they talk to their colleagues. Accurate, honest, and frequent ongoing performance appraisals are important to keep good people on track. No matter how good they are, good people can be better.

Since most executive officers have high achievement needs, often one of their characteristics is the desire to measure, accurately and unambiguously, the extent of their achievement. In the human service agencies such as hospitals and welfare agencies of various kinds, it's difficult to measure achievement. The challenge to trustees is to develop objective criteria and processes that will both indicate and support administrators' areas of strength and needs for growth.

There is much controversy about performance appraisal, but everyone agrees that one-to-one is the best setting—one supervisor and one supervisee. But boards usually appraise as groups. The key role of chairpersons is to represent the board in the nurturing of administrators. This is not to exclude contact between the administrators and other board members, but merely to focus the will of boards on one person.

Too often, administrators nurture both the staff and the board. But they are human beings in need of counsel, support, admonition, and praise. The boards, through their chairpersons, should provide for this, at least on a monthly basis.

If you intend to provide Christian nurture to administrators, you need to organize your boards to make sure that it happens. It's too important to just wish and hope. Administrators need to be treated as persons.

MCC meeting weathers storm

Some things done, some not

Kitchener, Ontario—One of the most severe snowstorms within memory changed many plans and canceled many events, but the annual meeting of Mennonite Central Committee (International) went about its business here January 26-28—with some modifications.

Scheduled for the Rockway Mennonite School auditorium, the meeting quickly moved to an old downtown hotel—the Walper—on Thursday noon when it became apparent that travel, even in the city, would soon be impossible. Board and staff members who had arrived before the storm struck booked in at the Walper and carried on. Chairman Newton Gingrich, who lives only some twenty-five miles out of Kitchener, arrived Friday noon, part of the way by snowmobile.

Although attendance from the local congregations was virtually nil, the board (local persons co-opted as proxies gave it the needed quorum) had more time than ever to listen to program reporting by staff. The extra time came as the result of the cancellation of two public meetings and a discussion by US representatives of possible changes in stateside structure.

A dinner in honor of retired chairperson H. Ernest Bennett of Indiana, postponed last year due to a storm in Illinois, was again canceled. Instead, a citation and tribute were read in his absence during the Friday afternoon meeting. Bennett was the third chairperson in MCC's fifty-seven-year history.

This was the fourth year running that storms have severely hampered the annual meeting proceedings. The board voted to initiate a feasibility study for a change in fiscal year so that the board meeting can take place at a time when snowstorms are less likely to interfere.

Strong affirmation was given by members to regional development. The West Coast and Central States organizations were encouraged to continue their efforts and hopes were expressed that other areas would develop along regional lines.

A scheduled Thursday afternoon meeting of US representatives on the MCC board to consider national program and structure did not materialize due to the absence of most members. However, the board decided to ask the chairman and executive secretary to meet with US Conference committees to interpret a "findings" statement produced last September by a joint MCC-MCC (Canada) executive committee meeting, and to invite response.

MCC staff and board members worked through the agenda for the annual meeting in this gracious-looking room. Due to the blizzard, less than half of the board members were able to make it. (Fifteen of thirty-four, plus three proxy votes, made a quorum.) But, if all board members had fought their way through the snow, where would they have sat?

It is planned that the US members will meet at next year's session—to take place in California January 25-27—and that a larger consultation on the subject will be held sometime in 1979.

The findings statement, accepted by the board with one opposing vote, affirms that "the US constituency needs to form some kind of body or structure for general US agenda and for reporting by US subsidiary groups. . . ."

Board members voted to budget $500,000 for an emergency relief and reconstruction program in eastern India where a cyclone did massive damage in November last year. About $275,000 of this will be raised in the constituency with the rest coming from Canadian Government matching grants through CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency).

John Wieler of the MCC (Canada) overseas department illustrated his report on the cyclone with slides shot during his December visit to Gunter District on India's east coast. The slides showed human and animal bodies strewn through the rubbish of annihilated villages.

"How do we respond?" he asked committee members. "We must continue to suffer with people, to weep with them, or else we harden. We must get ourselves deeper into this thing rather than withdraw."

Concern was expressed about MCC's involvement in Vietnam. Board members reported constituency fears that MCC would become identified with the North Vietnamese. Elmer Neufeld commented that MCC has not endorsed the Vietnam Government, but works there to meet human need, just as it works in other countries where it does not favor government policies. Budget for Vietnam in 1978 is $83,000, as compared to $1,000,000 in 1976.

A major change in overseas programming will be made with the elimination of a country director in Indonesia and the establishing of a direct administrative relationship with the two Mennonite church synods in that country. This is the first time MCC is trying this.

The indigenization trend is also proceeding in India where more and more of the administration and program are being shifted to Indian people. In all of the overseas programs there appears to be a strong and increasing effort made to cooperate with existing Mennonite mission efforts to avoid duplication, and to enhance the witness of the "good news" in a wholistic way.

For Africa, staff predicted an increasing emphasis on the need for material aid for refugees created by armed conflicts. More emphasis will also be placed in 1978 on a peacemaking methodology, particularly in southern Africa, and a ministry to refugees other than in kind.

In Bangladesh, job creation programs will become a high priority together with agricultural development and family planning. More volunteers will be placed in the Philippines, and plans are under way for an MCC-Mennonite missions presence in Ireland.

MCC staff presented a paper on material aid which stated, "Relief deserves to exist along with education, evangelism, medicine, and development in a comprehensive ministry to human suffering." Although the paper admitted the negative effects of material aid—self-respect and initiative is undermined, the local economy is affected, and dependencies are created—it did not give specific guidance to the North American constituency on what to prepare for material aid. MCC staff said they were aware of this, and expressed determination to define material aid strategy during 1978.

CIDA coordinator Romeo Maione spoke to the gathering. "Man is the king of the earth," Maione began. "We can no longer hide behind the apron strings of God. We cannot blame him for nuclear weapons, wars, injustice, and hunger. Man created those things. We have become the responsible agents of development in our world.

"We can begin by knocking off our waste," he advised. "We are deep in sin in North America because we are using three-fourths of the resources in the world unresponsibly by building obsolescence into products and by building armaments."

Maione pointed out injustices caused by international corporations. "National governments are social governments," he said. "They take care of things like social security. The world's economy is run by international corporations and meetings of heads of state—there is no regulatory body. What can national governments do—declare war on multinational corporations? We need people whose faith is not confined to a patriotic myth."

There are presently 742 volunteers serving with MCC in 46 programs located in 40 different countries. In 1977 there were 705 applications of whom 37 percent were placed—46 percent of the constituents and 22 percent of the non-Mennonites (of whom there were 282 last year). Personnel in service from Canada account for 39 percent of the total.

Constituency contributions in 1977 were only 2 percent higher than those received in 1976, while total income was up only 1 percent. Material aid contributions were down by $700,000 over 1976, while cash contributions were up $550,000—due in large measure to Self-Help sales.

Thirty-eight percent of total income was from nonconstituency sources such as CIDA, US AID, volunteer earnings, Self-Help sales, and interest income. Total expenditures of $10,147,000 were $1,300,000 lower than in 1976. Budget for 1978 is $8,591,000, excluding the $500,000 for India.

New members on the executive committee are Edmund Janzen and Bruce Harder, both of California. Newton Gingrich remains chairman and Elmer Neufeld vice-chairman. Roy Sider was reelected assistant secretary. *Compiled from reports by Dave Kroeker of the* Mennonite Reporter, *and Sarah Ann Eby of MCC Information Services.*

Members of the Native Ministries Board accepted responsibility for a self-study of their work among native people.

Canadian Conference expands ministry

Winnipeg—The Conference of Mennonites in Canada has launched the most significant outreach ministry in its seventy-five-year history. At the February 2-4 sessions of the Council of Boards, the decision was reached to respond to the call from *Umsiedler* in Germany and Chinese Canadians in Vancouver and Winnipeg for financial support in church planting and personnel training.

The General Board ratified a decision to develop a program in West Germany for training ministers. In his report to the General Board, H. J. Gerbrandt said that there is an urgent need for the training of ministers and other church workers. In the meantime "we will continue to need short-term workers for Bible studies, evangelistic and deeper-life services, and resource people for ministers' and teachers' courses."

The revised 1978 budget of $916,000 does not include the $80,000 item for expanded *Umsiedler* work. Henry Gerbrandt outlined to the General Board a program to raise this amount by special appeals to congregations and individuals. Jake Fransen, vice-chairman of the conference, told the General Board that "the appeal of the project is great, and people will respond as they have done in the past."

Rapid development of the ministry to Chinese people in Vancouver, the emergence of a growing Chinese Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, and the prospects of outreach to Chinese people in Toronto prompted the Congregational Resources Board to budget $46,000 for its 1978 evangelism ministry.

With a view to meeting the needs of these expanding outreach programs, the General

Board decided to implement a strong stewardship program which would inform congregations about the work of the conference and educate individuals about the benefits of large-gift giving.

With the development of outreach ministries to *Umsiedler* and Canadian Chinese as well as to native Canadians, boards looked at the question of combining these ministries under one board. The tentative question of such a structural change was posed to the Native Ministries Board, the General Board, and the Congregational Resources Board.

The Canadian Mennonite Bible School Board resolved to present a long-range plan for the development of the college complex, and a program for financing such a development. College students engaged board members in a discussion about the board's plans to expand the college program and physical complex. The students, seemingly, were opposed to any large-scale expansion. The board emerged from a lengthy "in camera" session with a decision to budget $15,000 a year for maintenance repairs on the existing buildings at the college complex.

The General Board and the College Board will approach the 1978 conference floor with a $43,000 over-expenditure, which includes a $30,000 bill for an electrical distribution system on the campus, and a $13,000 over-expenditure on the Heritage Centre building under construction. Budgeting for a $20,000 tunnel was covered by special donations.

In other business, the Congregational Resources Board resolved to enter into closer relationships with the congregations whose building programs or personnel it was subsidizing. Self-sufficiency as well as accountability to the church community were seen as the goals of a negotiated contract between the board and a congregation.

The CR Board endorsed its use of the *Mennonite Reporter* as its primary vehicle for communicating Canadian Conference news and issues, although some board members voiced their desire to have a Canadian conference periodical.

Lawrence Klippenstein, conference historian and archivist, commented on the structural problem of having the history-archives committee responsible to three different boards. He compared the history-archives committee to an orphaned child. "If the child becomes attractive and intelligent, we will become proud of it. When the day comes that the child will bring income into the family, all the relatives will fight over it, seeking to adopt it as their own," he said. Klippenstein emphasized the inter-Mennonite character of the Heritage Centre under construction.

The resignation of Ike Froese, executive secretary for Native Ministries, was accepted by the board. Froese forwarded a resignation effective on September 1 of 1979.

The Native Ministries Board, upon request of the General Board, accepted responsibility for a study of native ministries which was part of a mandate at the 1976 and 1977 conferences. The General Board declined the responsibility, with Henry Gerbrandt suggesting that the General Board go on record as asking the Native Ministries Board to do the study and to make appointments as necessary. David P. Neufeld, conference chairman, said that if Native Ministries so wished, the General Board could receive the findings and carry them forward. *Irene Friesen Petkau*

Women: Managing themselves and others

Women today are facing situations unrelated to the past.

It is still widely believed that a woman's place is in the home. Why, then, are more than half of all women between eighteen and sixty-four years of age in the labor force? That is more than 34 million women in the United States. Percentages are similar in Canada. Women make an essential contribution to the nation's economy, and, says the US Department of Labor, do not take jobs away from men.

Both the increasing percentage of women working, and the changing nature of their work, is a relatively recent development. Currently, the leading edge for women in careers is working as supervisors and managers.

Seminars to teach women these skills are becoming common. On February 2 eighty women attended a Women in Management workshop in Wichita, Kansas. Among those attending were Tina Block Ediger, Herta Funk, and Eleanor Loewen from the central offices of the General Conference in Newton, Kansas. The workshop was led by Matti Gershenfeld, a psychologist specializing in career programs for women in management with the US Civil Service.

Ediger, Funk, and Loewen attended because they believe Mennonite women need to learn leadership. Tina, who is director of mission services for the Commission on Overseas Mission, noted that women who are missionaries often initiate significant projects overseas, and in several instances schools have been founded by women. In North America, in contrast, women are usually not encouraged to assume leadership roles. "We need role models for women," observed Herta, "beyond the traditional expectations society has for women." Herta is director of adult education for the Commission on Education.

Eleanor Loewen, director of career planning at Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas), and director of student services for the Commission on Education, said that for her the workshop emphasized the need for women to take added responsibility. "There has to be growth," she reflected. "Women who are homemakers, as well as those who are working outside the home, need to realize that they have other abilities. Women need to take themselves seriously."

The workshop highlighted problems women can expect to meet as they become managers. One is how to relate to men. And men in management often have difficulties relating to women managers. Lists of do's and don'ts guide both sexes through the stereotypes each has of the other. Men, for example, need to learn that not every woman is a secretary. Women need to learn that not every man is an authority.

Management entails loneliness. Women, the workshop suggested, should be aware that a manager (male or female) does not usually maintain warm human relationships with clerical staff. And for women managers, neither will they fit into the "boys' club." Furthermore, assertive characteristics in a woman are normally considered negative by men and other women.

What implications does this have for a sense of worth? Tina, Herta, and Eleanor were unanimous in their concern that Christians should not relate to each other on the basis of status. Is it impossible, they queried, to maintain good social relations, and a sense of warmth and worth, if one becomes a manager?

They do, nevertheless, see a need for continuation of women's organizations within the church. At the present time it is the way in which women become visible to the church as leaders. It was through Women in Mission that women were recognized and allowed into leadership councils, such as the commissions on education, home ministries, and overseas mission.

Humorously, but also poignantly, they wondered if the time would come when men would ask to sit on the board of Women in Mission.

That comment suggested the distance women still have to travel before being recognized as persons with ability. *Vic Reimer*

The Mennonite

Central District Edition

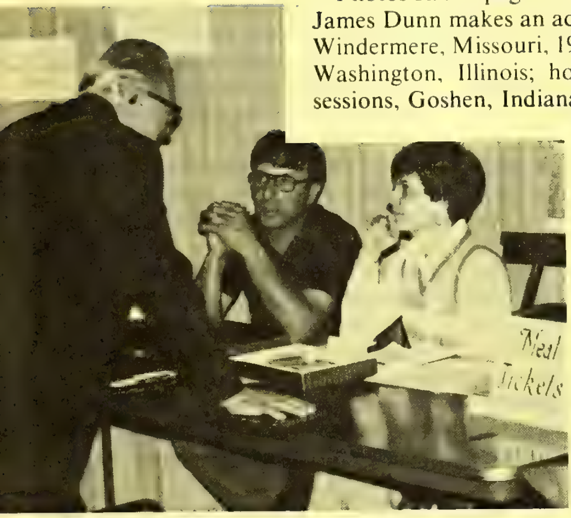
CENTRAL DISTRICT REPORTER February 21, 1978

Central District Conference

Wooster, Ohio— March 30-April 2

The 1978 Central District Conference will be held March 30-April 2 at First Church of the Brethren, Wooster, Ohio. District churches in eastern Ohio are the hosts. Registration materials were sent to congregations the first week in February. Any church which has not received these materials should contact Oak Grove Church, Route 1, Smithville, Ohio 44677, or telephone (216) 669-4373. Registration blanks should be returned promptly to allow ample time to prepare for accommodations. The March 21 *Reporter* will feature the conference program.

Photos on this page were taken at previous district conferences. Clockwise starting at right: James Dunn makes an address at the 1971 conference, Berne, Indiana; lunch line at Camp Windermere, Missouri, 1972 conference; Curt Birky with young people at 1976 conference in Washington, Illinois; hosting committee at 1976 conference; mission hearing at 1973 sessions, Goshen, Indiana.



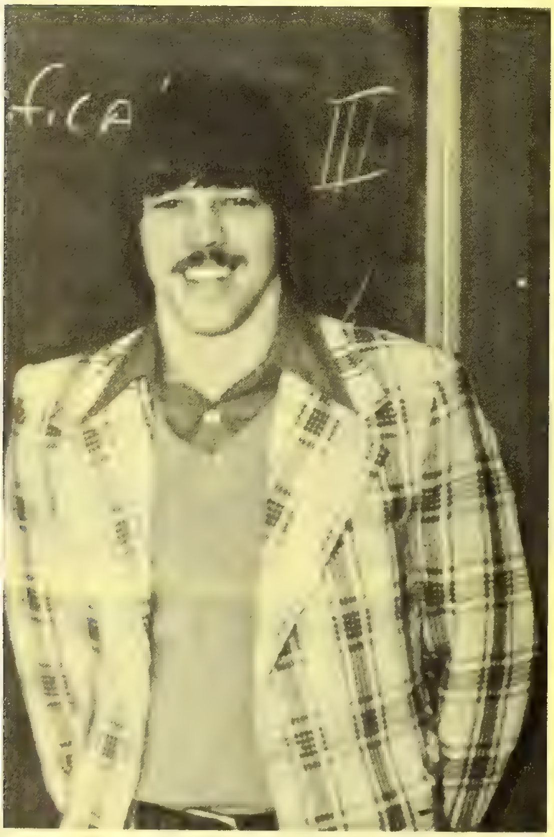
Education committee reports activities

The education and publication committee reports this month on their long-range objectives. Members of the committee are Jim Mohr, Bluffton, Ohio, chairperson; Ronald Hunsicker, Elkhart, Indiana, secretary; Paul Goossen, Wayland, Iowa; Elizabeth Hostetler, Lima, Ohio; Doyle Lehman, Berne, Indiana; and Jo Ropp, Normal, Illinois.

The committee presented the following list of objectives at the executive council meeting at Bluffton College, August 4, 1977.

1. The education committee is committed to a five-year trial period with an aggressive youth ministry which would develop and train local congregational youth leadership.
2. We are prepared to continue the *Central District Reporter* as the vehicle by which news, commentary, and devotional material can be shared with members of the district.
3. We are prepared to engage in an aggressive needs-assessment program. We will collect data from the congregations and from other sources to identify needs in the area of education.
4. We are prepared to make use of The Foundation Series curriculum. This can be done through workshops, seminars, conferences, and clinics. We are planning several regional workshops in the spring of 1978.
5. We are prepared to explore the possibilities of Project Teach for the fall of 1978 or the spring of 1979.
6. We commit ourselves to promote the church-college scholarship fund.
7. The prime focus of the committee is on local leadership training. Therefore we are prepared to initiate and operate several regional schools and seminars. Their purpose will be to train persons to lead a variety of educational experiences within the church context.

The committee solicited the following articles by district youth workers Jim Amstutz and Curt Birky.



Jim Amstutz, eastern Central District youth worker, met with many area youth groups in 1977.

Goals expand for youth ministry

Happenings. Youth ministry has been the focus of my work in 1977. A fire was kindled for me as I prepared a presentation titled "The Unique Contributions of Youth in the Church" for the Festival of the People held last spring. The spring cluster workshops touched upon that subject and in September a joint youth ministry workshop was held with the corresponding Mennonite Conference churches with author Rich Bimler as resource person. Bimler serves as assistant executive secretary for district services of the Missouri Synod's Lutheran Board of Youth Ministry. He helped sort out our expectations as youth advisors and teachers.

Senior high retreat at Camp Friedenswald was the high point of the summer for me with the General Conference sessions at Bluffton, Ohio, running a close second. (I worked with the junior high group.)

The Youth for Friedenswald project was a huge success with $1,200 raised by the district youth groups. With the funds a new Ping-Pong table, bumper pool table, and a sixteen-millimeter movie projector were purchased.

The fall cluster workshops looked at ways the congregations can best use the gifts of young believers.

Reflections. People are getting involved in youth ministry. Numbers are significantly increasing at conference youth events and at Camp Friedenswald. New youth groups are being formed and old ones rejuvenated. Although not always well attended, the area sponsor workshops are well received and appreciated.

Healthy relationships are being formed with youth and adults throughout the Central District. Cooperation with the Mennonite Conference is encouraging. Working with the various churches provides a unique insight into the composition of the Central District Conference. Each church offers a different approach to youth ministry and life in the believers' church.

Goals. A major concern for the coming year will be peace education. As the government reviews the status of the volunteer army, much needs to be done in terms of peace awareness. A preregistration program is being designed in which individuals and churches work through the nonresistance questions before their status is in jeopardy. (See page A-6.)

Another goal is to evaluate the post-high situation in the eastern Central District. There is always concern but very little action taken in this area.

And finally, I plan to work with churches on a more individual basis to better facilitate need assessment and goal actualization in youth ministry. *Jim Amstutz, eastern Central District youth worker*

Cluster groups highlight fall activities

The fall of 1977 provided several settings for our church youth and sponsors to spend time with each other. Here are some highlights.

Activities at the cluster level were expanded this year as sponsors met in September for supper and discussion of the question, "What is my task as a youth sponsor?" In December the sponsors again met for a meal, fellowship, and sharing ideas on "Working with the Youth Group President." Another cluster-level activity was a young peoples' evening meeting, which included recreation, games, and refreshments—all arranged by a host youth group. Many new friendships have been formed among our Mennonite people through these activities.

Youth group officers and sponsors from ten congregations met October 28-29 at Camp Menno Haven, Tiskilwa, Illinois, for a training workshop in youth work skills. Much input was given and many ideas shared through discussion of leadership styles, communication skills, and program planning.

Approximately 115 people participated in this year's youth institute entitled "Youth in the Church." Recreation, singing, seminars, and group discussion were again a part of the program. Clarence Sutter of Highway Village spoke on "Jesus, His Friends and Your Friends." The Lombard (Illinois) Mennonite Church hosted the group.

Snow camps provided another stimulating setting for fun and learning. Many of our young people participated in one of these weekends held in January at Camp Friedenswald. *Curt Birky, western Central District youth worker*

A small group gathers for discussion at the western Central District sponsors' and officers' workshop. Curtis Birky led the October 28-29 meeting held at Camp Menno Haven, Tiskilwa, Illinois.

Workshops to offer leadership training

Ron Ropp, chaplain of Mennonite Hospital, Bloomington, Illinois, and Ron Hunsicker, director of the pastoral services department of Oaklawn Psychiatric Center, Elkhart, Indiana, will be leading identical seminars 350 miles apart.

Ron Ropp will be at Camp Menno Haven, Tiskilwa, Illinois, February 24-25 at an inter-Mennonite workshop for deacons, elders, or anyone doing church member visitation. Pastors are also invited to discuss how lay leaders doing visitation can become an effective part of what has often been considered only the pastor's responsibility.

Ron Hunsicker will be leading a similar workshop at Bluffton (Ohio) College, March 3-4. Both workshops begin Friday evening and end Saturday afternoon.

At the Bluffton workshop, in addition to Hunsicker's seminars, James Derstine, Hedy Sawadsky, and Charles Lord will be leading parallel sessions for congregational and board chairpersons, pastors, education committee members, Sunday school superintendents, peace and service representatives, and persons interested in peace education in the family and congregation.

James Derstine, pastor of the Neil Avenue Mennonite Church in Columbus, Ohio, has done graduate study in group processes. Working in his own congregation, he has developed some tools to aid the pastor and congregation working together as a team. He has also looked at the pastor's role as an employee of the congregation.

Hedy Sawadsky of Church and Community Services in Elkhart, Indiana, has served as director of Christian education at several churches and as a resource person for Project Teach. She will offer help with one of the most common problems facing congregations: enlisting teachers.

Charles Lord has been traveling for Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section, holding workshops in the United States and Canada. His background includes military participation and a change in position about such participation, working with children's literature, and providing helps for newly elected peace and service representatives.

Each congregation has been sent descriptive folders, schedules, cost information, and registration blanks. All congregations are invited to send a carload of representatives. *Stan Bohn, Central District conference minister*

Bluffton College is the site for the Project Teach summer workshop scheduled for August 21-25.

Project Teach set August 21-25

A Project Teach summer workshop is being planned for August 21-25 at Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio. The program will be sponsored by the General Conference Commission on Education and the Central District education and publication committee.

Classes are planned for Sunday school superintendents as well as for teachers of kindergarten through adult classes.

This is the first summer venture for Project Teach. It is intended to open the door for public school teachers who have found it difficult to attend previous sessions held during the school year. Further details will be announced at a later time. *James Mohr, Bluffton, Ohio; chairperson of education and publication committee*

About people

Marjorie Derksen, Olivet Church, Clearbrook, British Columbia, has begun a two-year term under Mennonite Voluntary Service in the day-care center in Markham, Illinois. She is a graduate of Mennonite Educational Institute in Clearbrook. Her parents are John and Nellie Derksen of Clearbrook.

Dorothy Glanzer, Hutterthal Church, Freeman, South Dakota, has begun two years of Mennonite Voluntary Service providing home health-care for senior citizens in Cincinnati, Ohio. She is a graduate in nursing from Goshen (Indiana) College and has worked in a hospital and as a camp nurse. Her parents are Moses and Reva Glanzer of Canistota, South Dakota.

Don Mockler, Pleasant Oaks Church, Middlebury, Indiana, is the first recipient of the Middlebury Exchange Club's Golden Deed Award. He received the award last fall. Don is a first-aid instructor, a licensed emergency medical technician, and a leader in the community emergency medical service.

Vic and Bev Plessinger, Oak Grove Church, Smithville, Ohio, left December 14 for Harlan, Kentucky, to assist the Mennonite Disaster Service rebuilding project there. Vic was to serve as director and Bev was to work in the office. They planned to complete the assignment by the end of January.

The Ladies Aid of Meadows (Illinois) Church reports that one of their senior citizens, *Carrie Raber* of Pontiac, made all the comforter tops for their group. This totaled 7,450 blocks. There is still a supply ahead, and Carrie Raber is still cutting blocks.

Cheryl Troyer, Oak Grove Church, Smithville, Ohio, is in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on Goshen College's study-service trimester until April 10. Her faculty leaders are Richard and Marcy Gerig. Richard is the son of Virgil and Mary Kay Gerig, Elkhart.

Changes in pastoral leadership

Wendell Badertscher, assistant pastor in youth ministry and Christian education of Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio, has resigned his position. He plans to increase his carpentry work as soon as he can be replaced.

Virgil M. Gerig has moved from Freeman, South Dakota, to Elkhart, Indiana, where on November 27 he was installed as pastor of the Hively Avenue Church. His wife, Mary Kay, is working in Greencroft Nursing Home. They are the parents of five children the youngest of whom is a student at Goshen (Indiana) College. Gerig was pastor of Salem-Zion Church in Freeman for nine years. Earlier he had held Ohio pastorates at Oak Grove Church in Smithville and at Grace Church in Pandora.

Last fall *Willard E. Roth* became the coordinating pastor of a lay team ministering to Southside Fellowship, Elkhart, Indiana. His wife, Alice, is director of alumni affairs at Goshen (Indiana) College. Their son is a college student and their daughter is in voluntary service with Mennonite Central Committee.

Badertscher

Gerig

Roth

Nursing director attends geriatric workshop

Jacquelyn S. Kinder, director of Mennonite Hospital School of Nursing in Bloomington, Illinois, was among 150 participants who attended a five-day geriatrics conference at Nebraska Methodist Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska, November 13-17.

The conference focused on the promotion of quality care for the aging. Kinder said the content of the conference would have "far-reaching impact on geriatric nursing and nursing practices throughout the country."

The conference was sponsored by the Helene Fuld Health Trust. A total of $55,757 in Helene Fuld grants has been received by the school over the past four years.

College chapel includes singers, mountaineers

Four chapel services were held during the winter module at Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio. Chapel services are held at 10:50 a.m., Thursdays, at the Marbeck Center Barn and are open to the public.

On January 12, 19, and 26, campus pastor James Mohr presented a series of messages on the Book of Jonah.

The February 2 chapel service was led by Donald Pannabecker, acting academic dean at Bluffton College.

Persons providing fall chapel services have included Honeytree, a contemporary religious singer from Fort Wayne, Indiana; James Amstutz, youth worker for the eastern Central District; Herman Bontrager, director of personnel development for Mennonite Central Committee; the Bluffton College Chorale; a college group who attended the annual Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship assembly; and students from the September module mountaineering course.

Audiovisuals catalog, supplement available

A catalog of the films, filmstrips, and slide sets available through Mennonite Central Committee film libraries is available for congregations and other organizations.

The catalog features a brief description of the materials in the libraries at the MCC and MCC (Canada) general offices and regional offices.

The catalog also indicates which audiovisuals are available from libraries operated by church conference offices.

In addition to the catalog, an update of recent material added to the libraries is available.

Catalogs are available from MCC at 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

WOMEN
AT
WORK

Nominees announced for CDWM offices

First vice-president

Elinor Kreider (Mrs. Gerald), Eighth Street Church, Goshen, Indiana, grew up in Moundridge, Kansas. She is a graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, and has taught school eighteen years. She has served in her local congregation as president of Women in Mission, Sunday school teacher, and deaconess. Elinor is the mother of six children and five grandchildren.

Carol Sprunger (Mrs. Roy), First Church, Berne, Indiana, attended Bluffton (Ohio) College and two of her three children are students there. Along with her homemaking, Carol has served her local church as president of the Women's Missionary Society, Sunday school teacher, and Camp Friedenswald board member.

Second vice-president:

Lola Miller (Mrs. Leo), Meadows (Illinois) Church, is a homemaker and mother of three children. She serves her church as a library committee member, Sunday school teacher, and education department member. Lola does a lot of reading and enjoys gardening and sewing.

Sue Sprunger (Mrs. Ben), First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, was one of the principal organizers of the community day-care center in Bluffton. She is a member of her church's board of deacons and deaconesses. She is the mother of three children and does some substitute teaching at a nursery school.

Secretary:

Mildred Freyenberger (Mrs. Robert), Crawfordsville, Iowa, lives on a farm and is the mother of four children. She is active in her local congregation, the Eicher Emmanuel Church near Wayland. Mildred is also secretary of the planning committee for women's retreat this year.

Gwen Jones (Mrs. Bob), Maplewood Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana, is the mother of two sons. She was a part of the Evangelism Explosion training group in her church and has done personal followup with the women.

Bluffton College Women's Advisory Council:

Doris Bohn (Mrs. Alden), Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Indiana, is a graduate of Bluffton College.

Ada Lapp Litweiler (Mrs. Lester), Smithville, Ohio, is a former member of the faculty in elementary education at Bluffton.

Harvella Stutzman (Mrs. Robert), Normal, Illinois, is a graduate of Bluffton College and has a daughter attending there.

Mary Raber (Mrs. Ernest), Sugarcreek, Ohio, is a former missionary to China and has a son at Bluffton College.

Amendment proposed to CDWM constitution

The following amendment to the Central District Women in Mission constitution will be presented at the annual business meeting on Friday evening, March 31, at Smithville, Ohio.

"Bylaw 2, Appointive Offices. A. The first vice-president shall be the chairperson of the nomination committee. Two other persons shall be appointed by the executive committee to serve with her. They shall present to the annual meeting of the organization a nominee or nominees for each office to be filled. Nominations from the floor shall also be called for. Nominations shall not be made without the particular nominee having consented to the use of her name."

This amendment would permit (but not require) a single-slate ballot if this should be wanted in future elections.

A living, active church

A local roofing company notified Mennonite Disaster Service representatives of *Meadows Church,* Chenoa, Illinois, that the company had outdated inventory for the use of MDS if the local group would pick it up. The church group collected and stored three truckloads of material, and sent word statewide concerning availability of their material for disaster service.

The Chicago Area Mennonites are sponsoring two intensive weekend seminars called "Seminary Without Walls." In the first seminar, February 3-5, Hubert Brown led a study on spiritual gifts. The second weekend seminar, April 21-23, will be led by Lupe DeLeon on the topic of church growth.

In addition to continuing other established Sunday school classes, the *Mennonite Church of Normal* had three elective short-term classes: "Care of One Another," a study of mutual aid; "Planning for Death," taught by Ron Ropp, hospital chaplain; and "Parents With Teenagers," taught by a couple.

A marriage preparation seminar is being held at *Eighth Street Church,* Goshen, Indiana, for five weeks beginning on January 30.

A Mennonite Central Committee hunger concerns seminar was held in *Carlock (Illinois) Church* on Saturday, January 7. The seminar was sponsored by the Illinois hunger concerns committee, and dealt with hunger in the United States as well as hunger in Illinois.

Silver Street Church, Goshen, Indiana, is one of our district congregations which has mailboxes at the church for each family. In addition, shut-ins are listed under the names of other members and these members deliver mail to them.

First Church, Lima, Ohio, has had a two-Sunday series of evening services on "Relating My Profession to My Faith." Each Sunday evening four or five persons reported on their experiences.

Peace education needed now

Much has been written recently about the probable dismissal of the all-volunteer army. Carl Lehman's article in last month's *Central District Reporter* gave an overview of the draft consultation held in Kansas City, and mentioned possible alternatives now being considered. This form would mean compulsory registration for all seventeen-to-eighteen year olds, with three options to choose from:

1. Volunteer for military service.
2. Volunteer for some form of national civilian service.
3. Take chances with a national lottery for a military draft.

What would this mean? Are we ready to face this issue? LaVon Welty, Indiana-Michigan youth minister and North American youth coordinator of the Mennonite Conference, also attended the consultation and adds this information:

"According to Warren Hoover, who serves as the director of the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors, there is urgency when considering the current proposals. Hoover pointed out that the computer would send out a combined statement which would include classification and induction orders. Everyone would be classified 1-A or available for combatant services. The burden then would be on the conscientious objector to persuade the board to postpone the induction order, and then to persuade them of the sincerity of their conscientious objector status.

"It should be remembered that this system would likely include both men and women. The current mood is toward equality, and with this, the likelihood of drafting women is very real."

Peace education in our Central District churches has been virtually nonexistent since the end of the Vietnam era. High school students today aren't burning draft cards and going on peace marches. It is not a relevant issue for them today. But it soon could be if things develop as indicated.

Welty again points out that "it is important to remember that the proposed system will not allow much time for the formulation of a position against war, if indeed that has not been established before. In other words, the time between the receipt of the induction order and the date of actual induction or even the postponement of the induction is hardly adequate time for a person to suddenly dream up a consistent basis for conscientious objection, if it has not been thought of previously.

"In my mind, this calls for active peace education in our congregations. We cannot wait until the draft is reinstated and then, because of the threat to our status quo, suddenly think we must do peace education."

Why active peace education? Why not? Does a historic peace church educate itself, and especially the youth, only during wartime? Do our youth really understand what it means to be a pacifist? Do they understand why thousands of Mennonites left Russia when their nonconscription privilege was taken away? Do they know what a conscientious objector is?

What can be done? The Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section is preparing a packet to be distributed to the district peace committees. The packet will include questions from Form I-50, which was the form used for conscientious objectors before the volunteer army was established.

It is suggested that entire congregations work through the questions, not just the youth. Individual responses should then be notarized and sent to a central location (possibly the district office) so they could be retrieved if necessary in the future. According to John Stoner, the packet should be available in the near future. Watch for more information in *The Mennonite.*

Even if things don't pan out exactly as they're pictured, the point of doing peace education now is a valid one. Our youth need to grapple with these questions, to search for themselves the meaning of a peaceful lifestyle in a violent world. *Jim Amstutz*

YOUTH MINISTRY
Serving Together

Bloomington Hospital offers health tips by tape

Mennonite Hospital, Bloomington, Illinois, will initiate a new program of health information and education in early spring.

The telephone playback program, Tel-Med Incorporated, consists of a collection of three- to five-minute audiotapes providing health information on a wide variety of topics from nutrition to heart-attack warning symptoms.

One of 100 hospitals to use the Tel-Med system throughout the United States, Mennonite Hospital will initiate the program with a library of some 200 tapes, all of which have been reviewed by the hospital's medical staff. A Tel-Med directory of tape titles and numbers will be circulated in the community this spring. Callers will be able to dial a designated number, identify the tape they wish to hear by number, and the tape will be played.

The program is designed to assist community members in recognizing early signs of illness so that they may take appropriate action to understand and adapt to illness or injury. It can also increase public awareness of the importance of good health habits. It is not to be used in treating emergencies or diagnosing illnesses.

The Mennonite Hospital Auxiliary is sponsoring this free community service under the direction of Rachel Mitchell, the hospital's director of volunteers. Mitchell is working in conjunction with Edward J. Schlicksup, Jr., vice-president for patient care, to coordinate the system's implementation.

The auxiliary has provided $20,000 initial funding and volunteers to initiate the program. The system will be located in the hospital's information area and volunteers from the auxiliary will staff the phone.

Mitchell indicated that there will be a need for continued funding and volunteer support of this system since it is a free service but does require maintenance and upkeep to function effectively. She stressed that it is a health education project for the whole community and that groups, organizations, and clubs in the community will be invited to help participate in this program.

World Conference study guide available

Parables of the Kingdom, a study guide in six lessons prepared under the auspices of the Mennonite World Conference, can now be ordered from Mennonite and Brethren in Christ publishing houses.

Since the theme of the tenth Mennonite World Conference is "The Kingdom of God in a Changing World," the MWC presidium authorized a study based on parables of the kingdom.

The guide is designed to be inter-Mennonite, intercultural, and international. The Bible study notes, written by Howard Charles, are intended to be as free as possible of cultural bias. More than fifty contributors, representing thirty-one nations on six continents, have written for the guide.

Orders for the fifty-six-page guide may be placed with Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114, at $1.35 each.

The other publishers are Evangel Press, Nappanee, Indiana; Mennonite Brethren Publishing House, Hillsboro, Kansas; and Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pennsylvania.

Music auditions held at Bluffton College

Auditions for music scholarships at Bluffton College were held January 21 and February 18.

Bluffton awards music scholarships to students in piano, organ, voice, string, wind, and percussion instruments.

Applicants who live more than 200 miles from the college can submit a tape recording for their audition.

According to Earl Lehman, chairman of the Bluffton College music department, the announcement of winners will be made on March 20.

Students interested in more information may contact the Bluffton College admissions office at (419) 358-8015, extension 134.

Lima organization receives poverty funds

Churchpersons for Change and Reconciliation (CCR), an interdenominational ministry in Lima, Ohio, has been granted $500 this year from the Poverty-Affluence Reference Council (PARC) of the General Conference.

Projects of the Lima organization include jail visitation, jail chaplaincy work, court watching, and media presentations which call attention to justice.

The most visible emphasis now is housing rehabilitation. CCR buys houses, rehabilitates them, and sells them at cost to low-income persons. The buyers of the homes must participate in a period of reeducation in such areas as buying habits and care of homes.

Nine denominations in the Lima area are represented in the CCR. First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio, contributes to its support as a budget item and has two representatives, Roy Henry and Carl Smucker, on the board.

Grace Church, Chicago, prepares to rebuild

On December 3 representatives from twenty Central District congregations met in a Chicago garage which Grace Mennonite Church members have made into a meeting place. It is small, inconvenient, and only temporary because it can't meet building codes, but it was the source of a lot of confidence that Saturday.

The group heard members of the Grace Church congregation describe mission opportunities and share their own pilgrimage. They walked through the neighborhood which copastors Levi and Betty Hochstetler had described as the needed place of ministry. Dick Ramseyer, Bluffton College development director, donated time and travel costs to come and explain how funds could be raised to rebuild.

The meeting was arranged by Tim Kissel, pastor of the Trenton Mennonite Church, Trenton, Ohio. He has been asked by the district to coordinate efforts to raise $80,000 toward the total cost of $175,000 to build a new church building. Kissel has also arranged regional meetings for churches unable to be represented at the December 3 meeting.

The Spirit seems to be moving in the district church family. In the first reports over $20,000 was promised. The building site four doors north of the burned building has been purchased. Insurance settlements are more than first expected, even though far from covering the loss. The Markham congregation and Mennonite Voluntary Service unit contributed $4,000. Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio, plans to send $8,000. Letters have been sent to each church asking for participation in the effort to help members of Grace Church continue the vital ministry they have on Chicago's south side. *Stanley Bohn*

Tim Kissel speaks to church representatives at the December 3 meeting.

GRACE MENNONITE CHURCH

Church representatives meet in the remodeled garage which serves as a temporary meeting place for the Grace congregation. (Photos by W. H. Seidler)

District calendar

February 24-25—Western lay leaders' workshop; Camp Menno Haven, Tiskilwa, Illinois; resource person, Ron Ropp

March 3-4—Eastern lay leaders' workshop; Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio; resource persons, Ron Hunsicker, James Derstine, Stan Bohn, Hedy Sawadsky, Charles Lord

March 11—Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale, Exposition Gardens, Peoria, Illinois; co-chairmen, Donald F. Roth and Delton Litwiller

March 12—World Mission offering

March 12-14—Central District Seminar, Washington, D.C.

March 19—Mennonite World Conference offering

March 30-April 2—Central District Conference, Wooster, Ohio; hosts, eastern Ohio district churches

March 31-April 1—Youth meetings at Central District Conference, Wooster, Ohio

June 16-18—Tri-State Festival of Missions, Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio

July 25-30—Mennonite World Conference, Wichita, Kansas

August 21-25—Project Teach, Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio

Selection process begins for Bluffton College dean

A search committee for an academic dean of Bluffton (Ohio) College has been selected, according to Richard Rosenberger, chairman of the college's board of trustees.

Richard Weaver, a member of the faculty, was selected chairperson of the committee. Elmer Neufeld, current dean who became president of the college on January 1, is also on the committee.

Other members are Stephen Jacoby and Mary Ann Sullivan of the Bluffton faculty; Steve Steiner, Cincinnati, Ohio, student representative; Phyllis Simcox, Gibsonburg, Ohio, and Erland Waltner, Elkhart, Indiana, members of the board of trustees.

Donald L. Pannabecker, associate dean and director of institutional research at Bluffton, was named acting academic dean beginning January 1. His appointment was made by Neufeld.

Pannabecker graduated from Bluffton College in 1958. He received his masters' of divinity from McCormick Theological Seminary in 1961 and is completing a doctorate from the University of Toledo in higher education. He is married to the former Romaine Clemens, a 1958 Bluffton alumna. The Pannabeckers live at 307 Campus Drive, Bluffton, and have three children, Dina, Cheryl, and Tim.

Do you recognize anyone? This is a portion of the group which attended the Washington seminar in 1968. This year's seminar is scheduled March 12-14.

Seminar to examine farm policy

Since Mennonite Central Committee opened its Washington office, perhaps no group has taken advantage of it as much as the Central District peace and service committee.

For many district people, the annual workshops planned by the committee and Delton Franz, Washington office director, have been a door to a part of the world that affects us but that is often out of sight and mind.

This year's seminar deals with our country's relations to oppressive totalitarian governments, many of which our tax dollars have helped to bring into power, and are keeping in power, as a way to curb communist influence.

Agriculture and farm issues will also be dealt with, as will international trade policies which affect farming, employment, and the standard of living in Third World countries. Mission and relief workers have begun to write home asking friends to be aware of the effect of US trade relations overseas.

One of the main benefits of the seminar is learning how to effectively communicate with legislators. Participants are told when appeals can make a difference and when other means should be used to get their message across.

This year's event begins Sunday evening March 12 and ends Tuesday afternoon March 14. Rooms have been reserved at a Washington hotel. Cost for Central District participants includes meals, a small registration fee, and travel expenses. Lodging is provided free for members of district churches. Transportation costs can be subsidized if the local congregation cannot help and the individual cannot cover it. Car pooling can also keep the cost down.

For details and arrangements write Robert Liechty, 1224 West Water, Berne, Indiana 46711, or call (219) 589-2517.

Church experiments with radio talk show

Some Mennonite folks in Quakertown, Pennsylvania, are still talking about the evening their friends were on radio. Dave Hinson, program manager for the FM station which aired the talk show, said it was a "first" in Christian broadcasting, and a meaningful use of radio.

In fact, he is so impressed with the way in which the pastor of the East Swamp Mennonite Church, Norman Schmidt, handled the person-to-person aspect of the live broadcast that he would like to have Schmidt host a program on the station's television affiliate.

The talk show happened in December. Each year the East Swamp congregation organizes an at-home fellowship supper. Thirty-three homes host all the other families in the church, and each host family invites persons from the congregation who have never been to their home before. The families eat, have fun, and get to know each other better. It involves more than 300 persons.

But there is another feature to this annual affair. It is a time of sharing and Bible study. On this occasion, however, the sharing was more public than ever before. In other years the clusters gathered in homes too, but there was no communication among the scattered groups.

At 8:00 p.m. on December 4 those thirty-three clusters, and anyone else who cared to listen, tuned in to WFMZ, 100 on the FM dial. Norman Schmidt and Leroy Stoudt, Sunday school superintendent, were in the sound booth, and three other members of the church waited expectantly for the first call to come on one of the three telephone lines to the station. Only church members called. As they did, each telephone operator wrote the name of the caller on a card and held it against the glass window of the sound booth.

This system provided Schmidt and Stoudt time to plan ahead to the next conversation.

What was talked about? "With each caller I would first of all touch base on which home he or she was in, and we conversed about the families who were there and what they had been doing. Names were used. Then since I knew each caller, I would ask how some experience each had had related to their Christian faith.

"One caller had open heart surgery not long ago. I asked what it had meant to him to be a Christian as he faced that crisis, and what it had meant to have a congregation praying for him. He shared openly. A couple who had participated in a marriage enrichment retreat at Spruce Lake told of that experience and its importance to them."

During forty minutes of open-line, live broadcasting, sixteen callers gave glimpses of their Christian experience.

Was it genuine? "Yes," asserted Dave Hinson. "There weren't any of what I call 'testi-phonies' (exaggerated phony-sounding testimonials). What people said was real. Pastor Schmidt has a good insight on how to use the radio in a person-to-person manner. Most ministers see the radio as a pulpit, like, 'Hi there, all you folks out in radio land.'"

During the final twenty minutes of the hour-long program, two musical selections were played and Norman Schmidt presented a devotional message. Its theme was the church as a caring community of faith. In it Norman observed, "The East Swamp congregation is not the only church. We are simply one attempt to be God's people." In the days following the broadcast he received affirmations for this statement from persons of other denominations who had been listening in on these Mennonites who were baring their experiences on the air waves.

Program manager Hinson said the venture was well received. "There were no complaints," he said. "In broadcasting if you do anything wrong you hear about it." He thought the program was a first. "In Christian broadcasting there is nothing like what was done that hour. Most Christian broadcasts are preaching and Sunday morning services. This program was out of the church and into the home, and the talk was of the experiences of real people. It was professionally done."

Hinson would like Schmidt to host a half-hour television program on the TV station affiliated with WFMZ. "We would like him to take case histories from his counseling experience which illustrate the usual questions people have about children, marriage, sexual mores, and so on." The actual persons involved in the counseling would not be part of the TV broadcast, but others would take their role. Then Schmidt would provide the "ministerial punch," he remarked. Or as Norman observed, "I would interview the couple or individual about a specific area of life, and use the situation as a springboard for a biblical message." *Vic Reimer*

Conference encouraged to begin Spanish ministry

Newton, Kansas—Should the General Conference begin a mission program among Spanish-speaking people resident in the United States?

To help assess the dynamics of such a venture, a consultation on Spanish ministries was held here January 31-February 1. It was convened by Palmer Becker, executive secretary of Commission on Home Ministries.

More than twenty persons were invited. Among them were Spanish pastors, administrators, former missionaries to Latin America, pastors of Mennonite churches, and five representatives from the Mennonite Church. The Mennonite Church has been active in Spanish ministries for forty-five years.

It was a diverse group. There is considerable cultural variety among Spanish-speaking persons of Colombian, Cuban, Peruvian, Puerto Rican, and Mexican backgrounds. These five cultural and racial groupings were present at the consultation, in addition to the North Americans. Translation was necessary throughout the consultation.

There are about twenty million persons of Spanish background living in the United States. Another 3,000 enter the United States daily from Mexico and Latin America. Twenty General Conference congregations are strategically located for involvement in Spanish ministries.

The consultation was not a decision-making body. Its purpose was to provide counsel. The Spanish pastors strongly stated that the Christian Mennonite faith should take unique form in the different Spanish cultures. Two of these unique features were identified. One is that Mennonite Spanish congregations in the Mennonite Church are more open and flexible to the leading of the Spirit than some other Spanish Christian groupings. A second characteristic, more readily identified with free-church theology, is that instruction in a Mennonite leadership training program in San Antonio, Texas, is dialogical rather than authoritarian.

Participants in the consultation underscored a number of needs, Spanish-speaking people are very diverse; hence, ministries to them would have to be on many different planes. Beginning leaders would need to be screened and trained carefully. Pastors and members of English-speaking churches with high potential for Spanish ministry need orientation to Spanish culture. Most Spanish Mennonite churches are using Nazarene or Assembly of God literature. Starting Spanish Mennonite churches and yet relying on other dnominations to provide materials does not work.

Josue Abreu, a Cuban pastoring a Mennonite congregation in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, commented that retailers have been very alert to capitalize on the expanding Spanish market in the United States. "The church," he observed, "should do likewise."

Words & deeds

"Developing Ministering Persons," a lecture series with church leaders David Augsburger and David Bosch, is scheduled February 24-25 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana. A special invitation is extended to potential students to attend the series because it replaces the special student conference of previous years. Augsburger's topics are "When Wound Speaks to Wound—Encountering" and "When Healing Calls to Healing—Experiencing." Augsburger will join the AMBS faculty in July. Bosch, a native South African and a committed critic of racism in South Africa, will present lectures titled "Cross-cultural Ministry" and "Ministering in the Context of Alienation: Reconciliation." Room and board will be provided by the seminary.

Protests against the neutron bomb are being voiced. The German Mennonite Peace Committee has spoken against the willingness of the German Government to introduce the neutron bomb. India's Christian Association for Peace with Justice released a strong statement by its president, J. R. Chandran, which observed that in previous military thinking "the concern was to destroy the material resources of the enemy with the least possible harm to human life. This concern is now reversed. (The neutron bomb destroys human life but leaves material undamaged.) This appears to be a logical consequence of the capitalist outlook for which material prosperity has priority over human values." From Prague, Czechoslovakia, an appeal from the Christian Peace Conference calls for an ecumenical peace witness against the neutron bomb, and calls the weapon a "perversion of reason."

Exceptional children meet regularly for Sunday school in the Salford (Pennsylvania) Mennonite Church. Thirteen years ago families from the area organized to meet the spiritual needs of children with developmental disabilities. Initially, activities varied from devotional periods to games and babysitting, but parents involved in the project saw a need for structured teaching as well. For the past six years students from Northeast Bible Institute have taught Bible at individual levels. Attendance is about twelve. Parents live within a five-mile radius and are free to attend their own congregations. Four pupils have made a decision for Christ, and all but two members of the group also attend the regular worship service. Currently, Nancy Williams, a consultant with Mennonite Mental Health Services, is researching Sunday school material for exceptional children. She is available as a resource person to congregations in their ministry to the developmentally disabled. Her address is 5927 Miller Street, Arvada, Colorado 80004.

Spanish conscientious objectors continue to be arrested despite an amnesty in October 1977. Fourteen objectors who were in prison at the time of the amnesty were released but several days later six new objectors were arrested. The government has promised that within six months there will be a conscientious objector statute, and that in the meantime there will be no arrests, but the arrests demonstrate, says a group of objectors in Barcelona, that "the promises of the government are not credible." John Driver, Mennonite Board of Missions worker in Spain, reports the formation of a small but committed group of objectors in evangelical circles. The Spanish translation of William Keeney's book *Lordship as Servanthood* is complete, and is currently being published in Spain. The book teaches the biblical basis of peacemaking.

Winnipeg—Receipts for the first three months of MCC (Manitoba)'s fiscal year were $320,000, up $40,000 over a comparable period in the last fiscal year. The largest increase was in designated giving, where nearly $70,000 was contributed to the India Disaster Relief Fund. Self-Help Crafts recorded sales of $46,500 for the first quarter, and thirteen Self-Help centers turned over $31,500 in sales. There are 160 Mennonite congregations in Manitoba.

Glasgow, Scotland—William Barclay, New Testament scholar, author, and publisher, died January 24 at the age of seventy. Barclay had been minister of Trinity Church, Renfrew, Scotland, and later served as professor of divinity and biblical criticism at the University of Glasgow. Hailed as the world's best-selling religious author, he wrote more than fifty books and was regarded as a writer of extraordinary simplicity and charm who could communicate an understanding of the New Testament in contemporary language for ordinary people.

The Milwaukee Mennonite Fellowship is active and growing. The fellowship, inter-Mennonite in character, developed from a social gathering of a few urban Mennonites in 1974. Now the group consists of twenty-three adults, fourteen children, and has a full-time pastor. Persons interested in information about the fellowship may contact pastor Bill Shumaker, 3375 North 45th Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53216.

Record

Calendar

March 27-31—Project Teach, Rosthern (Saskatchewan) Church

March 30-April 2—Central District Conference annual sessions, Wooster, Ohio

June 14-16—National conference on "Women and the Ministries of Christ"; Pasadena, California; sponsored by Fuller Theological Seminary, and the Evangelical Women's Caucus; speakers, Letha Scanzoni, Nancy Hardesty, Paul Jewett, Don Williams

Pacific

April 1—West Coast Mennonite relief sale, Reedley, California

Workers

Roxanne Ediger, Hoffnungsau Church, Inman, Kansas, began one year of General Conference voluntary service in November 1977 as a day-care worker in Beatrice, Nebraska. She is a certified laboratory assistant, and has worked in two hospitals as a laboratory technician. Her parents are Eldo and Letha Ediger, Inman.

Gary Goertz, Bethany Church, Freeman, South Dakota, began one year of Mennonite Voluntary Service January 1 working in home repair in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He has attended Freeman (South Dakota) Junior College. Gary's mother is Faye Goertz of Freeman.

Rebecca Klassen, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kansas, began two years of Mennonite Voluntary Service January 30 as a day-care worker in Markham, Illinois. Rebecca has worked as a nurses' aide. Her parents are Carl and Martha Klassen.

Judy Koop, Waterloo, Ontario, began a one-year assignment with Mennonite Voluntary Service in November 1977 as a day-care worker in Hutchinson, Kansas. Judy is a

Ediger

Goertz

Klassen

Koop

graduate of the University of Waterloo in Ontario, and is a member of Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church. Her parents are Nicholas and Katherina Koop, Waterloo.

Cheryl Paulovich, Goshen, Indiana, began two years of voluntary service with the General Conference in November 1977 as a teacher at the Hopi Mission School in Oraibi, Arizona. She attended Goshen (Indiana) College for three years, and has been employed in secretarial work and as an administrative assistant at the Montessori Center of New Jersey. Cheryl is a member of East Goshen Mennonite Church. John and Miriam Beachy, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, are her parents.

David Paulovich, Goshen, Indiana, began two years of Mennonite Voluntary Service in November 1977 as a seventh and eighth grade teacher at Hopi Mission School in Oraibi, Arizona. David graduated from City University of New York in 1968 with a BS, and in 1977 with an MA from Associated Mennontie Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana. He has worked as a camp director, and as a research chemist. David is a member of East Goshen Mennonite Church. His parents are Morris and Harriet Paulovich, Malvern, Pennsylvania.

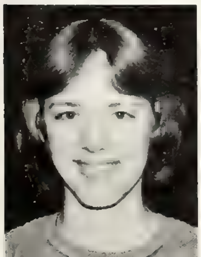
Theresa Rempel, Warman, Saskatchewan, began a one-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service in January as a teacher's aide for emotionally disturbed children at Edgewood Children's Center in Brentwood, Missouri. She is a 1977 graduate of Swift Current (Saskatchewan) Bible Institute, and is a member of Martensville (Saskatchewan) Mennonite Mission Church. She has occupational experience in accounting and invoicing. Theresa's parents are Samuel and Gertrude Rempel of Warman.

Tim Zehr, Hesston (Kansas) Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, is beginning a one-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service as a recreation worker in Hammon, Oklahoma. Tim is a 1976 high school graduate and has worked in maintenance jobs and as a clerk. His parents are Elmer and Violet Zehr of Hesston.

C. Paulovich

D. Paulovich

Rempel



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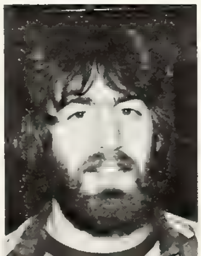

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The year past and some projections

David Virtue

Religion gained more of the news spotlight in 1977 than it had for decades. It began as the Year of the Evangelical, and ended with *Time* magazine declaring that the evangelical movement is in fact bursting the bonds of geography and seems on the verge of becoming an international state of mind.

The spread of the charismatic (neo-Pentecostal) movement in all the mainline Christian denominations, especially the Roman Catholic Church, will not abate. As mainline denominations continue to face problems, more spiritually thirsty people will choose the charismatic movement as an alternative.

God is not dead, he's merely shifted his emphasis. The boom of the evangelical movement seems likely to continue, with more prominent names to be added to the evangelical Hall of Fame. The TV evangelists (Oral Roberts, Robert Schuller, Billy Graham, etc.), the new Christian television network, the PTL (Praise the Lord), and 700 clubs will continue their upward spiral both in viewership and bank balances. It's not just the lining on the cloud that's silver edged; the cloud itself is dripping with evangelical dollars.

Within the Roman Catholic community, the controversy surrounding French Catholic Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and his right-wing followers, who want a return to the Latin Tridentine Mass and pre-Vatican II thinking, will continue to polarize that church, as will the equally controversial Belgian Catholic charismatic Cardinal Suenens. Lefebvre's trips to the United States and Latin America last year brought attention to his cause but failed to ignite the far-right forces in his church. The pope himself is ailing fast. His passing could see either a further liberalization in the spirit of Pope John or a conservative reaction prompting further polarizations within the church.

The Catholic Church, which has seen an exodus of nuns from the convents in the last few years, is likely to see more this year. The decline in the number of people entering the priesthood continues, especially in the teaching orders. But the helping orders probably will pick up as the shift in emphasis toward social amelioration, especially in the Third World, continues.

The appeal of Mother Teresa and Canada's Jean Vanier will continue as the plight of the world's poor and mentally handicapped is exposed.

While the left-right polarities within the Catholic Church persist, numbers of Catholics will feel the faith has evaporated for them and silently leave the church despite liberalizing trends such as taking the communion wafer "in the hand."

The flap in Chicago over allegations that Catholic churches were stealing hymns through the illegal duplicating of copyrighted church music will die. But Protestants ought to be thankful that Catholics are singing their songs. Who knows where it might lead?

Now that divorce has been more or less accepted by churches, remarriage is becoming the next major issue they must handle. This category includes the Vatican's decision for leniency toward divorced Catholics.

The continuing drive by homosexuals for attention, understanding, and acceptance by the churches will be with us in 1978. Included in this category will be the religious elements of Anita Bryant's crusade against gay rights. Churches will continue to polarize, but most are expected to hold to their position that homosexual acts—not necessarily the condition—are immoral.

Schism erupted in the US Episcopal Church over more than a dozen issues, including the ordination of women, and the breakaway Anglican Church in North America was formed. Breakaway churches usually enjoy a brief honeymoon period, therefore it will be a year or two before any evaluation can be made as to this one's results.

In Canada, the Anglican Church reported both declining membership and fortunes. It will have to go through more agonizing self-analysis if it is to persevere as a viable voice in the next decade. Ironically, the budget cuts set for 1978 are in the areas of evangelism and Bible study.

Religious cults in North America continued their pursuit of the naive and gullible in 1977. Disputes swirled around Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church and the controversial deprogramming tactics of Ted Patrick. Moon's affairs are being investigated at the government level but it seems his authoritarian pose will continue to attract followers who are desperately looking for absolutes and easy answers. Gurus and swamis from the East continued to pour into Canada and the United States last year, and several are fighting among themselves as to who will usher in the Age of Enlightenment through the latest altered state of consciousness. In Vancouver, Swami Vishnu Devananda, who offers Yoga vacations, publicly denounced the levitation theories of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. More squabbling at the gates of Nirvana are expected. Watch for it.

The Jehovah's Witnesses went on the offensive nationally to explain the group's refusal to use blood transfusions. The Witnesses scored a coup by obtaining testimony of famed heart surgeon Denton Cooley that he believes physicians should respect the wishes of the Witnesses. However, new figures released by the group revealed declines in membership, partly due to the failure of the Messiah to appear in 1975. Stringent antismoking and drinking regulations turned off many new converts and door-to-door proselytizers declined noticeably.

Herbert W. Armstrong's financial and religious empire came under fire in a ninety-two-page magazine criticizing him and his son Garner Ted for allegedly squandering funds, intimidation, and hypocrisy. The magazine, written by six former students, also criticizes Garner Ted's television theology and the activities of the Worldwide Church of God. The church is worth $60 million.

The financial dealings of charitable and religious agencies came under scrutiny in

As churches continue to face problems, more spiritually thirsty people will choose the charismatic movement as an alternative. The Holy Spirit *by Bernini in St. Peter's symbolizes that the Holy Spirit is ever hovering around us, waiting to bring new life and creativity to all who desire it.*

1977. More can definitely be expected in 1978.

It was revealed that Billy Graham's organization had financial holdings running to $27 million in stocks and land. No irregularities were found, but the Better Business Bureau had difficulty getting an accounting. Billy agreed that, in this new day of letting it all hang out, he would declare all. He did, and the fuss has temporarily died down.

Religion is a $30-billion-a-year business in the United States, and the government wants closer tabs on who has the money, how it's spent, and where it goes. It will be watching especially for operating costs and overhead.

In Canada there's a move by the federal government to push through legislation to keep the overhead of charitable agencies to 20 percent. This will mean, for example, that the activities of World Vision Canada, a service agency based in Toronto which has reported 30 percent operating costs, will have the boom lowered on its ways.

Americans still give more than anyone in the world, and this has not declined appreciably in the face of economic recession. Mainline denominations report lower incomes and budget setbacks, but independent religious and charitable organizations have not yet suffered noticeably.

In 1977, numerous church groups confronted the television industry over programming. Violence has decreased, but sex for home viewing is growing, and the churches promise to do battle royal with the networks if it continues.

In Canada, the confrontation between church and big business reached new levels. Increasingly, the clergy could be found in boardrooms, exposing the corporate sins of multinationals' dealings with repressive regimes such as those in South Africa and Chile.

The United Church of Canada is in trouble both financially and spiritually. As both are generally linked, it's unlikely there will be any change in its fortunes. Both are declining. Theological obfuscation is eroding its one-time historic Christian stance.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is dying on its ethnic vine. Fewer religious Scots are wending their way to the New World, and those that come have little interest in John Knox.

Baptists in Canada still are divided among themselves. There are three branches and little sign that they have any intention of uniting. The more fundamentalist groups are standing still, but the more evangelical ones report steady growth.

When people feel the world shaking beneath their feet, interest in religion rises. With the economic winds and other prevailing signs showing low pressure, religion will continue to attract increasing attention from men and women.

Letters

Disagree with review

Dear Editor: Several statements in the review of "A Marxist Looks at Jesus" (December 13, 1977, issue) compelled me to check Machovec's book from the nearby library. I wondered how a Marxist and atheist could write a "sympathetic" account of Jesus, an "illuminating and challenging study of Jesus." How could someone who directly denied the deity of Jesus Christ be "an ally instead of an archenemy of the Christian in the attempt to understand and grasp the biblical message and its relevance."

The reason, as expected, is that Machovec's Jesus is a different Jesus (*heteros:* "another in kind and nature"), indeed a "reinterpretation" of the Lord, who, as truly man and truly God, has granted a precious interpretation of himself in the Gospels. To Machovec he is not the Savior of mankind; the future this-wordly salvation of mankind is "ultimately the proper postrevolutionary form of the authentic and original Marxist vision. . . . The movement will reach this goal, for it must be reached" (page 36).

Even those who nailed Jesus on the cross spoke truths about him. However, they did not accept that he was God; for that claim he was charged for blasphemy, tried, and condemned. When at one occasion he asked his disciples who people thought he was, the only true answer was clear: "Thou art the Christ." Indeed, an insight known only by the gracious enablement of God the Father.

Machovec's book presents a counterfeit Jesus. Just as counterfeits are more dangerous when they look more like the original, so this book is much more dangerous than cheap, crude, and ridiculous imitations. Instead of encouraging one to seek an encounter with a Marxist as a "moving experience," one should expect to be asked to be sober minded and careful in approaching a denier of the Incarnation. To know about this sort of material may be proper and good, but to accept the authors as allies borders on spiritual treason.

If educators in Christian colleges present this kind of literature in a positive way, as the reviewer did, it will be no surprise that in the next generation even more radical "reinterpretations" of Jesus will appear, totally void of any fear for "the one who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell" (Jesus Christ in Luke 12:5). *Ted VanderEnde, St. John Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio 45877* January 6

An evangelism seminar is scheduled April 5-7 at the Mayfair Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Resource persons are Floyd Bartel, Don Yoder, Lynn Liechty, and Dennis M. Oliver. Registration fee is $15 with traveling bursaries available. Write Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Help wanted

Urgent volunteer needs (spring and summer): **Day-care workers**—male and female, for Hutchinson, Markham, Beatrice; **carpenters**—experienced and inexperienced, for Portland, Wichita, Cincinnati, Philadelphia; **drivers**—van and ambulance, for Portland, Markham, Hutchinson; **teachers**—degrees in elementary and special education, for Oraibi, Philadelphia, Arvada, Oklahoma City; **social workers**—advocacy, legal aid, community organizing, for Arvada, Seattle, Denver, Kansas City. Contact: Mennonite Voluntary Service, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; (316) 283-5100

Concerned about approach

Dear Editor: We are deeply concerned about "Mothers Without Wedding Rings" (January 3 issue).

Our concern is with the fact that today in our society there are so many teenaged girls who become unwed mothers, and this is on the increase.

But we are also concerned about how this issue was presented. There was not one word about the men, the fathers of these babies. There was only great compassion for the girls who become pregnant.

We, too, feel sorry for them, but why isn't it said that these pregnancies are the consequences of sin? If one didn't know better, you could get the notion that their pregnancies were caused by something in the air—a virus or something like it.

Why don't we call things by name? Sin is sin. Why do we not let God's Word speak to us? Such articles can mislead our young people.

The article says, "There is little satisfaction in being a lonely virgin." Is there more satisfaction in being an unwed mother, even if society and church accept her?

Is this article the stand of *The Mennonite* or is it just an interesting topic for a free-lance writer? *H. and L. Dueck, 680 Carleton Street, Chilliwack, British Columbia V2P 6E3* January 17

Teacher needed

A teacher for the upper elementary grades (four through eight) is needed in Taiwan at an English-speaking school for missionary children. This salaried position is for a two-year term under the sponsorship of the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference. Write or call us immediately if interested.

Commission on Overseas Mission
Box 347
Newton, Kansas 67114
(316) 283-5100

Should address fathers, too

Dear Editor: The recent article "Mothers Without Wedding Rings" (January 3 issue) is timely and appropriate for a church publication such as *The Mennonite.* It raises a subject that has been too long taboo and suggests certain incisive questions that we as professing Christians need to face.

However I deeply regret that the double standard, still so prevalent in the sexual orientation of our day, is perpetuated by the writer of this article. There is no reference to unwed fathers or, to rephrase the title, to fathers without wedding rings. The agencies which today are trying to deal with the grief and pain of this critical and pervasive social problem recognize the need to deal with the sense of guilt, remorse, and shame on the part of young men involved, as well as that of the women.

In line with the article's thrust we might well ask, Is there not as great a need within the church to recognize the need to forgive the male member of this social aberration as well as the female person? *Erna J. Fast, 321 North Maple, Hutchinson, Kansas 67501* January 12

Report on alcohol study

Dear Editor: This is a belated note of appreciation for your good summary of the preliminary report on the alcohol study (December 6, 1977, issue).

I was a bit distressed that the *Red River Valley Echo* chose a headline for the article which highlighted one conference. However the similar headline in *The Mennonite* was quite suitable as it appeared in the paper of that conference. *Peter H. Rempel, peace and social concerns assistant, MCC (Canada), Winnipeg, Manitoba* January 11

Meditation

Proverb for a new year

From places as diverse as pulpits and restroom walls, a modern proverb confronts us: Today is the beginning of the rest of your life. After we have heard the statement a few times, we pass it off as old hat. And yet, if we stop to reflect on it, we recognize its shock value. Whether we are ten years old or seventy, all we have left to live are the days ahead of us. The past constitutes only memories and is unchangeable. The future, on the other hand, is ours.

At the beginning of a new year, a Christian wishing to observe the tradition of making New Year's resolutions could consider seriously the implications of this statement: Today is the beginning of the rest of my life.

God's invitation to accept us is always open. Whereas we cannot change the past, we can, by seeking God's help, live more Christ-like lives today and tomorrow than we did yesterday and the day before. Taken in this sense, the idea of beginning the rest of life ceases to be shocking and becomes, rather, a challenge to be accepted gratefully and joyfully.

Anthony R. Epp

Salvation means creativity

He walked up to me in the airport with a little pamphlet held in his outstretched hand, a nervous smile on his face.

"Are you saved?" he asked me with great earnestness.

"From what?" I equivocated.

"Oh, you know . . . from sin and death," he said as he pressed his pamphlet upon me. "This tells you all about it."

"You mean, am I a Christian?" I still hadn't answered his question, but leafed through the paper. "Yes, I have hold of eternal life because of what Jesus Christ has done," I replied, a bit defensive and standoffish in my manner.

"Then you're *saved,*" he said enthusiastically, "and you won't mind if I take this back," he continued, plucking his pamphlet from my fingers. "We need to give these papers to people who aren't saved yet." And off he went to accost a harried businessman who was probably late in catching his flight.

It left me thinking about what salvation means to me. I walked to my plane wondering if salvation gave people some kind of special right to bombard people with "Are you saved?" I decided that it's a valid question, but must be carefully asked, at the right time.

As I absently showed my boarding pass to the stewardess, I considered how I—and many of my friends who have grown so familiar with all of the "old" words like *salvation* and *grace*—no longer speak in terms of salvation; we often call it "healing."

Conversations with the people seated near me, the business of a meal, arrival, getting baggage, saying hello—these drove my thoughts about salvation to a part of my mind where they just stewed around. When I finally got to a dictionary to look up the word, I found that it is always linked in its definition with its opposite—destruction.

"So what am I saved *from*?" I asked myself. "What's more, what am I saved *for*?" I thought about it for a long time and then came up with words and phrases which made salvation more relevant to me that day:

Salvation—from death, for life, by the living Lord.

Salvation—absolved to administer the news of absolution by an absolute God.

Salvation—from emptiness, for fullness, by the indwelling Spirit.

But the one circle of thinking which meant the most was this: Salvation—from uncreativity, for creativity, by the Creator of the universe.

The uncreativity and self-destruction I experienced before Christ made his salvation real to me has changed. God wants me to realize my highest creative potential. And it is possible through and by Christ, the re-creator. I tried to be creative before, but even now when I try too hard to be creative it is a failure. Salvation means being freed from sin, self-consciousness, and selfishness—the opposite of destruction. Salvation = creativity!

Katie Tonn

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Gary Harder is pastor of the First Mennonite Church, 11125-76 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 0J9.

Henry Landes is a management consultant and mental health professional. He works with Oakwood Associates, 2600 Oakland Street, Elkhart, Indiana 46514. His article is adapted from a speech he delivered to the Mennonite Health Assembly at Cincinnati, Ohio, on March 9, 1976.

David Virtue is religion editor of The Province, 2250 Granville Street, Vancouver, British Columbia V6H 3G2.

Anthony R. Epp, 7424 Holdrege, Lincoln, Nebraska 68505, wrote his article originally for his church's newsletter.

Katie Tonn, Box 748, Angwin, California 94508, is a free-lance writer.

CREDITS

Cover, 115, Rohn Engh, Star Prairie, Wisconsin; 116, Paul M. Schrock, Box 200, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 118, Steve Goossen, MCC; 119, Rudy Regehr; 125, RNS.

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Keeping quiet in evil times

Lawrence Yoder, MCC representative in Indonesia, preached the following sermon in the Pati churches on March 13, 1977.

"Keeping quiet in such evil times is the clever thing to do" (Amos 5:13). Clever persons keep quiet when they see corruption. Shut your mouth when the officer in power asks for a bribe. Don't say anything to injustices. This policy seems to work best for the majority of people.

There are not many people who will defend the practice of taking and receiving bribes. We believe in people's rights. Few will justify actions which crush and trample the weak. But why do most people fail to open their mouths when they see others oppressed? Why do we just shut up and pay the bribe?

The main reason we don't say anything about the evil around us is because we are seeking the easiest way to protect our own private interests. We don't want our boat rocked. We focus on our own individual needs and are unwilling to take a risk. We are more willing to pay a bribe to purchase "justice" for ourselves than to sacrifice ourselves by becoming an example—challenging unjust legal processes, commercialization of the courts, and the inordinate power of vested interests.

Each time we keep quiet in the face of evil, we despise God's revealed will to us—that we stand up and speak for justice, truth, and honesty. Jesus surrendered himself to become a sacrifice for the multitudes. He refused to sit quietly in the face of evil, no matter who was behind it.

The Prophet Amos, whose words we started with, was a herdsman and a keeper of fig trees. He was not an educated person. He had no standing in the eyes of society. God called Amos to leave home and go to another country to proclaim the word of the Lord to crooked Israel. Israelite society in Amos' day was plagued by corruption of public office. Only those who could pay the bribe could escape from the cruel hand of the officials. Farmers who could not pay taxes in cash were required to pay in kind; the yield of their toil was taken from the mouths of their children.

Amos, whose heart was set aflame by the Spirit of God, preached condemnation on this evil.

The salaried preachers of Amos' day were not happy with him. They wanted to throw him out of the land. He was told to go home to his own country and preach there. But Amos, even though he was small, even though he was in a strange land, did not cringe in the face of their threats.

For Amos, justice was justice and honesty was honesty. He did not keep quiet when a bribe was refined by calling it a commission. A bribe is a bribe and evil is evil. Damned be those who revel in such evil ways.

We have all heard of the Lockheed corporation paying bribes to Prime Minister Tanaka and Prince Bernard. Both leaders had to resign from their offices when the bribes were discovered. In those countries, receiving a bribe is wrong. But the corporation who paid the bribe got off scot-free. It was an embarrassing situation for the United States.

But what about us here? Payment of bribes, under a multitude of other names, continues to be a way of life. Call it an administrative fee, coffee or cigarette money, a commission, or a gift—all of it is bribery. Even though there are frequent noises from the government about efforts to stamp out corruption, commercialization of office seems to be on the increase everywhere.

Probably there are those here who, along with our foreign minister, feel that North American values do not necessarily apply here. Some may feel it inappropriate for me as a foreigner to point out these things. But Amos was called of God to go to another country to proclaim God's word. Let what I have said be an encouragement for all Christians to be more conscious of, and obedient to, our calling to live God's will for justice and right in our society.

I feel embarrassed at the number of times that I have meekly paid bribes when demanded. I was saddened when a member of our church said that he has a good understanding with the officers whose signatures he needs. I was disturbed when a leader in our churches said it was not so bad that political prisoners were held without due legal process, because actually most prisoners are grateful for the security they have in prison.

Frequently we Christians hold the opinion that faith is primarily spiritual. But Jesus, in his first sermon at his hometown synagogue, said that he was anointed to proclaim good news to the poor, to announce release to the captives, and to free those who are oppressed.

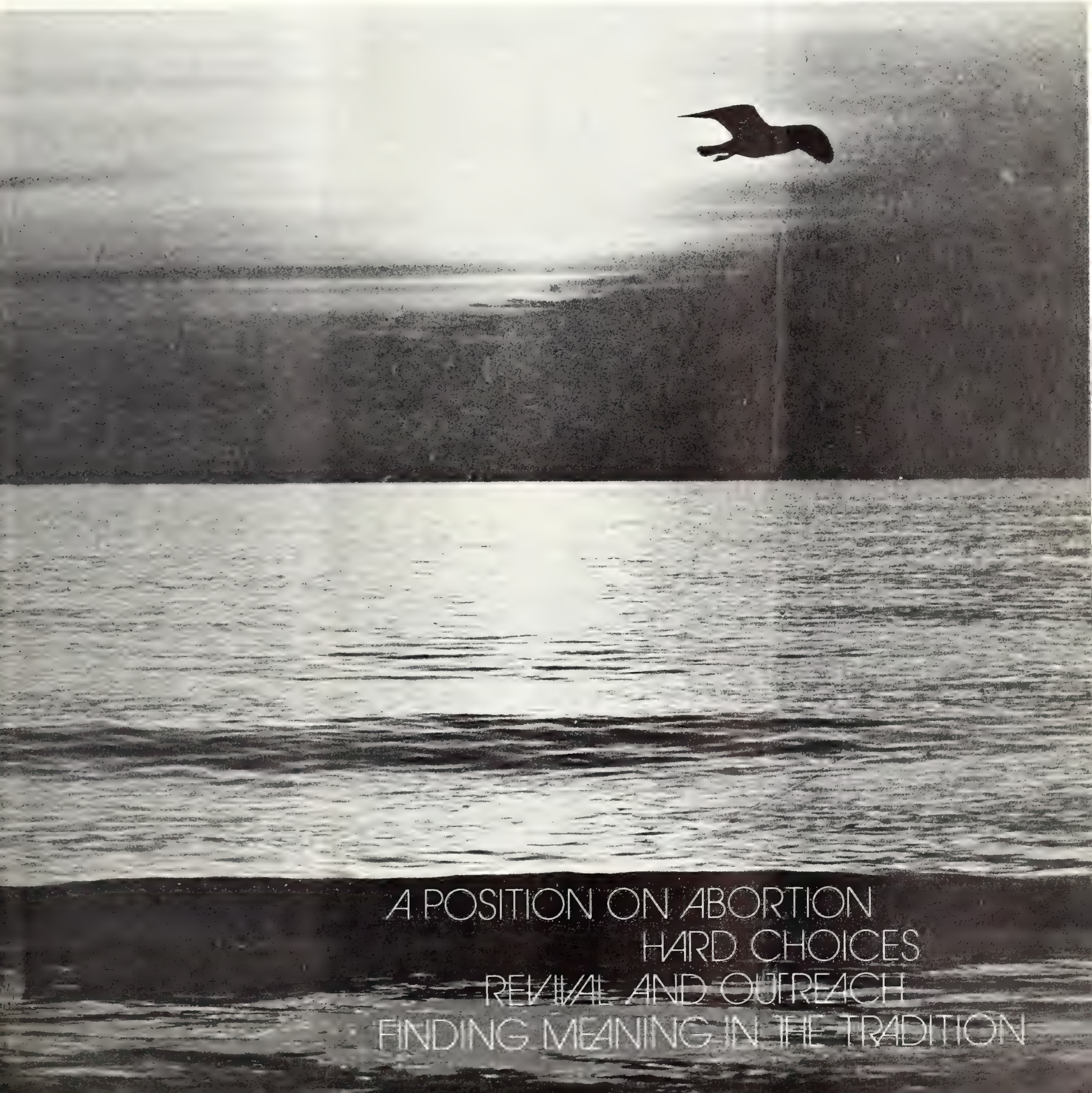
What do you suppose the Lord's attitude is toward us—disciples who easily and calmly bluff our way out of the responsibilities to hold up justice and truth?

Amos calls us to repent from our clever and calculated tendency of keeping quiet in the face of evil.

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93: 9 FEBRUARY 28, 1978



A POSITION ON ABORTION

HARD CHOICES

REVIVAL AND OUTREACH

FINDING MEANING IN THE TRADITION

A POSITION ON ABORTION

Duane Friesen

I believe that under certain unusual and exceptional circumstances abortion may be justified on moral grounds. I cannot agree with those who would absolutely prohibit abortion.

I do agree with those who are disturbed by the ever increasing numbers of abortions being performed in our society. Though these abortions are legally justified, many of them are not morally justified. Though I do support a liberal law (I shall explain later), I cannot equate legality and morality, as so many do in our society. The law permits abortion for the sake of personal and social convenience. In my judgment that is not a sufficient moral basis for an abortion, particularly if one approaches the issue of abortion from a Christian perspective.

Unfortunately, those who oppose any and all abortions contribute to the lack of careful moral reflection on the issue, and this unwittingly supports the increase in the number of abortions. Thus those who reject the absolutist position then tend to accept any and all abortions, since there appears to be no discriminating position in between. The church should refuse to get trapped into either the extreme of absolute prohibition or complete acceptance of abortion. We must learn rather to make discriminating moral judgments case by case.

Much of the moral confusion about abortion revolves around the question of how we regard the act of abortion. At one extreme are those who see an abortion as similar to the removal of a piece of tissue from the body. At the other extreme are those who see abortion as the murder of a human being. I believe an abortion is neither of these kinds of acts.

What is the fetus?

What are we talking about when a person considers an abortion? The fetus is not just a "piece of tissue" like any other in one's body that is removed by a surgical procedure. The fetus represents a new creation, a different genetic entity, because it is the combination of sperm and ovum of two different human beings. What has been created is a potential new human being, an entity temporarily confined to the mother's womb, but an entity having a distinct genetic identity from the woman's own body. Those who accept any and all abortions by claiming that the fetus is just a "piece of tissue" like any other do not know "what" they are aborting.

On the other hand, the fetus is not yet a "person," as we normally think of what it means to be "person." To be a "person" requires the development of the central nervous system so that a human being has the capacity to exist independently of the mother, and to interact socially with other human beings. In spontaneous abortions or miscarriages we do not give the fetus a name, nor even give the fetus the normal funeral and burial rites, because we do not yet recognize the fetus as a person. Those who reject any and all abortions because they regard abortion as the killing of a person distort what we are talking about when we consider an abortion. Abortion is not the killing of a person as we normally understand the word *person.* That is why abortion cannot be equated with acts of killing persons in war and capital punishment.

Abortion is an act that represents a "twilight zone" where we must accept a certain ambiguity. To resolve the "what" by declaring a fetus as simply a "piece of tissue" or a "person" would distort what an abortion is. A fetus is neither just a "piece of tissue" nor a "person."

But because the fetus is a new creation, a potential human person, we cannot lightly and without justification snuff out its life. There is a sanctity and holiness about its being that requires us to regard the fetus with respect. On the other hand, because it is not yet a "person," there may be reasons to abort that fetus in view of other overwhelming

I cannot agree with those who would absolutely prohibit abortion. I do agree with those who are disturbed by the ever increasing numbers of abortions being performed in our society.

ABORTION
A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE
W EN'S NATIONAL ABORT ON ACTION COALITION

moral considerations, particularly where the sanctity of some other person is at stake.

Moral justification

Let us suppose, for example, that a thirty-year-old mother of two children, ages three and six, who has a chronic kidney disease and high blood pressure, discovers that she is pregnant—even though she has been careful to use the diaphragm as a contraceptive measure. The doctor tells her that if she continues the pregnancy, it could be too strenuous and prove fatal. Under these conditions, I think an abortion would be justified. The life of the mother is also holy and to be respected. She has two children she must care for who are persons to be regarded with respect. Why should she risk her life for the sake of a fetus that is not yet a "person" when she is already obligated to two children who are persons under her care?

Or suppose a fifteen-year-old girl is pregnant by her father who came home one night in a drunken stupor and raped her. She is extremely distraught, both because of the trauma of what happened and also at the thought of the social consequences if she should continue the pregnancy and have the baby. Does not our respect and regard for this fifteen-year-old girl mean that we could support morally a decision on her part to get an abortion? [The case material is from my book *Moral Issues in the Control of Birth* (Faith and Life Press). This book does not argue for a position as I have done in this article, but is designed to help congregations study the abortion issue and reach their own conclusions.]

These are just two sample cases where an abortion is, I think, morally justified because of the value one places on persons who are already socialized human beings, and where their value takes precedence over the life of a fetus which is not yet a "person." I do not think, however, we can lay down absolute laws that can determine in all cases when an abortion is morally justified. That is why I oppose any attempt by the church to legislate any rigid legal position on abortion.

What does the Bible say?

Clearly the Bible does not give us any specific guidance on abortion. It does, however, call us again and again to have respect and love for our fellow human beings. This kind of love and respect for persons must guide us in the concrete decisions we make from day to day. There is no way we can legislate what that means for each situation. These issues must be worked through in the small group, in the counseling situation, and perhaps at the congregational level where there is sufficient openness. Our adherence to the moral principle of respect for persons may at times lead us to morally approve an abortion, and at other times to condemn abortion.

While the church should be open to a morally justified abortion, on the other hand the church should speak out against the widespread unreflective and uncritical acceptance of abortion. Abortion cannot be morally justified simply for the sake of personal and social convenience. Certainly abortion cannot be used as a means of population control. There are other more acceptable ways of controlling population. It is unfortunate how easily many Christians have simply accepted the trends of our culture. The fetus cannot be treated that lightly. It is a potential human person, and thus to be respected.

What about laws?

What then about the law? What kind of an abortion law should the church support? Though I think that abortion can be morally justified only under exceptional circumstances where the value of persons are at stake, I would support a liberal law, roughly equivalent to the laws we now have in the United States and Canada.

Because of the deep conscientious disagreement in the civil community about abortion, I do not think one minority in society can legislate for those who do not agree with them. There is simply too much disagreement over this issue for sufficient communal support of a restrictive law. A liberal law permits those opposed to abortion not to exercise their prerogative under the law, whereas a restrictive law would not permit those who believe otherwise to act as they believe they should.

Second, restrictive laws are inherently unjust, because they discriminate against the poor and the people on the bottom of society. People who want abortions will get them one way or another. The more affluent can afford to pay a doctor or travel to somewhere where they can obtain a safe abortion. The poor are forced to utilize the services of a criminal abortionist, often under very unsafe and unsanitary conditions. People will get abortions. A restrictive law will not be effective in stopping abortions in today's society where so many are opposed to a restrictive law.

The church's role

The church, I think, should not put its energies on the abortion issue into the legal arena. Rather it should do what is its specific responsibility—provide moral guidance. This will need to be guidance, as I have pointed out, that accepts the ambiguities of what an abortion is, but does not fall into the trap of either extreme position—absolute acceptance or absolute prohibition. Given the ambiguity of abortion, the church should affirm the value of the person, and thus only justify abortion where the sanctity of someone's person is at stake.

The church should refuse to get trapped into either the extreme of absolute prohibition or complete acceptance. We must learn rather to make discriminating moral judgments case by case.

ABORTION IS BASE BUTCHERY
RIGHT TO LIFE
Never to laugh or love... nor taste the summertime?
Fight Abortion!
VE THEM
THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO."

Hard choices: Abortion and war

Ted Koontz

War and abortion are stubborn moral problems. Although they are different in many respects, both involve making hard choices about whether or not to take human life (or "potential" human life) in order to preserve or maximize other values. Sometimes decisions about war and abortion pose an even more direct dilemma—when the choice seems to be not only between lives and other values, but between the lives of two individuals or groups. The clearest case is the rare one when the lives of mother and child (fetus) are pitted against each other.

Because war and abortion both involve taking human or potentially human life, it is reasonable to look for consistency in thinking on the two issues.

Pacifists have, of course, resolved the war dilemma by arguing that they should never take human life in war. Some argue that this position on war does not entail an absolute rejection of killing in other circumstances, because war is unique in its indiscriminate character. Such a position may be coherent, but I believe it is not the position to which Mennonite pacifism leads.

The logic underlying Mennonite pacifism leads to a view which absolutely rejects killing other human beings. In one form Mennonite pacifism is rooted in a straightforward interpretation and application of the commandment "Thou shalt not kill." In another form, it is rooted in a view of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection which sees in the cross not only the ultimate sign of God's redemptive love and the means of salvation, but also the ethical model for Christians to follow—a model which involves overcoming evil with good, and, ultimately, giving up one's own life rather than taking that of another; a model of self-sacrificial love. It is difficult to see why either position should apply only to killing in war and not to other kinds of killing.

Yet many Mennonite pacifists do not favor an absolute prohibition of abortion or even serious limitations on it. Some seem ready to count considerations of financial well-being, world population, and the mother's psychological condition as well as her health or life as valid moral arguments for abortion. How can this be? Mainly, of course, because they believe that abortion does not involve taking "human" life. A fetus, in this view, is not a person (human being) but at most "potentially human." Given such a position it is possible to retain an absolutist approach to the taking of human life, while sanctioning or at least tolerating abortion.

But I believe such a position is not viable. The development of human life is on a continuum. The fetus in the early stages of development is clearly less fully "human" than the infant, and the same may be said of the newborn as compared to the fully developed adult. But there can be no doubt biologically that the fetus is *human* life (as opposed to some other form of life) and that, if permitted to develop, it will become a *person* in the full sense of the word. To argue that a fetus is such an undeveloped form of human life that it is not to be protected by the pacifist's normally absolute prohibition on killing is to argue that some forms of human life are more valuable than others and that the least valued can be sacrificed to other considerations. This kind of weighing of the value of certain lives against the value of other lives (or causes) is precisely what advocates of "just war" thinking do and what pacifists refuse to do with regard to war.

On war, the pacifist commits himself to the view that he will always sacrifice his own life rather than take the life of another, no matter what the relative value of the two lives for society or the importance of other values at stake. Once the pacifist admits that it may be morally right to take a form of human life, no matter how undeveloped, it is certainly fair to ask on what set of scales the life of a ruthless murderer or dictator is to be weighed as having such value that it should never be taken, while taking the life of the fetus is morally acceptable.

Certain kinds of arguments are used by some pacifists for permitting abortion which they refuse to consider valid when thinking about war. Some argue that abortion is never a good, never in the true sense "morally right," but may still be better than the alternatives. Abortion is sometimes necessary because we live in a far from perfect world. It is certainly true that we live in a world which forces hard moral choices on us. But pacifists when thinking about war refuse to accept the arguments of those who favor war because they believe war is a lesser evil than, for example, the destruction of our civilization. Pacifists always insist that there is a better third alternative, or that suffering is to be preferred to war. Why are lesser evil arguments permitted in the case of abortion, but not in the case of war?

Other pacifists defend abortion under certain circumstances because the birth of a child would create great hardships for the family into which it would be born, and, in some overpopulated areas, for the society at large. By taking into account the welfare of persons other than the immediate actors in the abortion decision (doctor, mother, fetus) an argument for abortion along these lines follows the form of what is perhaps the most powerful moral argument for participation in certain wars. The argument is that although love demands self-sacrifice rather than killing the attacker when an attack is directed at oneself, when an innocent third party is attacked love demands that one protect the innocent even if it means killing the attacker. To do otherwise is to demonstrate an "ironical preference for the life of the guilty to that of the innocent" (Niebuhr, *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics,* page 196).

Pacifists have rejected this argument. They have focused attention directly on the immediate action of the soldier (killing other persons) rather than on the intended results of that action (protecting the innocent). They have in effect refused to admit considerations about the welfare of third parties in making decisions about war and have rejected the option of doing immediate harm (killing the attacker) to prevent a greater but more distant harm (the killing of innocents). Why are third-party arguments (the welfare of family and society) permitted to count on abortion and not on war? And why is the option of doing immediate harm (killing the fetus) sometimes preferred to accepting the more distant and greater harm (detrimental consequences for family or society), when it is rejected in the case of war?

Still other pacifist arguments for abortion are framed in terms of concern for the welfare of the potential person, the fetus. Such arguments may seem preferable from the pacifist perspective because they treat the fetus as subject, as valuable in its own right, not as object. These are "quality of life" arguments. They point out the fact that the fetus has little chance of a decent life, either because of the social circumstances into which it will be born or because of likely physical or mental defects. American Friends Service Committee puts the question strikingly: "How do we balance a child's right to be born against its right to a decent life?" (*Who Shall Live? Man's Control Over Birth and Death,* page 38). This particular study goes on to answer the question by denying the fetus its right to be born if it seems probable that it will not have a decent life, judged in practice by whether or not the mother wants the child.

Such reasoning sounds strangely reminiscent of the observation of an American military man in Vietnam explaining the destruction of a village: "We had to destroy it in order to save it." In any case such "quality of life" arguments are sharply contrasted with pacifist thought about war. In the case of war, pacifists would certainly not argue that killing was justified because it would improve the (now) dead man's quality of life, or even the quality of life of others who survived. Here the pacifist puts priority on the right to continued bodily existence. Why can quality of life considerations override the right to continued bodily existence in the case of abortion?

The photo shows unborn infants between eighteen and twenty-four weeks of the gestation period, all of whom were aborted in one morning at a large metropolitan, university-related hospital. All were alive when aborted.

Finally, nearly all pacifists would permit abortion on the basis of considerations of the welfare of the mother, though there is great variation in the type of consideration which would be required in order to justify abortion. Toward one end of the spectrum of opinion, some would feel that abortion is morally justified if the mother feels a child would be a burden to her financially, psychologically, or socially. Near the other extreme, some would argue that abortion is morally justified only if the life of the mother is in grave danger unless an abortion is performed. Very few, I dare say, would argue that a woman would be morally wrong in choosing an abortion if she was very likely to die in an attempt to give birth to the child. Yet it seems to me that a consistent

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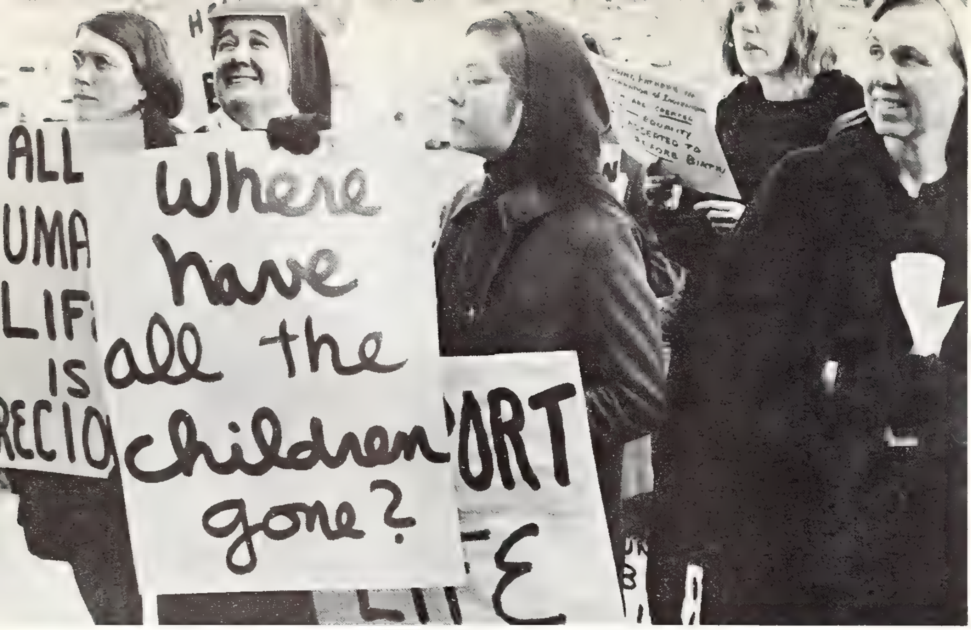
Pacifists always insist that there is a better third alternative to war, or that suffering is to be preferred to war. Why are lesser evil arguments permitted in the case of abortion, but not in the case of war?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The logic underlying Mennonite pacifism leads to a view which absolutely rejects killing other human beings. I believe that careful consideration of war and abortion will lead to reformulation of our position on war.

application of Mennonite pacifist logic on war to the problem of abortion would lead to that conclusion.

Of course, if Mennonite pacifism seeks only to prescribe an ethical course for the Christian, not for the world, and if such an ethic is binding only on those who have voluntarily accepted it (matters about which with regard to war there is much disagreement among Mennonites), the conclusion that the mother morally ought to risk a high probability of death in order to avoid killing the fetus would apply only to women who have committed themselves to a life of self-sacrificial love. Nevertheless, it does, so it seems to me, apply at least to them. It may be argued that mothers have obligations to others which they would not be able to fulfill if they died. But the same can be said of pacifists who give up their lives rather than killing their assailants. It may be argued that a mother is of more value to her family and to society than a fetus and that she has more rights than a fetus, an argument which is certainly true. But it is also true that only a mature person (the mother) can choose voluntarily to sacrifice her interests or life for the sake of another, and that sacrificing oneself for another is more in keeping with the Mennonite view of the way of Jesus than insisting on one's rights, especially when defending one's rights or life demands killing another.

Several questions arise from this analysis. One is whether the kind of logic which Mennonites use about war should be applied to other problems, like abortion. Some might contend that there is no need for consistency in the type of reasoning which one applies to problems of war and violence and to troublesome medical decisions. But although I would agree that the different sets of facts and values involved in these related but different areas may lead to conclusions which appear on the surface contradictory, I believe that a coherent moral position requires consistency in the *types* of reasoning used and the *kinds* of considerations which are deemed morally relevant.

Another question might be whether Mennonites should not simply apply their logic on war to the abortion question as I have done here and defend an absolutist stance against abortion. But I believe that the reluctance of most Mennonites, myself included, to argue that it is morally wrong for a Christian to have an abortion when her life is very seriously endangered is not simply a failure to carry out the implications of our thinking about war. This reluctance seems to me to represent a correct intuitive recognition that there are other moral considerations involved in such a case, considerations which are powerful enough to override what has traditionally been understood as an absolute prohibition of killing under any circumstances.

If I interpret this reluctance correctly and if it is important for moral reasoning to be consistent from one issue to another, then an even more basic question is raised: Is our traditional way of formulating our position on war adequate? I believe that careful consideration of war and abortion will lead to reformulation of our position on war. Mennonite ethics must be recast in less simplistic forms, which do more justice to other aspects of the gospel and to the complicated and troublesome situations in which we find ourselves, while still reflecting a continued and deepened commitment to the way of the cross as the basic ethical norm for the Christian. Concern for social justice and an emphasis on God's grace, for example, may help us develop a more fully satisfying ethic.

We dare not let the sinfulness of the "is" dictate our view of the "ought," but neither can we let an abstract and wooden "ought" detach us from the realities which engulf us. That leads into moral rigidity. The community of faith must discern a new path.

The reluctance of most Mennonites to take an absolute stand against abortion seems to me to represent a correct intuitive recognition that there are other moral considerations involved in such a case, considerations which are powerful enough to override what has traditionally been understood as an absolute prohibition of killing under any circumstances.

What is Council of Commissions?

Once a year about 100 elected representatives converge on Newton, Kansas. What do they do? Well, this year they worried about the snow and sleet which kept falling over Kansas, delayed a number of flights, and threatened to provide a few unscheduled days of togetherness.

Although a nuisance, the snow did not disrupt the serious business of hearing reports, debating concerns and recommendations, making decisions, and setting policy. The reports were presented by General Conference staff. Evaluating the work of the General Conference during 1977 was the task of these elected representatives. After the reports the various commissions began to set budgets and goals for 1978.

One might call Council of Commissions the General Conference parliament. Since Mennonites adhere to the concept of the free church, this "parliament" is not a law-making body for congregations, but it is the group which sets policy for the commissions. These elected representatives also decide how the money is divided among the various ministries—education, home ministries, overseas mission, seminary—of the church.

The entire news section of this issue of The Mennonite *is used to present the highlights of the Council of Commissions, February 10-14.*

Is civil disobedience our Achilles' heel?

It isn't often that the affairs of state and church get equal time at a church meeting.

But it happened. And the two are intimately related. The state demands taxes. The church hopes for donations. Their common denominator is money.

If debate among members of the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church is the litmus test of what it means to be a discerning church, then the denomination is pointed to an exciting future. The two issues, war taxes and fund raising, were the preeminent concerns during meetings in Newton, Kansas, February 10-14.

Although thorough reports were heard by the sixteen-member board on all aspects of programming—overseas mission, education, home ministries—and dozens of decisions were made, the two keynote issues were civil disobedience and how to communicate the need for increased giving.

During the first session on Friday, board members locked onto the planning for the midtriennium conference on war taxes and civil responsibility. Uneasiness about the process erupted quickly. The structure of the June 1-4 invitational consultation on the issue was strongly faulted, as was the conference itself.

Board member Ken Bauman, pastor of First Mennonite Church in Berne, Indiana, galvanized his colleagues with his allegations. "The consultation is not structured for dialogue—it is monologue. The way it has been set up upsets me deeply." Later he declared that the Commission on Home Ministries should not serve as the launching pad for the study and the planning leading to the conference in 1979. "Why ask CHM? The image of CHM is stacked. It should be the responsibility of the General Board."

His assessment was the beginning of a fruitful debate which occupied several more sessions of the General Board, one session of CHM and hallway discussions.

The debate crystallized about several key questions. What is wrong with the study process initiated by the obedience-civil disobedience committee of CHM? Is the issue of war taxes so divisive that a schism in the General Conference is inevitable? Is the February 1979 delegate conference viable?

By Valentine's Day, February 14, perhaps symbolically, the hard-hitting process of charge and countercharge had evolved into understanding and affirmation of the original plans. On paper, little had changed, but in the minds of those who spoke for the "unheard,"—the "conservatives," the "common person," and the Canadians—there was a restoration of confidence in the process. Tenseness was dissipated. The mood became one of working together.

The June consultation will meet at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana. About twenty-five persons are invited. These include theologians and biblical scholars, attorneys, administrative staff of the General Conference, several MCC staff, and representatives from the Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Brethren Church. The proceedings of the consultation are to serve as the basis for a study guide on civil disobedience.

The committee planning the consultation and the midtriennium conference was called in to justify its ideas. One member, Perry Yoder, observed, "Getting people to participate is very difficult. People are very tense about this."

"We thought the trust level would be quite high," said another member, Harold Regier. "Requests for speakers were made on the basis of scholarship and the purpose is

General Board members (from left) Irene Dunn, Bertha Harder, Marvin Zehr, and Ken Bauman ponder the issue of war taxes.

biblical. It is not a matter of pro or con."

"We don't know where the scholars will come out," declared Don Steelberg, chairperson of CHM. (A complete list of scholars invited is not yet available—some are still considering the invitation.)

It was noted that since the concern on abortion had been handled insensitively at the Bluffton conference, there was fear that the same thing would happen with the issue of war taxes. So why should those who oppose withholding war taxes bother to participate? They won't be heard anyway.

Another fear was that the Canadians would also stay away. "My gut reaction is that it is a US issue," said board member Loretta Fast. She was challenged on that.

"Don't Canadians also pay military taxes?" queried Ben Sprunger.

"Yes," replied another Canadian board member, Jake Klassen, "but we have not gone through the trauma and frustrations of the Vietnam War."

Hence, if both the Canadians and those opposed to withholding war taxes stayed away from the February 1979 delegate conference, the gathering would be a farce. The conference would not be viable if large blocs of delegates simply weren't there.

For a brief time the board lost nerve. Should the conference be canceled? However, chairman Elmer Neufeld injected reality by reflecting, "The issue is not going to go away. So, what is the next step?"

Over the next four days the board recovered confidence in itself, in the planning already done, in the possibility of bringing the dissenters into dialogue, despite differences in theology and nationality, and in the voice of the discerning church. "I came to the Mennonite church because of discerning congregations. If we cannot discern in a process like this, then we have missed the boat," reflected Don Steelberg.

That was the next step.

They reminded themselves that the Anabaptist movement grew out of several forms of civil disobedience.

They decided to adjust some of the personnel for the June consultation. They decided to promote serious study of the civil responsibility issue among congregations next fall so that delegates would be conversant with it. They decided to book the Leamington Hotel in Minneapolis February 9-10, 1979 as the place for the midtriennium conference.

On the issue of funding for General Conference programs the discussion was less vehement, although just as serious. The fact that giving in 1977 was $340,000 below budget compelled the various commissions and the General Board to carefully assess reasons, and determine priorities for 1978.

A consensus among the board members suggested that money is available. Money will be given, but the level of giving will only increase as people in the pews become aware of program. To further this goal the executive secretaries were instructed to produce guidelines for the solicitation of donations from individuals. The various commissions are not to compete with each other for funds, but they have been given the green light to be more active in fund raising.

Relations with Mennonite Central Committee also came under review. Since donations by US General Conference congregations to MCC have been sliding—down $150,000 since three years ago—the General Board set a giving goal for US churches of $300,000. This is about $70,000 higher than the amount actually given to MCC in 1977. It is not part of the General Conference budget, but represents a goal.

In another MCC-related action, the General Board approved the formation of an MCC (US). It would be a structure to which MCC regional groupings in the United States could report.

The General Board also affirmed the action of its executive committee last December when they refused to pay a tax levy from the Internal Revenue Service. The personal income taxes are owed by Heinz Janzen (general secretary) and his wife, Dorothea Janzen. Under US tax laws an ordained minister is self-employed, is not subject to normal payroll deductions, and hence, Heinz has refused to pay the military portion of his income tax.

Normally the IRS simply confiscates the amount owed from the bank account of the person protesting. But with the levy the IRS is attempting to collect directly from the General Conference as employer. The General Board agreed with the executive committee that the Janzen case is civil disobedience by individuals, and not by an incorporated body, the General Conference. *Vic Reimer*

When does eleven equal zero?

When does eleven equal zero? The answer is in the 1978 conference budget.

The budget ($3,179, 883) is the same as for 1977. So it is a zero increase. But since members of the General Conference donated $2,839,867 in 1977, there was a shortfall of about $340,000 in giving. Hence, to realize the standpat budget, giving in 1978 will have to increase about 11 percent over 1977. The zero-percent increase budget actually calls for an increase in giving of $340,000.

Meeting in Newton, Kansas, February 10-14, the Division of Administration recommended the hold-the-line budget to the General Board. The recommendation was accepted.

This means that due to inflation, and international exchange pressures on the US and Canadian dollars, there will be a cutback in program.

For 1978 there is also a moratorium on all salary increases, except increments based on experience, which average twelve dollars per month. This decision was not accepted readily by the total Council of Commissions. Some observed that General Conference staff are being forced to accept something which is not fair during inflationary times. "Who of you would give up your cost-of-living adjustment?" someone asked. Another declared that it would be difficult to make up the salary in 1979 because it would entail a 12 percent or more increase. In 1977 the salary expense for the fifty-one employees of the General Conference in Newton was approximately $550,000. A 6 percent increase would have added $33,000 to the salary bill.

At mid-year the Commission on Overseas Mission will be granted a second look at its budget. If projections for receipts are positive, COM may be allowed to increase its missionary staff. That would require above-budget spending by the commission.

One above-budget item was okayed. The General Conference will make a $7,500 contribution to the *Umsiedler* program of the Canadian Conference. The Canadians, who were given responsibility by the General Conference for work among the resettlers from Russia, have budgeted $80,000 for them. Designated gifts will be accepted for the ministry, and if necessary, funds will be drawn from the Emergency Reserve Fund of COM.

In response to the Bluffton conference resolution on aid for retired ministers, a new fund has been set up. It replaces the Ministers' Aid Fund, and is called the General Conference Pastors Aid Fund. Assets will be transferred from the old fund, and new resources will be solicited from congregations and district conferences. Eligibility for payments will be limited to persons whose fifty-fifth birthday occurs before January 1, 1979. The aid is necessary because many older, retired ministers and spouses do not have pension plans.

The Division of Administration did not give in to pressure from the Commission on Home Ministries to reduce from 20 percent to 10 percent of budget the cash with which each commission is to begin the year. This cash serves to minimize borrowing during the summer months when receipts are usually low. *Vic Reimer*

Commission on Education continues curriculum development

"The year 1977 will go down in Commission on Education (COE) history as the year of The Foundation Series," executive secretary John Gaeddert told the General Board at its opening session, Friday, February 10.

The new cooperative Sunday school curriculum for children up to grade eight was launched in General Conference churches for the September-November 1977 quarter. Sixty percent of GC churches used the new lessons for 90 percent of their classes. Gaeddert remarked, "The Foundation Series has become a household word and the first-quarter response has been overwhelmingly positive."

At the annual four-day sessions, COE approved the next step in a youth and adult Sunday school curriculum. Helmut Harder has been granted a sabbatical and study leave from Canadian Mennonite Bible College to assume the executive-director position for two years, beginning July 1978, on three-fourths time. The new materials are projected to be in use for the fall quarter of 1981.

Participating in this continuation of The Foundation Series are the Mennonite Church (OM), Brethren in Christ, Church of the Brethren, and General Conference. The Mennonite Brethren may also become cooperative users. Plans call for four years of youth and four years of adult curriculum materials.

COE made plans to implement the Bluffton resolution calling for further response to the issue of abortion. Over the next year, through the family life committee, a study packet is to be developed and made available to congregations.

Bruce Woods, outgoing director of family life education, told the commission that the major thrust in family life education should be the implementation of Marriage Encounter (ME) across the conference. "There is evidence of interest and participation from all areas of the General Conference."

Because of financial limitations and the local relevance of ME, COE will encourage district, regional, provincial, and local groups to take responsibility for ME. COE will continue to provide leadership for its initiation through COE staff person Herta Funk and the family life committee.

David Suderman, staff person in higher education for COE, announced his termination and acceptance of an assignment with the South American Mennonite churches, effective March 1, 1978, in the area of music education. "His attempts at promoting greater communication with, and understanding for, the Mennonite schools and colleges, have helped us to gain a better appreciation for the unique character and role of our institutions for higher education," commented one commission member.

For the future, COE consolidated the part-time higher education assignment and the part-time student service assignment into one full-time position. Eleanor Loewen is filling the student services position but it was declared that the new staff position was open for suggestions.

Faith and Life Press, a department of COE, published or reprinted the following in 1977: John H. Yoder, *Christian Witness to the State;* Perry and Elizabeth Yoder, *New Men-New Roles;* David Schroeder, *Learning to Know the Bible;* MWC, *Parables of the Kingdom;* Esther Groves, *Lordship as Servanthood* (leader's guide); William Keeney, *Lordship as Servanthood* (student's guide); Walter Klaassen, *Biblical and Theological Bases for Worship in the Believers' Church;* Wilfred Unruh, *Planning Congregational Worship;* Frank Ward, *The Sacred Car* (study guide and cassette); *The Foundation Series,* Quarters 1 and 2; Uniform Series, *Adult Bible Study Guide, Youth Bible Study Guide, Bibel Studien Fuer Erwachsene; Builder; Rejoice; With; On the Line;* Gering, *Catechism Workbook; Songbook '77;* Waltner, *This We Believe;* La Vernae Dick, *Amos and Jonah;* La Vernae Dick, *Who Are the Mennonites?* and Helmut Harder, *A Theology for Christian Camping.*

Best sellers among Faith and Life materials for 1977 were *The Mennonite Hymnal* (3,095); *Songbook '77* (2,712); *This We Believe* (1,344), and *If* (1,455).

Lois Bergen, COE staff person for youth education, reported that the Cheyenne Peace Curriculum Project is being funded through the National Endowment for the Humanities. A first draft of this project has been critiqued and it is projected that the material will be in use within the next year.

Thirteen youth work camps were held in 1977, including eighty-six workers and twenty-two leaders. Projections for 1978 are seventeen camps, 200 work campers, and thirty-eight leaders. The biggest single youth event projected for 1978 is the Mennonite World Conference youth program.

The COE budget for 1978 was set at $234,050, an amount identical to 1977. *Bernie Wiebe*

John Gaeddert (left), executive secretary for the Commission on Education, and Helmut Harder, chairman of COE, listen as members of the commission tell about themselves. Before getting to work hearing reports and subsequent deliberations the commission began their meetings with a time of sharing.

New vitality in church planting, MVS, broadcasting

"How do we chart our task for the new triennium and what are the priorities?" asked chairperson Don Steelberg at the start of the annual meeting of the Commission on Home Ministries February 10-14 in Newton, Kansas.

Martha Nickel, recently returned from India, said that she felt caught in a dilemma that could be illustrated by a college student's choice between Jesus and french fries when deciding how to spend money. "Like the student, we too often choose french fries. And I find that a terrible choice—between self and Jesus in my own life."

"Fifty new church plantings, in the form of house churches, fellowships, congregations or exploratory groups, have sprung up over the past seven years. Many are inter-Mennonite, some are Spanish, some Chinese, and some are not officially organized; but all are interested in relating to the General Conference in some way," reported Leonard Wiebe, CHM secretary for church planting. "The strategy of CHM is to encourage 'mother-daughter' models wherever possible. District and provincial home missions committees assume responsibility in most cases where the above model is not feasible."

Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) opened five new units in 1977, all related to mission churches. Palmer Becker, CHM executive secretary reported, "We have almost doubled our MVS program over the past four years. The number of volunteers has risen from seventy in 1974 to 140 in 1977." Peter Ediger, MVS director stated in his report: "Twenty-three units are presently involved in ministries including child care, home rehabilitation, environmental concerns, counseling, alternative education, the arts, nursing, community organization, mental health, welfare rights advocacy, and prison ministries. We are projecting more new units in 1978 and expect to have 160 volunteers by the end of the year.

Eric Friesen, Toronto, host of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's FM radio network Eric Friesen Show, appeared before CHM on behalf of radio and television ministries. Eric reported on a meeting with Mennonite Broadcasts board and staff about a new radio broadcast that would replace the Mennonite Hour. An experimental three-minute daily format is planned for test marketing this summer.

CHM approved General Conference cooperation in this pilot project. They agreed to pursue the process of naming a speaker for the broadcast, and hope to become full partners in future production and marketing. The earliest possible airing of the tested program would be next winter, according to Diane Umble, director for Faith and Life Radio and Television. "Our share in a full year's costs could be $40,000 for production costs. We do not expect to buy air time, that would be done by local congregations and other groups or businesses. But the broadcast will be designed for good time slots on powerful stations."

Perry Yoder, part-time CHM staff member, outlined the process planned for dealing with the war tax or civil responsibility issue raised at the Bluffton conference. Because of this issue's "divisive and emotional potential in the conference," a survey instrument has been designed to get congregational input; a consultation June 1-4 at the seminary will work toward a study guide, and congregations will be encouraged to use the study in preparation for a February 1979 special General Conference delegate session at Minneapolis, called solely for the purpose of responding to the Bluffton resolution on tax withholding.

To stay within Division of Administration guidelines to hold the 1978 CHM budget at $579,918 as in 1977 (due to 1977 shortfall of $340,000 in overall GC budget), cuts were made in media staff time, Indian Ministries program subsidy, peace and social concerns, and it was agreed that terminating area MVS director Dale Suderman would not be replaced immediately. *Bernie Wiebe*

Lynn Liechty (right) appears incredulous as he listens to remarks by his neighbor during a Commission on Home Ministries session. Erick Sawatzky and Martha Nickel are the other CHM persons in the photo. In the background listening to the interchange is Jake Fransen, vice-president of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Executive committee members Elmer Neufeld and Marvin Zehr kept posted on CHM deliberations as well as on the other commissions.

Buoyant mood characterizes WM meeting

Women in Mission is expanding its frontiers.

Definite progress has been made in expanding the opportunities for women in church work, but WM representatives meeting in Newton, Kansas, have a vision for more involvement.

Women in Mission executive officers, and representatives from each US district and Canadian province—a total of twenty-four—met February 9-10 to plan program for 1978, and to discuss women in church vocations.

Even though acceptance of women in church leadership still has a good distance to go, it was noted that women generally are more relaxed about moving into partnership with men in church vocations. There has been a change in attitude. In years past, women saw involvement in the male-dominated structures of the church as a right to be demanded. Now that the principle of partnership is accepted, the emphasis has changed. Church structures are still mainly led by men, but women are now seeking greater involvement on the basis of their ability to complement and fill in experience which men don't see. It is a concept of interdependence.

Nevertheless, there are problems. Women who are seminary graduates are experiencing difficulties in finding pastorates, and those who do are having problems with their role. This is one of the frontiers that needs expansion. Men, and particularly male ministers, experience distress in accepting women. Women ministers experience subtle signals which make them feel second-rate. However, they experience joy in their work with women who are sick, in need of counsel, or who seek career planning.

Some participants wondered whether there should be "confidence" training for women. Women need to develop the desire to share abilities. "We can't always wait to be asked," it was declared.

A budget of $178,000 was accepted for this year. In 1977 WM raised $172,683, of which $107,267 went to the Commission on Overseas Mission. Several special projects were approved for 1978. Five thousand dollars was granted for training in how the media, particularly television, manipulate people. Money is being budgeted so that wives of ministers may go with their husbands when they attend short courses or seminars. Pastors' wives also need to grow. The women noted that someday it may even be necessary for WM to provide support to men whose wives are ministers. Seminary scholarships for women were increased.

Two new appointments were made. Naomi Wollmann, Moundridge, Kansas, is now a member of Faith and Life Radio and Television committee, and Lois Schrag, Kingman, Kansas, is the first woman from WM to be on the peace and social concerns committee.

Effective in July, Lora Oyer, Chenoa, Illinois, is the president of Women in Mission. Naomi Lehman, who has served for six years, will continue until the end of June. A presentation was made in honor of her pioneering leadership. *Vic Reimer*

Elsie Flaming second vice-president of Women in Mission.

Seminaries look at role of women

The role of women at seminary, the status of the MA in Christian education program, and an update on faculty policies were among the major agenda items at the joint board meeting of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries held February 10-11 at Newton, Kansas.

In May 1977 the seminaries' Task Force on Women presented a series of recommendations to the administrative committee. These called for giving greater visibility and encouragement to women studying for or engaged in church leadership positions.

The board noted that some steps had been taken, including increased publicity through the AMBS *Bulletin,* the employment of Anne Rupp (copastor of the Pleasant Oaks Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Indiana) as a spiritual counselor for seminary women, and the preparation of a course on the Christian family, which would focus particularly on family structures in the AMBS community.

Further discussion was generated on whether AMBS has the responsibility to assume an advocacy role on behalf of women ministers in the church. If so, what forms should this take? How should support be given to women alumni as they face resistance in entering the pastoral ministry? Should financial as well as spiritual encouragement be given to women pursuing graduate studies toward a degree? The board committed itself to continued dialogue on these questions, as well as on the task force recommendation supporting the appointment of a woman as full-time faculty member.

In formal action, the board voted to drop the two-year MA in Christian education program in favor of a Christian education track within the three-year MDiv program, effective July 1, 1979. This was seen as a move to strengthen the professional focus within the MDiv program along the four vocational tracks of pastoral ministry, Christian education, pastoral counseling, and overseas missions.

There was further discussion on the status of MA programs. One member questioned the legitimacy of offering "nonprofessional" programs in biblical studies and church history. Another felt that potential students, unsure of vocational goals, were often attracted by a two-year program. Ross Bender, AMBS dean, indicated that further study of the implications of such programs will continue.

Erland Waltner, president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, and Marlin Miller, president of Goshen Biblical Seminary, reported that work is continuing on the preparation of a new faculty handbook. It will update the faculty support policy adopted in October 1972.

An MBS budget of $356,709 for the 1978-79 fiscal year was recommended by the board, and later approved by the General Board. This represents a 5 percent increase for cost-of-living adjustments. *Susan Schumacher*

Henry Poettcker, president-elect of Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

"Seek, and ye shall find," COM staff told

The Commission on Overseas Mission predicts that this year the number of missionaries will bottom out, and if funds are available, there will be an increase in COM overseas personnel within the next year.

COM executive secretary Howard Habegger reported that despite maximum efforts at recruiting—104 new missionaries since 1974—an unusually high turnover rate has prevented an increase in personnel. Nine years ago there were 198 missionaries, in 1974, 150, and now in 1978 there are 137.

National churches are asking for North American personnel to work with them. "But," noted Howard, "COM faces a crisis of confidence with the receiving churches because we are not able to send personnel which they are requesting." There has been a significant shift in the kind of persons requested by national churches. Increasingly they are asking for those with evangelistic and church-planting skills.

An additional factor in placement of missionaries is the goal to place more longer-term missionaries. Howard called for persons willing to commit themselves for five to ten years, and who would not "emotionally keep one foot in North America and one in Africa, or Asia, or Latin America."

Commission members instructed the COM staff to continue active recruiting despite the budget squeeze. "If the Lord provides the workers, then the Lord will also provide the means," asserted chairman Vern Preheim.

In thinking through the implications of this, the commission said that staff should be more forthright in communicating the actual cost of missionary support. Although 85 percent of General Conference missionaries receive significant support from their home churches, or clusters of congregations, this support does not usually reflect the actual cost involved in the missionary's work.

The commission instructed its staff to recruit aggressively, and if workers are called, serious efforts will be made to send them, despite tight finances. They said workers should be sent even if this necessitates above-budget spending.

The commission also decided to seek funds for development work from agencies outside the General Conference structure. This is a change in policy for North America, but it does fit in with one of the seven goals for mission in the 1970s enunciated at the 1972 COM mission strategy conference. This goal stated that to assist economic development in Mennonite church areas around the world financial resources beyond those of COM would be solicited. Missionaries and national churches have received funds from OXFAM and from various government agencies. The West German Government granted $500,000 for construction at Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hwalien, Taiwan.

But COM staff persons have not solicited development aid from either Canadian or American international development agencies. The proposal received vigorous discussion. How would the constituency react? Is it really good stewardship, since it might curb constituency giving to COM? Would there be a tendency to push development programs in order to secure funds? Would COM become identified with the agency granting the money?

The commission did decide to seek funds from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), an agency of the Canadian Government. MCC (Canada) has been receiving funds from CIDA for several years. Howard Habegger said that approximately $100,000 out of COM's $2,084,000 budget could be classified as development projects.

Harold Ratzlaff, former missionary to India, told the commission, "Our money needs to be voluntary. Government money would taint our mission work."

However, members of the commission with MCC experience declared that there has never been a request by CIDA to identify the source of funding. They said many governments and charitable agencies are looking for legitimate organizations which can use grants with integrity. "They know," said Peter Dyck, "that small agencies like MCC can do more with the money than any government-to-government aid program." MCC (Canada) is prepared to serve as a facilitator for COM in seeking funds from CIDA.

Jeanne Zook, commission member from Portland, Oregon, commented, "With our people, a worthy project is OK. I believe in development. It will free donated money for work not otherwise possible." *Vic Reimer*

A classroom wall map of the Mediterranean symbolized the Great Commission during sessions of the Commission on Overseas Mission. Chairman Vern Preheim queries a board members response to an agenda item as executive secretary Howard Habegger listens.

Ephesus
Rhodes

Record

Calendar

March 27-31—Project Teach, Rosthern (Saskatchewan) Church

March 30-April 2—Central District Conference annual sessions, Wooster, Ohio

July 25-30—Mennonite World Conference, Wichita, Kansas

Workers

Cecil and Linda Siemens, Home Street Church, Winnipeg, have begun a two-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in northern Manitoba where they will be working as assistants at the Pauingassi Trading Post. Cecil was last employed as an electrical maintenance technician in Manitoba. He served previously with MCC in Zaire. Linda has worked as a licensed practical nurse at the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg.

Cecil Siemens family

An evangelism seminar is scheduled April 5-7 at the Mayfair Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Resource persons are Floyd Bartel, Don Yoder, Lynn Liechty, and Dennis M. Oliver. Registration fee is $15 with traveling bursaries available. Write Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Teacher needed

A teacher for the upper elementary grades (four through eight) is needed in Taiwan at an English-speaking school for missionary children. This salaried position is for a two-year term under the sponsorship of the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference. Write or call us immediately if interested.

Commission on Overseas Mission
Box 347
Newton, Kansas 67114
(316) 283-5100

Letters

Look at the balance

Dear Editor: I have been concerned for some time over the basic direction of *The Mennonite* and the philosophy it espouses. Many articles have socioeconomic concerns and are written from a social-political point of view. Now these articles are valid and important, and I realize that the Christian gospel has deep social implications; however, we need some balance in the presentations of your articles.

Topics and subjects such as evangelism, personal devotional life, and deeper spiritual life are very hard to find in *The Mennonite.* This concerns me; for really, these are as important, if not more so, as the social topics you so frequently cover.

Let's have some balance and have more articles on evangelism (personal, or for the church), devotional life, personal ethics, and biblical subjects which need discussion.

In this way *The Mennonite* will become a more useful servant of the Mennonite people.

May God bless you and the editorial staff as you work to further his kingdom. *Ervin Siemens, Bergthal Mennonite Church, Rural Route 2, Didsbury, Alberta T0M 0W0*

January 17

Reinforce Kreider letter

Dear Editor: I would like to add my bit to reinforce Bob Kreider's letter (January 10 issue).

I spent two months in voluntary service at an Indian school in western New York State in the summer of 1937. I don't recall that we even talked about the draft.

I think I was the only Mennonite. There were also Quakers and Church of the Brethren. Dan West was the leader. There was a Frenchman, I think Pierre Ceresole (probably misspelled), and also the head of the Christian Social Democrats of pre-Hitler Germany. His name escapes me. Maybe Carl Landes was there for part of it. It seems so long ago.

It was purely *voluntary service.* I paid my own transportation and contributed toward the food. We shingled roofs, poured concrete, gardened, and canned for the boarding school.

Our discussions centered mainly around our historic beliefs—Quaker-Brethren-Mennonite—relative to a more aggressive peace witness. *William H. Stauffer, United Church of Christ, Stone Creek, Ohio 43840*

January 19

On national boundaries

Dear Editor: Thank you so much for the editorial "Uneasy about Canada" (January 10 issue). I appreciated the balanced approach to our too common problems in our modern culture, regardless of the national boundaries. *Howard Raid, 111 South Spring Street, Bluffton, Ohio 45817*

January 20

God's special children

Dear Editor: I am enclosing a poem (author unknown) as a response to the article "God's Special Children" (November 15, 1977, issue).

A meeting was held . . . quite far from earth.
"It's time again for another birth,"
said the angels to the Lord above.
"This special child will need much love.
His progress may seem very slow,
accomplishments he may not show.
And he'll require extra care
from the folks he meets way down there.
He may not run or laugh or play;
his thoughts may seem quite far away.
In many ways he won't adapt,
and he'll be known as handicapped.
So let's be careful where he's sent;
we want his life to be content.
Please, Lord, find parents who
will do a special job for you.
They will not realize right away
the leading role they're asked to play,
but with this child sent from above
comes stronger faith and richer love.
And soon they'll know the privilege given
in caring for this gift from heaven.
Their precious charge, so meek and mild,
is heaven's very special child!"

I wish God's blessings to all in 1978. *Bertha Tiessen, 7 Robinson Street, Leamington, Ontario N8H 1Y5* January 20

Notes on church growth

"We need a revival" (today we might say *renewal*), "then our church would grow." Others say, "We really can't witness to others until we get ourselves refreshed spiritually." Such statements reflect a truth but also some misunderstanding.

What is the relationship between revival (or renewal) and church growth?

Renewal is God's will for every person and it usually is good for the congregation. Revival brings personal spiritual growth and it brings deepened experiences of reconciliation. These are important preludes for church growth.

But outreach growth does not necessarily happen after a revival. Why not?

Sometimes the renewal is so inward oriented that it cannot reach out. Christians enjoy each other more but may actually become further separated and isolated from those who are outside the fellowship. John R. W. Stott has said that Christians who have no friends outside their fellowship circle may become more like the Pharisees than like Jesus.

Effective outreach (or evangelism) cannot happen without revival (or renewal). But renewal can occur without letting it grow to its intended fruition of outreach.

If we expect outreach growth, we will need to plan for it prayerfully. It may mean rearranging our own lives and making more time to meet new people or to cultivate weak relationships. Many people mistakenly assume that all authentic evangelism is spontaneous. To be sure, evangelism that results in conversions and discipleship is the work of the Holy Spirit. But many Christians too readily leave the whole task to the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit in us moves us to accept the privilege and opportunity of being soul winners in partnership with him.

Following a time of spiritual renewal in one congregation, the prayer groups decided to split up and try to again reach their original size by adding new members. They prayed, studied, and worked for this goal. In a short period, several new persons were added to the congregation.

True spiritual revival results in the bonus of outreach to others. *Floyd G. Bartel, secretary for CHM congregational mission*

I chose the ministry

My call to the ministry has been part of the longer process of discerning gifts, God's leading, and fulfillment. Father was a minister, and the church was always held before us as an organism with the greatest potential and possibility for self-expression. Over the years, as churches also began to affirm women in the ministry, I came to feel a special sense of joy in pastoral work.

The greatest hazard of the ministry is loneliness. Who ministers to ministers? And there are only a few female predecessors to go to.

On the other hand, being among the first women pastors in our conference has been a freeing experience. I have noted that the pastoral ministry has traditionally been tied to a male identity, not always to a pastoral identity. It is exciting to step over these lines and see a unique new contribution that can be made.

I have found the greatest fulfillment in relationships with persons (which includes worship, teaching, singing, fellowship, and counseling), where a gift is drawn out, a potential realized; where new visions are experienced and a new sense of personhood is attained. It comes when I see people becoming more like God wants them to be—daring to share their gifts within a network of interrelationships. *Anne Neufeld Rupp, copastor, Pleasant Oaks Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Indiana*

Rupp

Beside my Bible

Mary F. Heisey

"Seek and read from the book of the Lord" (Isaiah 34:16a). Beside my Bible this month are three other faith-enabling books that contain references to biblical incidents and counsel. Keeping God's Word nearby encourages immediate checking of such passages and illuminates the entire reading experience.

To Understand Each Other, *by Paul Tournier, translated by John S. Gilmour (John Knox Press, Atlanta, Georgia; third paperback printing, April 1977, sixty-two pages).*
In this powerful revelation, Swiss physician-psychiatrist Tournier makes us feel understood. Hence, we feel more like trying to understand others. Have you checked your marital dialogue lately? Are you avoiding certain emotionally charged subjects with your mate? Remember, the real encounter—opening up in depth—takes time. Listening, sharing, confession, and repentance are all involved, but complete mutual understanding grows out of personal submission to Jesus Christ who loves and understands us all.

The Bright Years, *by Sam C. Reeves (Fleming H. Revell Company, Old Tappan, New Jersey, 1977, 127 pages).*
This self-help book on how to make retirement the best time of life was written by a senior-ager who has been Minister to the Retired for the Louisiana Baptist Convention since 1970. His well-intentioned advice, delivered in "trite but true" tones loaded with quotations, poetry, and maxims, quickly grows tedious; helpful hints, however: Create and keep an up-to-date will; plan your own funeral.

To All Generations, *by Clara Bernice Miller (Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and Kitchener, Ontario, 1977, 222 pages).*
Even if you do not ordinarily read novels, read this one. Dan Brenneman, resident in a church home for the elderly in southeastern Iowa, is worth getting to know. Christian first, Mennonite second, he examines his faith, questions it, tests it, and continues to grow in it. The characters in this life-giving story respect the past, adjust to the present, and prepare for the future.

Meditation

Finding meaning in the tradition

Why don't the youth of today . . . be in every way perfect like we . . . in our day.

That is the perennial question, and for which there is no abiding answer, it seems.

The genius of a tradition does not lie in its absolute fixity. Any culture or tradition that is to remain alive must come to terms with the new components of experience that come its way. These must either be accommodated (if the ideology permits), or rejected (if they threaten it), but they cannot be ignored. And it is always the case that the newer generation encounters components not experienced by the previous generation. To have traversed from a rural agricultural to an urban industrialized environment is one example, another is to have switched languages. To make these major hurdles while retaining the reason to be is at the heart of the tradition's dynamic. The traditions that cannot come to terms with the new environmental, technological, and even ideological components are destined for the museum.

The ethos of youth includes a turn in the road. That turn in life happens personally and often corporately. It happens physically and psychologically. There must be room within the tradition for the self-discoveries of youth. There must be a forum for testing youthful dreams and there must be opportunities for expression of ideas and energies.

As one Mennonite minister, and father of two young people, I am anxious that our tradition be both firm and flexible—firm in knowing our purpose as a people of God, flexible in our sensitivity towards the new genius that the young generation will bring to our faith. To keep the polarity of firmness and flexibility is the responsibility of the current leadership.

For the youth who are restless about the tradition let me say what's on my heart. Give us an honest try. To abandon a tradition (cultural baggage as it is often mislabeled) is to abandon one tradition in favor of another one. To have a tradition is to have a people. It means that you belong. An incredible disruption of humanity occurs where people, young or old, do not belong anywhere. There is a vacuum. Such isolated persons have no context, no milieu, no community within which to hammer out their life's orientation. In the biblical and social sense, they are without a people. The poverty of such abandonment surfaces especially in the critical experiences of illness and death, and in such celebrative highlights as marriage.

A tradition does not function without a community to give assent to it. God created humans not in isolation, but as a community, male and female, to start with. Tradition really means nothing more and nothing less than a pattern for living. In the Christian sense it means to follow Christ in a way that can be tested with fellow Christians. The Mennonite way of life is one such tradition. It is true that their way sometimes was much too rigid, but it was also sometimes too flexible.

Each generation is obliged to ask what it is that makes our togetherness part of the will of God. If the tradition is at variance with the direction of the Spirit of God, then it must be reshaped. That reshaping must be done, not by negating God's history with us, but by examining how God used us for his purpose in previous generations and then by probing for ways in which we will bring about a creative witness for his truth in the current and future generation. All of us are called to be true to God within the generation in which he has trusted us to live.

Menno Wiebe

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CONTRIBUTORS

Duane Friesen is associate professor of Bible and religion at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas 67117.

Ted Koontz, 27 Fairlawn Street, Everett, Massachusetts 02149, in a PhD program in international relations at Harvard University.

Mary F. Heisey, 56 East Street, York, Pennsylvania 17403, is a free-lance book reviewer.

Menno Wiebe works for MCC (Canada) with native concerns.

CREDITS

Cover, Rohn Engh, Star Prairie, Wisconsin 54026; 130, 131, 133, 134, RNS; 135, 136, 145-48, Vic Reimer, GCNS.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Making the hard choices

Our two feature articles on abortion vividly portray the difficulties of Christian decision making. At such times it is tempting to resort to one or two texts in the Bible, declare these to be *the* answer, and be done with it.

Certainly it could never be God's intention for a pregnancy to occur in order to be aborted. Somehow, abortions are closely related to our human wills.

At the same time, both Friesen and Koontz declare that an absolute antiabortion stance is not the answer. There are exceptional circumstances where abortion does seem the appropriate Christian choice.

Such ethical dilemmas bring out strange situations. Evangelical Christians have cooperated with the Roman Catholic churches in some strong, absolute antiabortion statements. Among Mennonites, some of the same people who have been unwilling to support any strong nonresistance position suddenly do proclaim a very strong antiabortion position. And, paradoxically, some of the Mennonites who have proclaimed an absolute position against killing in war or in law enforcement have not been ready to declare the same absolute against abortion.

I wonder if we as Christians have the courage to accept the implications. Since we find inconsistency among both conservative and more liberal theological positions, this means that you and I have to personally seek out God's Holy Spirit and let him reveal his will for our lives. Neither of us can rely on an established Christian doctrine on abortion or war or capital punishment or divorce or remarriage; there isn't any one consistent position that either the evangelical *or* the more liberal Christians can agree on. Both groups waffle on one or the other of these moral choices.

This should not really come as a big surprise. Paul, in explaining his Christian liberty, says, "All things are lawful for me. . ." (1 Corinthians 6:12). The late Paul Tillich said that revelation or faith has no specific ethical content.

How shall we then decide? (Or as the popular Francis Schaefer book and film series puts it: How shall we then live?)

Paul does declare an absolute freedom in Christ. And anything that proceeds out of our lives in Christ is legitimate. Almost sounds easy.

But wait a second, Paul continues in 1 Corinthians 6:12, "but not all things are helpful . . . but I will not be enslaved by anything." And Paul Tillich also goes on to say that the problem of the specific will soon comes up for Christians, because revelation or faith relates to the whole human being.

Biblical freedom is always related to the effects of our choices. Christ's presence in our decisions gives meaning to everything we choose. Our choices are related to our purpose as God's spiritual family.

Paul sums up Christian liberty in 1 Corinthians 10:23ff by saying that all of our actions must be "helpful" and "build up"—our choices need to be serious and constructive.

One way to test whether our choices are actually "freeing" ones according to Jacques Ellul (*The Ethics of Freedom,* chapter 3) is to ask ourselves whether we could accept both alternatives. For example, you are free to abort only when you could also accept not to abort. Or, you can divorce only when you could also not divorce. Paul uses the example of eating meat sacrificed to idols.

Without options, there is no freedom and no choice. If we are truly in Christ, we have choices.

Let's pray to God for the wisdom and courage to exercise our Christian freedom when we face the hard choices. BW

The GC income was short

The General Conference treasurer reports that 1977 income was $340,000 short of the budget. It puts many programs into serious jeopardy. Why didn't the money come in?

Last August, when the Bluffton delegates were informed that first-half year giving was down and they were asked whether programs should be cut, the delegates voted to proceed in faith.

But the money did not come. Was it the squeeze of the economy? Were there second thoughts about programs after the delegates went home from Bluffton? What can we expect in 1978?

There are those who suggest that the many institution expansions (colleges, homes, hospitals, schools, camps) drain money from missions. Some say that congregations are spending more and more money on their own church programs.

Frankly, I am puzzled. We Mennonites are affluent like never before. Just look at our standards of living. The money is there, I believe. But there must be reasons for not giving it to General Conference. Can you help us to learn these? Let's pray together about this and discern the leading of God's Spirit. BW

don't let the world SQUEEZE YOU INTO ITS MOLD

being transformed is being free to be different

MCC 1977 Report

February 28, 1978

The Need

quiet, hidden suffering

Our cultural values encourage ignoring the needs of the poor and oppressed at home and overseas. Christians attuned through Christ's example can feel and resist the pressure to conform to materialistic values.

Several smaller wars occurred in 1977—a civil war in Zaire, border wars between Ethiopia and Somalia, conflict with violent outbursts in southern Africa, the Middle East and Ireland. Millions still suffer the effects of the Indochina war.

Natural disasters were fewer, but India experienced a flood, and at year end a devastating cyclone left millions homeless. The African Sahel has again begun to report drought.

World jails are full of political prisoners. Economic disparities supported by an irrational buildup of arms oppress the masses. Christian/Muslim conflicts in the Philippines, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Somalia and the Middle East are growing.

1977 was a year of quiet, hidden suffering, hard to identify and relieve, but rendering people powerless and destroying them.

The Resources

25,000 bundles
364,000 cans of beef
1,410 tons of wheat
743 persons . . .

MCC's major resources come from Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregations and individuals. They are supplemented by other concerned people and agencies.

The most valued resource is workers who demonstrate their love for God by serving other humans. During 1977, 743 workers had assignments in health, teaching, agriculture, religious services, technical or economic services, social services and support services, and a mandate to share in word and deed God's grace.

They share knowledge and resources with needy people and their witness to the transforming power of Christ rubs off in their daily contacts.

Handouts can create dependency and destroy human dignity and self-respect, but material aid is needed for emergency situations.

Eight material centers in North America received and processed for shipment 420 tons of material aid and more than 25,000 bundles. The portable meat canner handled 364,000 cans of beef. 1,410 tons of wheat were donated, mostly by Kansas farmers. Some food was available and purchased for distribution locally with money given as cash contributions.

For some the best means of participating is donations of money. People gave substantially in 1977, although not as much as in 1976. This total was supplemented by organizations such as the Canadian International Development Agency and the provincial governments of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Because MCC ministers principally through its workers, the largest expenditure is worker support despite their receiving little more than maintenance costs. The 1977 budget remained at 1976 levels, but in many countries high inflation diminished the dollar's purchasing power.

Agriculture

proven in other settings but not practiced ocally

Food production is a priority. The largest program is in Bangladesh where MCC promotes winter crops to utilize the land in the otherwise off season. Agriculture is also a significant component of diversified programs in Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Haiti, Jordan, Paraguay, the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Zaire.

Most agricultural program activity introduces farm methods proven in other settings but not practiced locally. These methods include soil and water conservation, crop improvement, tree planting, rural credit, storage and marketing.

Water projects are in great demand even though some of them fail, because water is so vital to life. More than 50 wells were hand dug in Bolivia, Upper Volta and Chad in 1977, many under adverse circumstances. In Jordan old Roman irrigation systems were rebuilt and olive trees planted in soil thought to be too arid by contouring to maximize rainwater.

Drip irrigation, applying water directly to plant roots, increased yields on the West Bank. Dams to store water and control flooding were built in India and Chad. In Vietnam MCC supported construction on a large irrigation project.

In many places land is available but people cannot afford tractors or fuel, and hand labor automatically consigns them to subsistence. One practical answer is animal power. In Indonesia 160 oxen were provided to new settlers, and animal-drawn implements were promoted in Botswana and Bolivia.

Garden produce,
Bangladesh

Lowering
an irrigation
culvert,
Chad

Well
construction team,
Upper Volta

Economic and Technical Services

training, energy, methods, credit, self-help

The major activity in this program category is skill development, job creation and promoting appropriate technology. Workers help with vocational training in Botswana, India, Morocco, Swaziland, West Bank and Zambia. Alternate fuel sources like methane gas and windmills are being developed in Nepal, Chad and Kenya. Materials and methods for low-cost housing are under exploration in Zaire, Brazil and Swaziland.

Credit programs, often in close cooperation with Mennonite Economic Development Associates, operate in Colombia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay.

Self-Help Program crafts provide an important source of income for thousands in about 20 countries.

Education

involves the most workers

The Teachers Abroad Program, operating principally in Africa and Latin America, involves the largest number of MCC workers. Most teach in church-sponsored secondary schools and participate in local churches.

In addition to the usual English, math or science classroom teaching, workers help begin elementary schools in Bolivia and help in a refugee school in Swaziland. They teach religious knowledge in Lesotho, music in Brazil and teacher training in Botswana, Brazil, Nigeria, Bolivia and Zambia.

Through the Sponsorship Program several thousand children are helped to get an education and others to develop vocational skills.

Rice thresher built by MCC worker, Chad

Classrooms, Bolivia

Classroom, Nigeria

Health

concentrating on prevention

Current trends in health care development favor programs that have a community focus, concentrate on prevention and allow for local paraprofessional participation. MCC participates in sizable community health programs in Indonesia, Bangladesh, Zaire, Bolivia, Haiti, Nepal and Paraguay.

The need continues for hospital-based curative care. Personnel are loaned to Hospital Albert Schweitzer in Haiti, Tanta Christian Hospital in Egypt, the Institut Medical Evangelique in Zaire and Evangelische Johannesstift in Germany.

With 1,400 people per square mile, family planning is important in Bangladesh. MCC has a large program there and smaller ones in Latin America and other areas of Asia.

Nutrition is vital to improved health, and workers help families learn to balance their diets using local foods. The second nutrition seminar in Jamaica, conducted jointly by MCC and Goshen and Bluffton colleges, has helped to upgrade worker skills.

Immunization,
Bangladesh

Immunization,
Haiti

Surgery,
Bangladesh

Health promotion
class,
Bolivia

Social / Religious Services

close partnership relation

MCC works in close partnership with Mennonite churches in Ethiopia, Zaire, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Colombia, Brazil, Jamaica, Paraguay and with European Mennonites through the International Mennonite Organization (IMO), the European Mennonite Evangelism Committee and the European Mennonite Bible School. Mennonite missions and MCC work cooperatively in East Africa, Botswana, Bolivia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Germany, Swaziland, Lesotho and Zaire.

Volunteers teach at the Mennonite seminary in Indonesia, the European Mennonite Bible School and mission schools in six African countries, help in mission hospital and health programs, and do development projects with Mennonite and other Christian churches.

Refugee ministries are concentrated in eastern and southern Africa and in Germany in a joint ministry with International Mennonite Organization to Umsiedler from the Soviet Union. Another ministry is to persons disrupted by the Indochina war. Through workers in Laos and visits to Vietnam, MCC participates in agricultural projects that demonstrate that Christian compassion transcends political and national boundaries. Such projects allow vital contacts with Christian churches in these countries.

The trainee program continues to be a bridge between North America and other parts of the world which benefits both ends.

As the year closed reconstruction efforts continued in India Turkey and Guatemala following natural disasters.

Although less material aid was needed in 1977, MCC concentrated on preparedness and disaster contingency planning. Two special material aid coordinators were assigned to central Asia and Africa's Sahel, both vulnerable to disasters.

A question always before us is are we affecting the causes of poverty and oppression. Christian Samaritans should bind up wounds, but what about the modern-day robbers who leave people bleeding by the side of the road? Can they and their situations be transformed?

Polish trainee
and sponsor,
Souderton, Pa.

Earthquake
damage,
Guatemala

Peace Section

responding to social / political disasters

Peace Section is committed to the lordship of Christ in all of life. Mennonites often respond to natural physical disaster but forget spiritual, social, economic and political disasters. Peace Section, composed of the Canadian Peace and Social Concerns Committee and Peace Section (U.S.), seeks to increase awareness of these needs and suggest ways to respond.

1977 activities focused on binational North American concerns and overseas concerns. A major emphasis in the first was the development of a proposal for a Mennonite Conciliation Service to constructively apply nonresistant love and reconciliation in conflict situations. This grass roots organization will have Peace Section as a resource.

Two North American subgroups continuing during 1977 were Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship, a forum on peace issues for students at Mennonite colleges, and the Task Force on Women in Church and Society.

Contacts with European Mennonite peace groups were fostered through a part-time European representative, involvement in the Church and Peace Conference in Germany and sponsorship of Dutch Mennonite peace leader Sjouke Voolstra's visit to North America.

Peace Section also participated with the Mennonite World Conference Provisional Peace Committee and the World Council of Churches' Consultation on Militarism.

A task force was appointed to study the meaning of justice in the Bible and the church's past response to injustice, then construct models of working for justice in today's world.

Peace Section continued to make information on peace concerns available to North American Mennonites and Brethren in Christ through newsletters, pamphlets and booklets.

Reconstruction, Guatemala

Program Summary

	No. of Personnel								Program Expenditures
	social/religious services	agriculture/nutrition	health	education	economic/technical	support services	language study	total personnel	
Africa	**15**	**35**	**25**	**81**	**25**	**31**		**212↓**	**$2,749,000↑**
Algeria				4				4	49,000↓
Botswana	3	7	5	19	10	5		49↑	351,000
Chad		6				2		8	320,000↑
East Africa		2	4	1	1	1		9↓	271,000↑
Ethiopia		1		1		2		4↓	35,000↓
Gambia									3,000◇
Ghana									5,000◇
Lesotho	3	1	5	8	2	1		20↑	87,000↑
Malawi				7				7↑	109,000↑
Morocco					2			2↓	29,000↑
Mozambique									19,000↑
Niger	1	1						2	
Nigeria				12		6		18	89,000↓
Rhodesia									11,000↓
South Africa									76,000↑
Sudan			2	5	1	1		9	35,000↓
Swaziland	4	1	3	5	4	2		19↓	191,000↑
Upper Volta		4				2		6	138,000↑
Zaire	1	11	5	10	4	4		35↑	810,000↑
Zambia	3	1	1	9	1	5		20↓	121,000↓
Asia	**5**	**23**	**10**	**4**	**6**	**12**		**60↑**	**$1,956,000↓**
Afghanistan									5,000↑
Bangladesh	2	18	4	1	2	2		29↑	756,000↓
India		2				2		4	418,000↑
Indonesia	2	2	3	1		1		9↓	300,000↓
Korea									7,000↓
Laos						2		2	165,000↑
Nepal			3	2	4	4		13↓	89,000↓
Philippines	1	1				1		3◇	12,000↑
Taiwan									52,000↑
Thailand									1,000↓
Vietnam									151,000↓
Middle East	**1**	**3**	**2**	**4**		**7**		**17↑**	**$676,000↑**
Egypt			2	2		1		5↓	134,000↑
Jordan		2				2		4	222,000↓
Lebanon	1	1						2◇	62,000↑
West Bank				2		4		6↑	258,000↑

↑increase over 1976
↓decrease from 1976
◇new program for 1977

(figures shown without a symbol are approximately the same as 1976)

	social/religious services	agriculture/nutrition	health	education	economic/technical	support services	language study	total personnel	
Europe	**8**	**1**	**5**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**16**	**36↓**	**$351,000↑**
Belgium	2						12	14↓	
England									3,000↓
France							4	4↑	
Germany	5		5			1		11↓	214,000↑
Greece									11,000↑
Italy	1							1◇	4,000↓
Poland		1		1				2↓	3,000
Switzerland				2				2	57,000↑
Turkey					2			2◇	59,000◇
Latin America	**7**	**36**	**40**	**27**	**9**	**13**		**132**	**$1,677,000↓**
Belize									28,000↑
Bolivia		14	18	10	2	3		47↑	264,000↑
Brazil	5	13	11	3	2	3		37↑	379,000↓
Colombia									20,000↓
Costa Rica									3,000◇
Dominican Republic									1,000◇
Grenada				2		1		3↑	9,000↓
Guatemala	2							2	44,000↓
Haiti		4	9	2	1	2		18↓	439,000↓
Honduras									113,000↓
Jamaica		2		10	2	2		16↓	57,000↓
Mexico									53,000↑
Nicaragua									13,000↓
Paraguay		3	2		2	2		9↓	254,000↓
Total In-country Expenditures									**7,409,000↑**
Other International Costs									647,000↑
Total International Program									**8,056,000↑**
North America	**88**		**8**	**17**	**2**	**165**	**6***	**286↑**	**$2,068,000↑**
Canada									
volunteer	67		2	4		14		138↑	989,000↑
salaried						51↑			
United States									
volunteer	21		6	13	2	25	6*	148↑	1,079,000↑
salaried						75↑			

All amounts rounded off to nearest $1000.

*study assistance program

U.S. Ministries advocates for the disadvantaged

Although a major focus is Third World needs, MCC also speaks to North American poverty, hunger and injustice. The needs of Native Americans, offenders, the aging, the poor and minority groups were priority concerns for 1977.

The work with Native American concerns focused on justice questions of land rights and federal recognition for small, economically depressed tribes. Volunteers were placed with several agencies in Washington, D.C., and in two small tribal communities in Louisiana. Summer volunteers helped two tribes in Maine.

The offender ministries program continued to use a consultant as a resource for local congregations and conferences that want to become involved in their communities. The consultant is sponsored jointly by U.S. Ministries and MCC (Canada). Volunteers worked in the justice system in Lancaster, Pa.

Aging concerns became a new focus for U.S. Ministries during 1977. Plans were made to involve consultants as resources to churches needing assistance in this area. Volunteers in Lancaster, Pa., and Atlanta, Ga., provided leadership for senior activity centers and one-to-one casework services on the community level.

U.S. Ministries continues to hold as a priority serving as advocates for the physically, economically and socially disadvantaged. In Atlanta, Ga., Louisiana, Appalachia and Lancaster, Pa., social service volunteers worked daily at helping ease the burden of those who have little hope. In Washington, D.C., advocacy took a legislative focus and in Philadelphia, Pa., an educational one as volunteers worked at communicating life-style and justice concerns to the larger evangelical church through workshops and seminars.

The commitment to minority concerns has taken shape in two projects in 1977. U.S. Ministries provided leadership for the Mennonite Minority Employment Program, offering minority Mennonite and Brethren in Christ youth an employment training option other than the military. To respond to the Latino Mennonite church's problem of persons without residency documents, U.S. Ministries created a staff position

Classroom, Marksville, La.

VS'er and friend, Lancaster

Menno Home Repairs volunteers, Cincinnati

as a liaison between Immigration and Naturalization Service and the congregations, providing interpretation of laws and government policies and support to families and persons struggling with the problem.

Regions

mobilizing constituency resources

The West Coast Mennonite Central Committee, after three years as the first regional MCC body in the United States, is beginning to put down roots. During 1977 a self-study identified the number one priority as mobilizing constituency resources such as funds, personnel and material aid.

During the year a new MCC thrift shop opened August 30 in Lebanon, Ore., and a 500-voice West Coast Mennonite Men's Chorus was organized. The chorus will be self-supporting with all proceeds going to MCC relief and development programs.

In the first 11 months of the 1977 fiscal year $27,405.60 was received at the West Coast office in constituency contributions, down from $42,992 for the same period last year.

In April the Kansas Advisory Board of the *MCC Central States Region* moved to pursue developing the region. At Enid, Okla., representatives from seven congregations and church-related organizations organized the Oklahoma MCC Committee. The Oklahoma group is projecting an MCC assembly for March 1978, formation of a mixed chorus, a relief sale for October 1978 and a Self-Help/thrift shop.

During 1977 two new thrift shops opened in Kansas and Oklahoma. Eight workshops which explored ways to respond to the world's food problem and promoted the *More-With-Less Cookbook* were presented in Kansas and Nebraska. The mailing list for the "Central States Newsletter" has grown from 334 to 1,152 addresses. The newsletter goes to pastors and other interested persons in a 17-state area.

Orientation
to a
miner's life,
Appalachia

Bagging wheat,
Newton, Ks

Peace Section (U.S.)

rededication to the Christian peace witness

During 1977 Peace Section (U.S.) joined with other Mennonites, Friends and Brethren in New Call to Peacemaking, an effort to encourage a spiritual rededication to the Christian peace witness within their own groups and promote peacemaking in society at large.

The average world citizen can expect to give up three to four years of income for military armaments during a lifetime, and the United States is by far the world's biggest spender. During 1977 Peace Section (U.S.) worked with the General Conference Peace and Social Concerns Committee and other Mennonite conference offices in planning a consultation on war taxes, the way of peace and related issues.

Another inter-Mennonite consultation was held in November to discuss the Mennonite response if the draft for military service is revived. The focus was integrating both the service and peace witness motifs into a model.

During the past year a volunteer served as inter-Mennonite "peace missioner," visiting congregations, summer camps, conferences and colleges in a peace education effort aimed at examining the prevailing assumptions about national security from a biblical perspective.

The Washington office continued to function during the past year, working at informing Mennonites on church-related government activity and helping Mennonites who want to witness to government or learn more about how government works.

Dealing with immigration problems of Spanish-speaking Mennonites

Mennonite Disaster Service

idealism and realism

In 1977 Mennonite Disaster Service responded to floods in the Johnstown, Pa., area and in Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. The Johnstown flood affected 7,400 families, the Appalachian flood 22,300 families.

Longer-term projects continue in Johnstown, Pa., Harlan, Ky., and Williamson, W.V. The idealism of youth and the realism of retired persons complement each other among volunteers.

Seminars sponsored jointly by MDS and Mennonite Mental Health Services involved five of the seven Mennonite mental health centers and MDS workers. The seminars focused specifically on the emotional and spiritual needs of disaster victims and featured a consultant in disaster counseling.

A third involvement during 1977 was encouraging the Mississippi state legislature to make state and federal benefits available to disaster victims who are part of a disadvantaged minority group.

Mennonite Mental Health Services

seven centers maintained

During 1977 the Mennonite Mental Health Services director visited each of the seven MMHS centers/hospitals and participated in three center-sponsored workshops. Seminars were sponsored jointly with MDS. Four $500 grants were again awarded to students in mental health related fields.

MMHS gave the National Psychiatric Hospital in Asuncion, Paraguay, financial support to train local staff. The MMHS director visited Mennonites in the Chaco to develop plans for consultation and possible personnel training. MMHS also did exploratory activity in Brazil and Mexico.

1977 was the fourth year in a five-year program to provide a consultant in developmental disabilities, and an evaluation was initiated. The consultant participated in summer conferences, produced articles for church papers, visited local congregations and explored developing a Sunday school curriculum.

MDS,
Big Thompson, Co.

MDS,
Atlanta

Financial Summary for Mennonite Central Committee

Sources of Income	**1.**	Contributions:		
		U.S. Constituency Contributions	$2,788,993	
		MCC (Canada) Contributions	1,378,787	
		U.S. Relief Sales and Thrift Shops	964,303	$5,132,083
	2.	Other Income:		
		Grants	1,435,101	
		Volunteer Earnings	528,511	
		Self-Help	675,311*	
		Other	338,193	2,977,116
	3.	Material aid in kind		2,512,083
		Total Income		**$10,621,282**↓
Disbursements	**1.**	International Program		8,055,560
	2.	Domestic Program:		
		U.S. Ministries	238,568	
		Mennonite Mental Health Services	33,171	
		Mennonite Disaster Service	79,180	
		Peace Section	32,733	
		Peace Section (U.S.)	61,872	
		Exchange Visitor Program	69,085	
		Self-Help Program	414,826	
		Other	149,092	1,078,527
	3.	Administration		1,013,578
		Total Disbursements		**$10,147,665**↓
		Excess of Income over Disbursements		473,617

Material Aid shipments	3,611,079 pounds		
Personnel	United States	441	
(country of origin)	Canada	289↑	
	Europe	8↓	
	Asia	2	
	South America	3↓	743↑

All amounts rounded off to nearest dollar.

A detailed financial statement is available upon request.

*In addition $184,053 in Self-Help activity was recorded in 1977 due to an adjustment in accounting procedures.

Financial Summary for Mennonite Central Committee (Canada)

Sources of Income	**1.**	Contributions					
		Constituency contributions as forwarded by the provinces:					
			General	Designated	Total		
British Columbia			$159,725	$33,993	$193,718		
Alberta			33,804	46,410	80,214		
Saskatchewan			61,177	37,421	98,598		
Manitoba			308,648	171,163	479,811		
Ontario			282,160	76,598	358,758		
Other			7,163	16,070	23,233		
Total			$852,677	$381,655		$1,234,332	
		Relief Sales				328,184	
		Food Bank				148,810	$1,711,326
		(Farmers contributions only)					
	2.	Other Income:					
		Government Grants				1,623,957	
		Voluntary Service Earnings				348,200	
		Self-Help				330,501	
		Other				162,344	2,465,002
	3.	Material aid in kind					303,244
		Total Income					**$4,479,572**
Disbursements	**1.**	International Program					3,499,581
		(Forwarded to MCC for disbursement)					
	2.	Canadian Program:					
		Peace and Social Concerns				58,554	
		Native Concerns				46,399	
		Overseas Services				37,085	
		Die Mennonitische Post				44,275	
		Kanadier Concerns				13,567	
		Food Bank				244,354	
		Voluntary Service				314,090	
		Ottawa Office				34,257	
		Offender Ministries				18,626	
		Mennonite Disaster Service				1,664	
		Mennonite Historical Society				8,000	
		Montreal House of Friendship				11,367	
		Other				157,171	989,409
	3.	Administration					181,830
		Total Disbursements					**$4,670,820**
		Excess of Disbursements over Income					(191,248)
Analysis of cash		British Columbia			301,361		
contributions received		Alberta			241,122		
by provincial		Saskatchewan			240,922		
treasurers for the		Manitoba			601,675		
12 months ended		Ontario			666,120	$2,051,200	
November 30, 1977							

To share your resources
through MCC's
transforming ministry
contact:

Mennonite Central Committee
21 South 12th Street
Akron, PA 17501

MCC Central States Region
106 West 24th Street
North Newton, KS 67117

MCC West Coast
1014 G Street
Reedley, CA 93654

Mennonite Central Committee
(Canada)
201-1483 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, Man. R3T 2C8

MCC (Alberta)
337B - 41 Avenue, N.E.
Calgary, Alta. T2E 2N4

MCC (British Columbia)
Box 2038
Clearbrook, B.C. V2T 3T8

MCC (Manitoba)
101-1483 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, Man. R3T 2C7

MCC (Ontario)
50 Kent Avenue
Kitchener, Ont. N2G 3R1

MCC (Saskatchewan)
2206 Speers Avenue
Saskatoon, Sask. S7N 1C1

Editor:
Sarah Ann Eby
Canadian Editor:
Lydia Penner

Design:
Kenneth Hiebert
Photographs:
MCC Personnel

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The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:10 MARCH 7, 1978

Mennonite youth and sexuality-1

Practicing peace cooperatively

Women in the early church

God has set a right time

To gain some insights into the way Mennonite young people view the subject of sexuality among Christians, a questionnaire was sent to a nonscientific sample group of Mennonites, ages 17-23. Their responses, submitted anonymously, were identified only by age and sex. A large percentage did not respond, perhaps reflecting the reticence many young people feel about telling us their honest views on this subject.

Sex. As we drive past the billboards featuring sex as advertisement for mattresses and shampoo, as we amble past magazine counter headlines shrieking S-E-X, we can't help but wonder what our own Mennonite young people are thinking in that fenced-off privacy of thought, which teens are expert at building. "How do you feel about premarital intercourse and the life-style of sensuality our society sells so insistently?" we want to ask. But the silence has already gone far too long, and trust levels are low. The answers often don't come back at all, or else they are indirect.

Youth, like adults, who are living in a close relationship with Jesus Christ are more likely to take his teachings seriously.

At large. We need to understand what is happening among society at large. *Time* (November 21, 1977) quotes a 1976 survey of actual practice which reports that 55 percent of unmarried women have had sexual intercourse by age 19. For 19-year-old males, the figures go up to 85 percent. Even the *Time* researchers, however, suggest that North America is now experiencing a more conservative swing in its moral judgments and is veering away from the sexual license of the sixties. "We're not as swinging a people as we think we are," says psychologist Joyce Brothers. "People found that instant sex was about as satisfying as a sneeze."

Mennonite youth. We have no comprehensive study of Mennonite young people, but the Kauffman-Harder survey, 1975, indicated that of persons ages 20-29, 66 percent believed that premarital intercourse was always wrong. This would leave 34 percent with feelings ranging from ambivalence to approval.

Several U.S. Mennonite young people, included in an informal survey, suggested to this writer that 15-25 percent of Christian youth may have adopted a standard whereby sincere affection for the other person is the main prerequisite for sexual activity. Adds one young man, "There may be a larger percentage who have had sexual intercourse with someone to whom they were not married, but I would recognize many of those as Christians who have broken their standards. Any presence of guilt may imply that this 'new standard' has not been so sincerely adopted."

All of the polled youth suggested that, just as with adult ethics, those persons who are living in a close relationship with Jesus Christ are more likely to take his teachings very seriously. Those on the periphery are more likely to look to society, and our felt needs, for values.

There has always been a gap, admits Paul in the New Testament, between what we believe and what we do. The sexual area is no different in this from any other. Thus it is that our emotions and belief systems may not always jive with our behavior. We find the following notations in the secular study *Sexual Behavior in the 1970s,* by Morton Hunt (Playboy Press, 1974, page 155): "Many more young people are having premarital intercourse today than used to be the case, but this in itself does not tell us how liberated they are—how free from inner conflict about their own behavior, how unfettered and uninhibited in their sexual techniques, how capable of managing premarital coitus without doing physical or emotional harm to themselves or their partners."

It goes on to document that a majority had found premarital coital experience frightening and disappointing. Their lack of pleasure was due to nervousness, uncertainty, embarrassment, fear of failure, fear of discovery,

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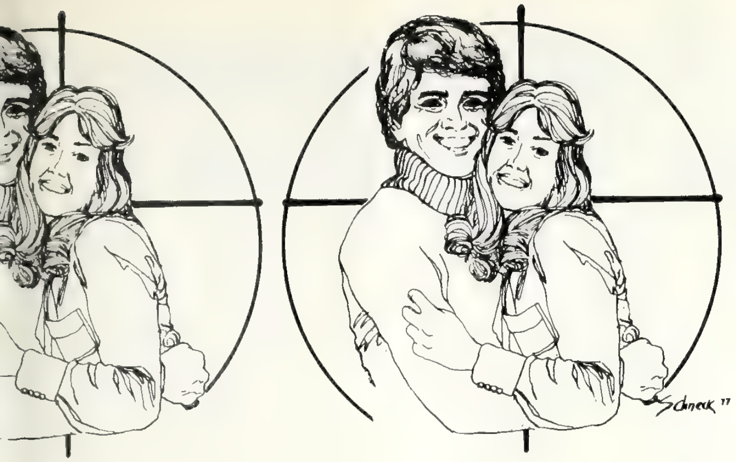


Mennonite youth and sexuality—1

Mary Lou Cummings

lack of skill, etc. Two-thirds of the women polled had experienced extreme regret the first time, due to their moral and religious training and fear of pregnancy.

Our upbringing. Further, two-thirds of the males and four-fifths of the females polled said that their fathers had never talked to them about sexual matters before or during the high school years. Three-fourths of the males and one-half of the females said the same of their mothers.

Therefore for young people, just as it was for those now over fifty-five, their education comes from their peers, books, overheard conversations and rumors (page 125).

In the *Hite Report,* another secular study of women, 95 percent of the women indicated that they had been brought up with the idea that sex was "bad" or at the very least, not to be talked about. Therefore they believed that it, and they, were "bad."

This paints a bleak picture of a society trying to throw off a repressed, silent, and guilt-ridden sexual history by role-playing the sophisticated libertine. But the results are hollow and joyless.

How does this apply to Mennonite youth? They are often reacting to these same forces in society. They are not much more likely to hear their parents discussing a young person's budding sexuality and desires as a gift from God, or to hear honest adult conversations on why total commitment is so important to their own sexual fulfillment and love.

"In the Mennonite church where I grew up, it was implied mostly. . . It was not talked about at church except with snickers and red faces. You knew it was a 'hands-off' subject (sorry, no pun intended). I don't remember any Christian teaching on sexuality. . ." (23-year-old voluntary service worker).

"The church certainly implies a 'no-no' in the direction of sexuality. At times it comes across that, since there will be no marriage in heaven, there should be no sex or sexes on earth. The harsh, parental attitude of the church towards physical contact between people is part of the cause of my guilt about my sexuality. Often I react as a child would to a parent's scolding—afraid and guilty, with no real knowledge of why" (17-year-old male).

"I have heard very little on this subject from the church. What I have heard has been relatively noncommittal. . ." (18-year-old female).

"Very little has been done by the church in the area of sex. What it has said has been good—a general affirmation of sex as a gift from God, to be used with discretion. . ." (19-year-old male).

"Very thorough, well taught. . . no need to be embarrassed by it; it's natural and everybody feels it. . . Taught in line with the Bible teachings" (18-year-old student).

Abe Schmitt, Mennonite marriage counselor, notes: "Among Mennonite clients. . . there is a consistent absence of awareness of the part that emotions play in marital relationships. The education Mennonites have received about marriage has been primarily theological. . . since feelings are so intricately central to the sexual experience, and these feelings have never been dealt with, gross sexual maladjustment is very common" (*forum,* November 1977, page 2).

Our needs. Two reasons are often cited for having extramarital coitus, despite one's own standards. There is the guilt over one's own sexual desires—they make you feel so unworthy that you eventually rebel. "I'm not a good person anyway, so I'll show my parents; I'll show the church." The second is a desire for love, intimacy and belonging. Intercourse is seen as a shortcut to this kind of love.

In both cases, there is a direct relationship between the needs of the lonely individual and how the caring community (the church) relates to those needs. An affirming relationship needs to be established before the late teens.

Youth is, by its very nature, the time when authority is called into question; when a questing, searching experimentation becomes very important. It is the time when great numbers of young adults cut off their close church relationships to dialogue with the world. This is often a necessary stage.

If, up to that time, all the input on one's sensuality has come from the outside world, and the parents and church have maintained silence, then the church's traditional call for abstinence—without real understanding—seems both inadequate and too late.

What youth seem to be asking for, especially in junior high and early teen years, is to hear parents and Christian couples dialogue freely on why the Bible promotes a sacred view of sex—as part of a lifelong commitment. They want to hear, without embarrassment, how to accept and understand their God-given sensuality.

One youth summarizes: "If the church expects young people *not* to look elsewhere for love, *we* should show a better love. A mindless abstinence is only for those who are called to it; the teaching that should be stressed is a temporary restraint in the faith for better things to come. . . . We should zero in on love. . . ."

First in a series of two articles

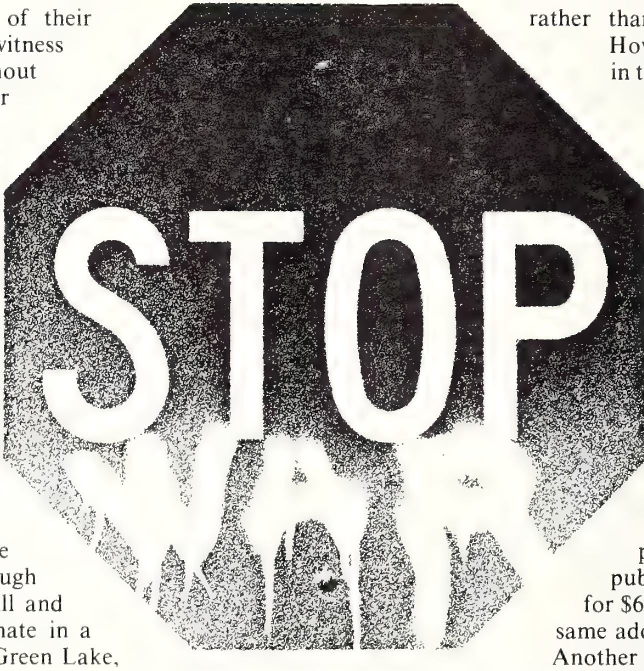
PRACTICING PEACE COOPERATIVELY

Lois Barrett

"I can't remember the last time our minister preached a sermon on peace," said one Mennonite at the recent US Mennonite consultation on the draft and national service.

In spite of the Mennonite heritage of peace and nonresistance, many within our congregations know little about the church's peace position. Indeed, some are not sure they believe in it. And joining the armed services is seldom a cause for church discipline of any kind.

To encourage a spiritual rededication to the Christian peace witness among the historic peace churches is one of the goals for New Call to Peacemaking, a two-year cooperative effort of Mennonites, Friends, and Brethren in the United States.



The movement began among the more conservative, evangelical Friends. Some of their leadership had written off the peace witness as an activity of some leftists without much biblical base. But through their study of the Scriptures, these evangelical Friends became convinced that the gospel is a gospel of peace, which they want to proclaim to their own church and to the world. They invited other Friends, as well as the Mennonites and the Church of the Brethren, to join them.

So far the movement has reached little into the congregations. The years 1977 and 1978 have been conceived of as a time for planning strategy and setting goals. The central planning committee of New Call to Peacemaking has tried to involve grass-roots people in the historic peace churches through thirteen regional conferences last fall and again this spring. These will culminate in a national conference October 5-8 at Green Lake, Wisconsin.

The national conference, which is to be a working conference of about 100 delegates from each of the three groups, is to be the beginning, not the end, of a new effort to witness to peace among ourselves, to other churches, and the governmental structures of the United States.

The General Conference Mennonite Church has been participating by sending delegates to regional conferences, by its participation in the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section (US) (which is taking primary Mennonite responsibility for New Call to Peacemaking), and by appointing a member of the NCP central planning committee.

For me, the most valuable aspect of New Call to Peacemaking has been the contact with the Friends and the Church of the Brethren. Although members of all three religious groups live near each other in many parts of the country, there has often been little contact. At the regional New Call to Peacemaking meeting last fall in McPherson, Kansas, I was excited to find so much commonality among us.

But I have also been disappointed to find so many differences in our commitments to peace and social justice. We have found it hard to agree on a common theological basis for pacifism. We have found it hard to agree on how peacemaking should affect our life-styles. We have found it hard to agree on what form our witness to government should take.

Perhaps it is significant that these differences are just as present within each of the three religious groups and not only among them. Even at the central planning committee level, the sharpest differences may be between Friend and Friend rather than between Friend and Mennonite.

How can local congregations get involved in this stage of New Call to Peacemaking? One way is by studying the working papers of New Call to Peacemaking. Each of three task forces—on the biblical basis of peacemaking, on life-style and peacemaking, and on building the institutions of peace—has produced a working paper for study by the NCP regional conferences. These may be ordered for use by adult Sunday school classes or study groups. They are available, individually or in quantity, for the cost of reproduction from the Church of the Brethren General Offices, 1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, Illinois 60120. A packet of peace study books and pamphlets, published by all three groups, is available for $6.50 per packet, postage paid, from the same address.

Another way to get involved is through contact with those who are attending the regional meetings. If a regional delegate is a member of your congregation, talk to him or her about New Call to Peacemaking or the working papers. Or have the delegate give a presentation to the whole congregation or a smaller group within it. District peace committees can put you in touch with these delegates if you do not know who they are.

A third way to involve yourself and your congregation in the spirit of New Call to Peacemaking is by establishing or strengthening contact with Friends, Brethren, and other Mennonites in your area.

Dale Brown, a Brethren theologian, told the Kansas regional meeting, "I am one who is working to get the three groups into the same room, talking together."

Peacemaking is more than saying no to military conscription. Those in the peace churches—and those peace-loving people who take a lonely stand in other churches—can work together for peace, renewing their own commitments to peace and making their witness to the world around them.

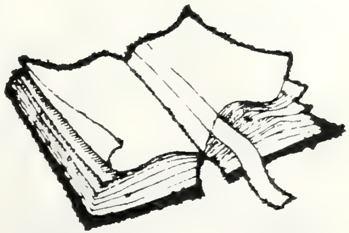
Women in the early church

Images of women in the early church are not only varied, but confusing. One catches a glimpse of Phoebe, minister to a church of twenty-seven at Cenchreae; but hears Paul remind the Corinthians that women should keep silence in the churches. Tabitha, like Paul and Barnabas, is called a "disciple"; yet Paul sets apart the religious status of men and women in 1 Corinthians 11: "For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man." How are we to understand such diverse and apparently contradictory views of women among the early Christians? And what guidance have such passages for us today?

Two steps are important for interpreting the meaning of specific New Testament passages about women. First, we must seek the *intention* of the Scripture in its own historical context. What did the passage mean *then?* After that, we can reflect on its meaning for us. Is the situation in the early church, which called for a specific concern about women, still the same today? If there is little or no correspondence between our historical situation and that of the first century, the pastoral advice might be inappropriate.

Finally, as a special test, is the passage itself in line with the *core* of biblical faith—the Old Testament experience of God-liberating, the Spirit poured out in Jesus' attitude toward women, and Paul's central vision for the church?

The confusing array of images of women in the New Testament is not surprising, if we remember that the epistles were directed to congregations in varied geographical locations and time periods. It is helpful to distinguish between images of women in the earliest church life, described in Acts and the Gospels, Paul's images in Corinthians and Galatians, and the images in the later epistles such as Timothy and Titus.



Open your Bible

1. *Images of women in Acts.* Acts depicts women primarily living in Asia Minor, Egypt, and Greece—not in Palestine. Although most of the women in Acts were Jewish Christians, the relatively emancipated status of Hellenistic women around them probably affected them. Lydia, for example, was a businesswoman, a public occupation unlikely for a traditional urban Jewish woman. Acts records numerous signs of new freedom for women in religious life. The four daughters of Philip became prophets and Prisca and Aquila served as co-leaders of a house church. Acts depicts a prominent role for women in the earliest church, both as leaders and facilitators.

2. *Images of women in Pauline writings.* 1 Corinthians 11 and 14 and Ephesians 5 are the Pauline writings most often used to defend the subordinate status of women in the church. John H. Yoder in *The Politics of Jesus* provides detailed background for interpreting the Ephesians passage and concludes that its *intention* is mutual submission in marriage, not for any woman to obey any man in the church.

The two Corinthian passages are of special interest because of the lively congregation to which they are written. This cosmopolitan city church was likely influenced by the new Gnostic movement which, in contrast to Christianity, believed that the world was beyond redemption and under the control of evil. The Gnostics taught that a person could be saved only by finding a way to set free the divine spirit imprisoned within oneself, as they thought Jesus had. Many women in the primitive church were participants in this movement, which emphasized individual spirituality rather than concern for the life of the church as community, a concern Paul held deeply.

Paul responds to Corinthians about some women who were creating disruption in the public worship. In contrast to Jewish customs, the women were making themselves visible and heard, overstepping the boundaries in their new role of offering prayers and prophecies. Paul lists reasons why women should not speak out in public worship and should cover their heads: (a) The Law gives women no right to speak. (Jewish law held that it was shameful because a woman's voice might be sexually provocative for the men.) (b) Decency and order are more important than individual ecstatic arrogance. (c) Women should cover their heads as a sign of subordination to men because Eve was created second and was the primary sinner. (d) It is shameful for a woman's head to be uncovered. (e) She should cover her head "because of the angels," to ward off the attack of evil spirits.

Since he apparently had no direct word from Jesus on these matters, Paul draws from his Jewish education and traditional custom for these reasons. In spite of his about-face in verses 11-12 about the interdependence of men and women and his major teaching elsewhere that "the old law had passed away," as Constance Parvey writes, ". . . in the end it is not theology but established custom that seems to have won the day." Still, within his framework of Jewish decency and order, Paul, unlike his rabbinic contemporaries, did allow a primary place for the participation of women.

3. *Images of women in the later epistles.* Paul preached that the old law was overcome and a new age of promise was coming. He, and the early church, felt that they were living in the final days of history (1 Corinthians 7:29-31), that "the appointed time has grown very short." This belief gave unprecedented position to women in the church.

But by the time of the third generation (1 Timothy, Titus) attitudes toward women had hardened. Prayers were to be said only by men. In 1 Timothy it does not mention women as saved by life in Christ, but rather as "saved through motherhood." Why this reversion to pre-Christian practices is not known, but it may be related to the fact that since the end had come, traditional practices seemed safer, and the threat of Gnostic groups led the church to become more cautious and conservative.

The second task remains for us to determine within our own congregations. What do these passages mean for today? Are the historical situations of the passages describing women in the early church similar to our own? Does the *intent* of the passage speak to a similar problem in our lives? Is the passage itself a detour from, or in line with, the core of biblical faith—the Old Testament experience of God-liberating, our oneness in creation and sin, the Spirit poured out in Jesus, and Paul's central vision of the church where all are one in Christ? *Third article in a series of three. Gayle Gerber Koontz, graduate student, 27 Fairlawn Street, Everett, Massachusetts 02149*

News

B.C. Conference supports CBI faculty

Frank Klassen

The entire Columbia Bible Institute faculty was given a unanimous vote of confidence by delegates to the forty-third annual sessions of the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia, February 10-11. The vote came following a lengthy discussion of recent administrative controversy at the local school.

CBI, in fact, occupied most of Saturday afternoon's discussion at Eden Mennonite Church in Chilliwack as more than 350 delegates and visitors dealt with conference business. Camp Squeah, budget deficits, and Russian Mennonite emigrants in Germany were also high on the agenda.

The afternoon discussion opened with a statement by the chairman of the CBI committee, Henry Neufeld. (He along with three other members form a third of the CBI school board; the other eight members come from the Mennonite Brethren Conference.)

Neufeld said that as the recent events developed at CBI, the board attempted to solve the problems the best they could, but unfortunately their decisions actually created further problems. He noted that two resignations had occurred, with one faculty member being reappointed, but said it was "not useful to detail the events."

He added that Sig Polle, dean of students at CBI, would stay on until May 31, when his tenure would be reviewed. At the same time, the board is again searching for a suitable candidate for president, but this time the entire board executive and two faculty members will be involved in the initial screening instead of just a few MB representatives as was the case last time.

The upheaval has also caused the board to institute a new grievance procedure and special dismissal procedure to safeguard against similar problems occurring again, he noted. These changes had come, concluded Mr. Neufeld, in the hopes of providing the best possible Christian education for the church's young people.

However, as the meeting was opened to response, former CBI instructor and current conference secretary Jurgen Schonwetter startled delegates, and particularly conference CBI board members. He announced that the executive from the MB Conference and MB board members had since attempted to overrule the decision of the full CBI board, and put pressure on Polle to resign at the end of the semester.

Calling it a "power play," Mr. Schonwetter called on his conference to stand behind the faculty, some of whom seemed to be doubted by the MB executive. "That's where the hang-up is," he said, "in their leadership structure, not among the teachers, students, or at the grass-roots level."

Apparently, events moved quickly after the January 31 CBI board meeting that saw Polle reinstated. Board members had been split 6-6 in their decision on whether or not to rehire. Finally, well after midnight, compromise was agreed upon, to rehire and review tenure May 1. This passed by a clear 8-4 majority.

However, several unhappy MB members then went to their conference executive, who called a meeting Saturday, February 4. At that meeting, it was decided to overrule the board's constitutional decision and to instruct a board member to tell Polle to hand in his resignation by February 10, effective May 1. Strong reaction to that move has since delayed but not entirely prevented the pressure tactic from succeeding.

Despite these problems in the upper echelons though, the most eloquent statement on CBI came from a second-year student. He noted that there was no distinguishing between denominations among students. "I don't even know which conference many of my friends belong to," he said.

To loud applause, the student called on the conference to continue their working relationship with the MB Conference, and with love and patience work out a new agreement together.

After another board member, George Nachtigal, responded by admitting mistakes had been made by the board, delegate Siegfried Bartel said, "Anyone who has ever served on a committee or board has made mistakes, often even more grave than this one." Mr. Bartel also encouraged the conference to stay in dialogue with the MBs. He added that "this situation could either become a stumbling block or a steppingstone to higher ground."

The conference's $103,000 contribution to CBI came under fire briefly, but was eventually accepted. Reelected to the CBI committee was Henry Neufeld. He, along with newly elected members Peter Retzlaff and Peter Wiebe of Clearbrook, join George Nachtigal as the conference board members. Amendments to the proposed working agreement were also passed.

In other business, the conference decided to expand and change the current committee structure of Camp Squeah, but not to hire a full-time camp director at this time. The question of cost was uppermost in delegates' minds in arriving at this decision.

The reason for fiscal wariness was because of the $17,000 deficit the executive found themselves in following the end of the financial year. Apparently, giving had not matched expectations, while the conference had actually gone $1,000 over the $265,000 budget. However, chairman George Groening encouraged members to give bimonthly and noted that other ways of raising money would be explored. The delegates passed (not unanimously) the 1978 budget of $318,611.

D. P. Neufeld of Olivet Mennonite Church, Clearbrook, reported on the situation of the *Umsiedler* (Russian Mennonites now coming out of the Soviet Union into West Germany). He noted that 6,000 Mennonites have come out of Russia during the past several years, with another 6,000 expected in 1978 alone. While they are not looking for handouts, he concluded, help should be extended from the Canadian brotherhood for three or four years, while they find new roots in a completely different country and culture.

Dates, sites chosen for 1979, 1980 conferences

Dates and sites have been selected for the General Conference's special midtriennium sessions and the next regular triennial meeting.

The midtriennium sessions, called for by delegates last summer, are slated February 9-10, 1979, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Leamington Hotel has been chosen as the site.

Theme for the conference is the civic and political responsibility of Christians at times when governmental demands seem to conflict with Christian ethics. The particular issue is war-tax withholding.

The Commission on Home Ministries is preparing a study guide for congregational use this fall, available September 1. It will look at present militarism in North America, previous acts of dissent by Mennonites, and biblical texts on dissent, payment of taxes, and corporate action.

The February 1979 conference will incorporate the findings of local congregations in a final consensus. Further information about the conference and how congregations may participate will be announced later.

The next regular triennial sessions of the General Conference are scheduled July 13-20, 1980, at YMCA of the Rockies, Estes Park, Colorado.

The Estes Park location permits family groups to enjoy outdoor recreation, as well as to conduct business in adequate facilities. A variety of accommodations, from camping to motels, is available to guests.

Previous conference sessions were at Estes Park in 1965 and 1968.

Indians begin protest walk

Bundled against the fierce cold and snow, a group of Indian protesters trudge through the Sierras toward the Nevada border February 13. They are on the first leg of their "long walk" from Sacramento to Washington to dramatize opposition to "anti-Indian" legislation in Congress.

Coalition listens to native concerns

An interpretive report by Bernie Wiebe

At 5:30 a.m., on Saturday, January 28, the clock radio came on. Some night-owl disc jockey cheerily announced, "The temperature is -25° Celsius (thirteen below zero), the winds are light and the sky is clear."

Reluctantly, I got ready for a planned 7:00 a.m. flight from Winnipeg to the northern Manitoba Indian community of Island Lake—350 miles into an even colder Saturday morning.

Nineteen representatives from the Inter-Church Coalition on Resource Development in Manitoba (I was invited as a reporter) squeezed into a twin-engine Otter on January 28 and set forth to listen to natives express themselves about the projected Polar Gas pipeline that would pump natural gas 2,300 to 3,000 miles from the Arctic islands into southern Canada and the United States.

I know too little about the Polar Gas pipeline. The media was preoccupied for much of 1977 about the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. Temporarily, at least, those plans have been put on hold.

In the meantime, the Polar Gas consortium, consisting of six companies from the United States and Canada, filed a proposal with Canada's National Energy Board to build a multibillion-dollar, forty-two-inch line through northern Manitoba to tap another source of energy.

Concerned Christians from the Christian Reformed, Mennonite, Anglican, Lutheran, United, Presbyterian, and Catholic churches wanted to hear how the natives feel about the proposed pipeline.

Seventy-five native men and women from Garden Hill, Ste., Theresa Point, Wasagamack, Red Sucker Lake, and Oxford House assembled at Island Lake to meet with the coalition members. Two chiefs and one chief's assistant gave major speeches.

They said that the Polar Gas people had never come to their communities to discuss the effects that such a pipeline might have. They are afraid of pollution and disruption of wildlife. They are concerned for their children and children's children. And they wonder what the inter-church coalition can do.

Coalition chairman Bill Blaikie told the natives that they were interested, first of all, in hearing concerns. If the natives had not been consulted before, then the coalition would support a full-scale inquiry into the pipeline and its effects, in cooperation with the native peoples. Second, the coalition would formulate a theological statement that would voice a Christian position about future northern development.

The meeting began with Scripture readings in Cree and English from Matthew's Gospel about the narrow and broad ways and about discipleship. We sang the hymn "All People That on Earth Do Dwell."

Hank DeBruyn, of the Christian Reformed Church, told the gathering that all of us are involved in the pipeline discussion. All Christians need to choose the Way that leads to Life.

Solomon Loonfood, a northern native, said he sensed that all the natives present were against a pipeline. But, what about those who were not present?

Alfred McDougall said, "I think it would be wrong for us Indians to think only of ourselves. We must also think of the people in the South, and their way of life." It made me wonder how many of the Polar Gas people would speak likewise about a concern for the natives.

My own feelings about the day were reflected in Arie Van Eek's (Christian Reformed) comment to me in the plane: "I find it significant that the Mennonites, whom we Reformed people regard as withdrawn and uninvolved, are ready to sit down with us Calvinists, who have traditionally supported most business projects; and that together we find ourselves concerned about being faithful Christians in our dealings with the native peoples."

The dialogue began at Island Lake. It is to continue back in Winnipeg, and perhaps also to the boardrooms of Polar Gas.

The concern is not so much to stop a pipeline. But in 1978, surely the Indian people must be consulted and treated as any other citizens would be if steps were taken to disrupt their communities. Publius Fiddler, native pastor at Garden Hill, declared, "I feel that we should at least be notified before our land and resources are abused."

The pipeline may be built, but then it would be something to which the native people are partners—instead of victims.

Relief important, but poses hard questions

Akron, Pennsylvania—Material aid distribution always has been, still is, and should continue to be an important part of Mennonite Central Committee's Christian ministry to human need around the world, indicates a working policy on the role of material aid approved by the MCC board at its annual meeting January 26-28 in Kitchner, Ontario.

However, the question of how to do relief work is more complex today than it was in the years immediately following World War II when millions of pounds of food, bedding, clothing, and medical supplies were shipped to Europe each year.

"A relief program may be effective in ministering to human suffering, but there is always the danger of creating dependencies if the situation does not improve and it is necessary to continue the program for more than several months," the MCC policy statement points out.

This conclusion is verified by Henry R. Fast, MCC agriculturist in Bihar, the area of India into which much relief aid poured following a major famine in 1967-68. "Perhaps the most important mistake we made was that the relief-oriented work was carried on much too long after the emergency period of the famine had ended." Fast notes.

"Even today after being in India for two years 'preaching' development I still hear people saying that I have come here to do relief work. Others refer to me as the 'relief sahib.' "

"Continued free-food distribution creates a dependency on it as a source of food and the recipients are likely to be angry when the supply ceases," reports David Birky, country representative in Haiti. "It creates a no-win situation. It is our observation that many Haitians are looking for and expecting free foreign food since they have become accustomed to it, and when it is not given they become angry and feel they are being denied something that is their right."

Relief agencies contributing to a situation such as Birky describes are simply operating a welfare system in foreign countries similar to the welfare system operated by North American governments.

Continued distribution of material aid also disrupts the local economy. Although that may seem like an exaggerated statement from a North American perspective, North Americans must remember that roads and railways are poor or nonexistent in many parts of the Third World. Poor countries have no nationwide livestock or grain market such as exists in Chicago, nor do many have radio stations on which to announce the going prices even if such a market were to exist.

"Prices are very localized," Edgar Stoesz, associate executive director for overseas services explains. "When a big truckload of outside food rolls in, prices drop. All farmers know that good prices are the key. MCC agriculturists are working to improve local production and the local market—sometimes bringing food in works against them."

The same situation can apply with other commodities. A large shipment of used clothing can bankrupt local entrepreneurs who are trying to earn a living by getting a small business in making clothing going.

Even when an emergency such as a famine, earthquake, flood, or the cyclone which recently struck India means that emergency relief work is unquestionably needed, difficult decisions must be made. A primary consideration is whether to ship from North America, or whether to purchase the supplies in a nearby region if they are available.

Several factors affect the decision. An important one is time. "We have to get the supplies ready and to the port, reserve space on a ship, and then allow time for sailing," Stoesz explains. "In Third World harbors the facilities are limited and ships must sometimes wait several months before dock and warehouse space is available for them to unload. Depending on where we are shippng to, a crop of wheat can sometimes be planted, grow, and be harvested in the time it takes a shipment of wheat to arrive from North America."

Sending supplies by air is extremely expensive, and the red tape involved in chartering a plane can also waylay the shipping operation until the emergency is past.

A second consideration is cost. Although MCC can get US Government ocean freight reimbursement for some of its shipments, and Mennonites and Brethren in Christ donate many supplies, the cost of preparation, overland travel to the docks, and the shipping costs of some materials must be borne by MCC. These costs can sometimes total more than the price of buying materials nearby, forcing MCC to wrestle with the question of the stewardship of its resources.

On the other side of the coin, buying large quantities of materials on local Third World markets may affect prices there. For example, Bert Lobe, India country representative, reports that buying blankets in India to take into the cyclone-damaged area speeded things up, but drove up the price of blankets where they were purchased to levels out of reach by some people who needed them and otherwise could have afforded them.

Decisions like these sometimes put MCC between a rock and a hard place. For the five North American warehouses, they mean that sometimes supplies will move in response to a need and other times they will not. "It is frustrating for congregations, who hear and read about hungry people who can't afford to buy on the local market, when MCC's inventory doesn't move as fast as they think it should," comments John Hostetler, material aid director.

"But things go in cycles, and we just need to accept the fact that sometimes we're going to be carrying high inventories. At times inventories do accumulate in our warehouses while we wait for the right time to use these supplies. If we have a strong inventory, we'll be ready when the time of need comes."

Homeless peasant women and children press forward in a food receiving line at a camp run by the Indian Government in West Bengal State. David Birky reports that, "Continued free-food distribution creates a dependency on it as a source of food and the recipients are likely to be angry when the supply ceases."

Annual meeting hears plea for justice

Kitchener, Ontario—"We can no longer blame the love of God for the hunger that's in our world. We can no longer hide behind God's apron strings as we see people in the Third World who have given their all being tortured daily. We can no longer look at the injustices in our world and put them at the threshold of God.

"We have become the responsible agents of development in the world, and the policies that are laid down in many of the rich, powerful countries are the policies that are either doing good or evil in our world."

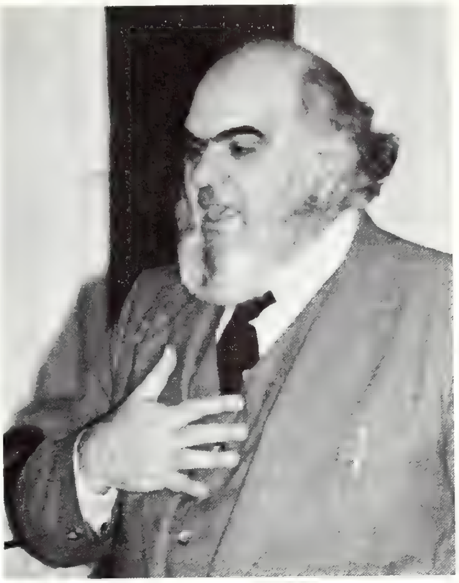
With these words Romeo Maione, coordinator for the nongovernmental agency projects of the Canadian International Development Agency, launched into a discussion of his views on injustice and development at the Mennonite Central Committee annual meeting January 26-28 in Kitchener, Ontario.

"We have made very serious mistakes in the whole process of development," Maione said. Through hard work and exploitation of natural resources around the world, North America has reached a high level on the mountain, he explained. "We thought that we were going to be able to develop the rest of the world without changing our thing at all. We were going to give a little help to the poor out there in relief and other things, because it was written in our books of truth that we had to help one another. But we always like to do it from a nice high, comfortable perch."

Wrong attitudes about development are not the only sin in North America, Maione said. A greater sin is the use of 70 to 80 percent of the world's resources in wasteful ways. Valuable resources are used up making products that have obsolescence built in so that consumers will have to replace products more frequently and industry will be able to make larger profits.

Maione also pointed a finger at large, multinational corporations. "The process of development in the Philippines has gone completely, totally crazy," he said, citing an example. "We're taking over the good land of the Philippines; we're giving it to large corporations like Dole to produce pineapple and pineapple juice for the world market. Yet the peasants are starving because they have no land."

Although large corporations say they bring capital to Third World countries, what they really do is prime the pump, according to Maione. "They put one bucket of water in the well, then pump. They pump up the savings in that country. They mobilize the savings of the people around their operation. They say they bring new management capacity to these Third World countries, but because they pay a little better salary, they take up the managers that exist in small, local companies and organize them within the corporation."


Romeo Maione

Maione's anger at the injustice in the world was evident as he spoke, and his words indicated that a sense of justice is integral in his personal theology. "The greatest injustice is not to respect a man's dignity," he said. "All of our industrial system is based on, '. . . really you're nothing. You can be replaced; we can put a computer in there.' That inbreeds in us a deep sense of hurt and alienation. Then the gospel comes along and says that not only are you important, but you're more important than everything in the whole wide world. You are equal in importance to the second person in the blessed Trinity, which has created this whole vast universe."

Because the body of the Christian becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit, Maione finds contact with God through contact with people. "When you look at the masses of people in the slums of Manila or Lima, there you see our Lord living in full splendor and full glory, waiting to meet those who profess faith in him.

"Everytime I see torture, I feel more sad for the torturer than I do for the person being tortured, because it is the torturer who is becoming more dehumanized. When we see someone suffering, that is our blessed Lord going through his suffering."

Maione feels that there is a time framework within which development and justice must happen. Current population growth rates cannot continue, and the only way to stabilize population is to bring more justice to the world. The Third World family currently needs a lot of children to bring in income and care for the parents when they become sick or old. "It is not just enough to produce more; what is important is who is going to get that production," Maione said. "The family that has just a little more of life, that has a little more sense of control of the future, has the wisdom to be smaller. People aren't stupid."

How do we bring more justice into the world? "Let's first of all start by knocking off waste," Maione suggested. "Let's start by knocking off obsolescence engineering. Also, I'm not a total pacifist, but $300 billion of armaments in North America is a long way from being a total pacifist. A lot of that is waste, total complete waste."

People need to learn to listen with humility to the poor of the world, Maione continues. "The biggest mistake we have made is the mistake of pride. We think we know it all and the poor peasants know nothing, and we are going to come and tell them everything." Many of the world's poor have survived for thousands of years with none of our technology, and that feat takes wisdom that is worth learning about.

People, currently estimated to be using about 5 percent of their capacity, need to grow to be able to provide the kinds of international structures that will put controls on multinational corporations, according to Maione. Economics have been lifted out of the hands of national congresses or parliaments into the international arena of multinational corporations and meetings of heads of states, and new control structures must be developed. The same is true for nuclear energy and weapons.

The Christian church also has a responsibility to challenge the powers and principalities. It will not be easy, but the Christian church must begin a dialogue with corporations, Maione urged. "It might end up in confrontation, but at least we're going to have to start talking to them. The church is going to have to challenge by bringing out the truth of the situation, and the truth sometimes is very difficult to accept."

Love is the purification of justice; without justice there is no love, Maione noted. Christians who profess love without working for justice are like the clashing cymbals in 1 Corinthians. "We've got to get through that noise to find out what the heart of the message of the church is in our modern-day world."

Feeding the hungry includes Washington's homeless

Washington, D.C.—Washington, D.C., is considered one of the wealthiest areas in the United States. The average family income is $21,023 and the district is populated with the likes of statesmen, politicians, and ambassadors.

It is also the land of tourists—men and women, children and pets—who flock in growing numbers to visit their nation's Capitol.

On winter evenings when tourists return to hotels, the museums, art galleries, Capitol, and state buildings attract Washington's "other side," the literally homeless, who seek the warmth of heating grates in front of government buildings to keep from freezing to death during the long nights.

Others find shelter in bus depots, lobbies of all-night banks, or the stark cold of deserted cars, park benches, and courtyards.

Three men died from exposure in the Capitol in January alone.

Stopping such needless deaths is the goal of a night shelter begun a year ago in Washington's northwest section and jointly operated by the Sojourners Fellowship, an ecumenical Christian community, and the Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV), a community with roots in the Catholic tradition.

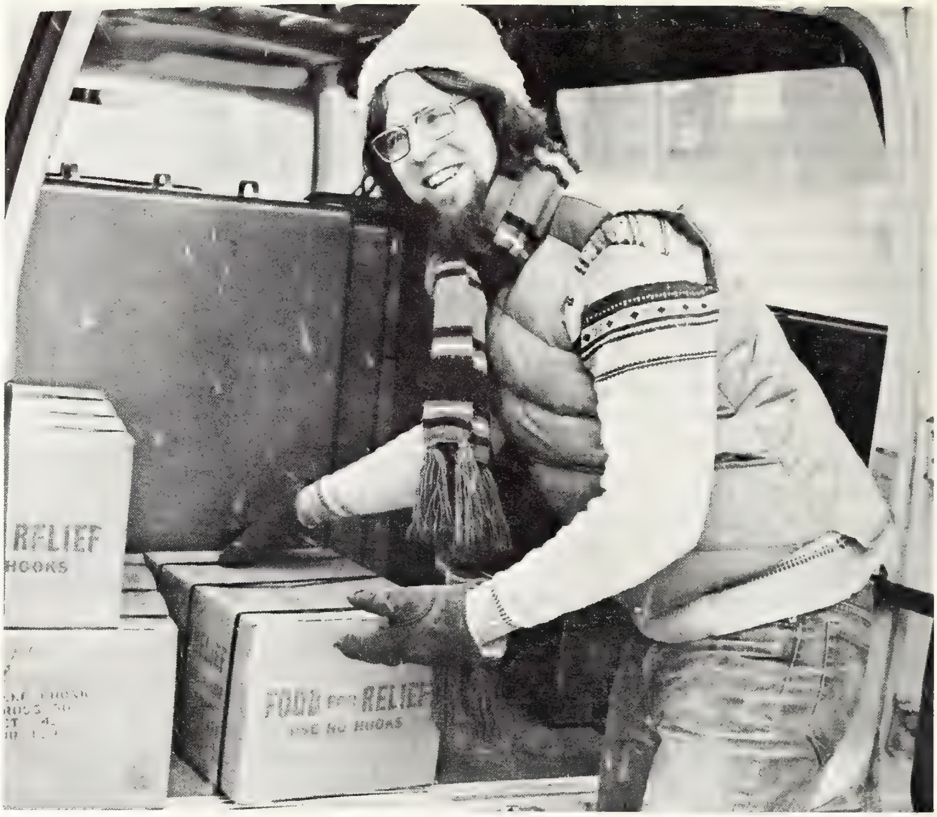
The shelter grew out of an annual tradition of CCNV, an all-night Christmas party the community gave for the poor who came to CCNV's soup kitchen and clinic.

Mitch Snyder of CCNV described the conception of "night hospitality" in an interview with *Washington Post* reporter Colman McCarthy: "We brought in some people for just Christmas night," Snyder recalls. "But when they left in the morning we wondered where they would be that night. When we looked, we found out—on the heating grates and in the alleys. We knew that once-a-year hospitality wasn't enough."

"Last December," the *Post* article continues, "Snyder wrote letters to 1,100 area churches, synagogues, and mosques to ask if basements, halls, or meeting rooms could be set aside for nighttime use by the city's homeless men and women. Out of the 1,100 requests, only one church—Luther Place Memorial (Lutheran) at Thomas Circle—allowed itself to be moved by the spirit of brotherhood. This winter St. Stephen and the Incarnation Episcopal Church joined it."

The churches are full to capacity each night. Luther, which takes women, has about thirty guests each night. St. Stephen offers hospitality to between sixty and eighty men nightly.

Each person is offered supper and breakfast, a mat, and one blanket. The fare is simple—thick soup, tea, bread, and cereal.



Tom Burnett, Mennonite Central Committee volunteer in Washington, D.C., unloads MCC canned beef for use in the night shelters.

All food and provisions are donated by the two communities and their friends, among them the Mennonite Central Committee. MCC has supplied bundles of blankets and clothes and cartons of canned meat—gifts from Mennonite homes to Washington's homeless.

Volunteers help prepare meals and mats (beds), stay up throughout the night to supervise the shelter, and clean up each morning so the areas can be used for other church functions throughout the day.

As well as food, clothes, and blankets, the shelter hosts need funds for first aid and kitchen supplies and for transportation for the homeless people. Many spend their days in areas far from the two churches and hesitate to accept rides to the shelter at night, when they have no money to bus back to their daytime haunts in the downtown area.

Although there is also a city-operated shelter with seventy-five beds, opened since the January deaths, and the private House of Ruth for women with thirty-five beds, many homeless people live in areas far from the night shelters and spend each night in the freezing weather.

Snyder told the *Post* "he has not had much success in persuading other community or civic groups around the city to pay attention to the homeless poor and make available empty basements or halls. He has told people to drive through northeast Washington or Anacostia, or neighborhoods in nearby Maryland and Virginia counties.

"If you train your eye to look for the homeless, he says, you will see them. When (you) drive through downtown Washington at night looking for the poor—by the White House, among the stately buildings—it's a different city. It's brutal and unyielding. Here we are the world's richest nation, and what do we have for the most wretched among us but heating grates. Even then, the heat isn't intended for the poor. It is to keep the buildings warm for bureaucrats chilled by the morning dash from the parking garage to their in-baskets." *Tina Mast Burnett*

Words & deeds

Actors and stagehands are needed for the drama to be presented at Mennonite World Conference this summer. The "Cheyenne Jesus Buffalo Dream," a full-length tragicomedy, will be performed seven times in the theater of Century II in Wichita, July 25-30. Fifteen male and ten female actors are needed in addition to persons with technical production skills. Some of the parts could best be filled by native Americans. Interested persons should request an audition form by writing Mennonite World Conference Drama, 718 Main Street, Newton, Kansas 67114.

The third task force working paper of New Call to Peacemaking has been published. Entitled "Building the Institutions of Peace," the paper suggests that dismantling the institutions of war while removing the cause of war in human need and injustice should be the overriding concerns of peacemakers throughout the world. The paper focuses on three areas—disarmament, hunger, and human rights. In each of the three areas, suggestions are made both for individual actions and group or community actions. Copies are available for the cost of reproduction from the Church of the Brethren General Offices, 145 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, Illinois 60120.

How did Mennonites cope with The Blizzard? Resourcefully. Despite blizzard conditions, First Mennonite Church in Berne, Indiana, processed 12,000 pounds of meat using the MCC mobile canner. Other churches cooperating were the Evangelical Mennonite Church, and Apostolic Christian churches. At Bluffton (Ohio) College, dormitories were used by nearly fifty stranded travelers, as well as Bluffton residents whose homes lost electricity. Since most campus employees were unable to come to work, many students volunteered for campus duties. Goshen College in Indiana was also shut down, and 200 students fanned out into the town to dig out streets, driveways, and stranded motorists. Nursing students virtually staffed the obstetrics floor of the Goshen General Hospital as regularly employed RNs remained stranded at home.

An evangelism seminar is scheduled April 5-7 at the Mayfair Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Resource persons are Floyd Bartel, Don Yoder, Lynn Liechty, and Dennis M. Oliver. Registration fee is $15 with traveling bursaries available. Write Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Johannesburg, South Africa—Government authorities intend to ban the Methodist Church of South Africa in the Transkei. Transkei's Prime Minister, Kaiser Matanzima, alleged that the Methodist Church took instructions from the World Council of Churches, openly opposed independence of the Transkei, and that some of the clergy in Transkei were also opposed to independence of the territory. Matanzima said that while the Methodist Church of South Africa will be banned, a further act will establish the Methodist Church of the Transkei. John Rees, speaking for the South African Council of Churches, expressed dismay at the announcement, and said the move would "bring about rupture of the fellowship within Methodism specifically, and the church as a whole, in South Africa.

Families for Justice retreats are planned for the summer. These intergenerational weekend retreats are a Christian family approach to injustice, poverty, and violence in the world. During the weekend, resource persons help families to understand the problems of hunger and oppression, cooperation versus competition, and television promotion of consumerism and violence. Role play is used to help identify with families in other cultures. Retreats begin Friday evening and end with lunch on Sunday. Families may want to plan to include a retreat during their vacation. Retreats are planned for New York, Iowa, and Pennsylvania during July and August. For information write to Weldon Nisly, Families for Justice, 315 West Logan Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19144 (315-848-8620).

Carter's military spending requests are even larger than many realized according to the Friends Committee on National Legislation, Washington, D.C. First reports of $126 billion related only to the Department of Defense budget. It did not include an additional $2.8 billion for nuclear weapons activities in the Department of Energy. Furthermore, military aid items totaling $3.64 billion have been moved out of the "050 National Defense" category into "150 International Affairs." Hence, Carter's request for military spending is $132 billion compared with the congressional ceiling of $116.4 billion in fiscal year 1978.

A 42 percent increase in Scripture distribution occurred in the Asia-Pacific region during 1977. More than 170 million Scriptures were distributed throughout Asia and the Pacific during the year as compared to 120 million in 1976. India topped the list with a demand for over 54 million, while in each of Indonesia and Korea 27 million were distributed. The largest single growth came in the fourfold rise in distribution of Bible selections through "Good News for New Readers," a program which makes it possible for new literates to read God's Word. The selections are graded for easy reading, but are full-fledged translations of the Scriptures. The Asia-Pacific region contains 60 percent of humankind, and only 3 percent profess Christianity. Furthermore, 80 percent of the world's non-Christians reside in Asia.

The Rosthern Mennonite congregation invites all past members and friends of the Rosthern Mennonite Church to its

**SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
HOMECOMING CELEBRATIONS,**

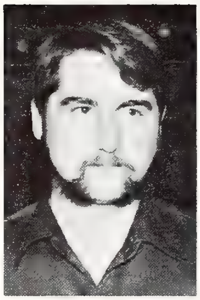
June 30-July 2 at Rosthern, Saskatchewan.

Overnight facilities are available at the Rosthern Junior College dormitories and the trailer campground.

Pictures of the past are needed for a display. Please label these well and send to Brunno Klassen, Box 851, Rosthern, Saskatchewan S0K 3R0, by May 15, if possible.

Record

Workers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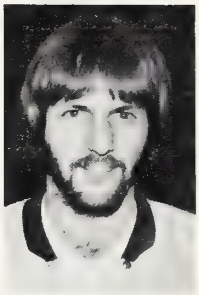
E. Goertz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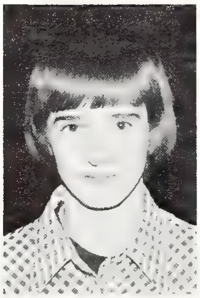
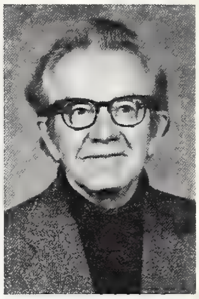

Neufeld

A. Suderman


D. Suderman

Wilbert Epp, Medstead, Saskatchewan, began five months of voluntary service with the General Conference in November 1977 working in home repair in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He is a graduate of Swift Current (Saskatchewan) Bible Institute, and is a member of the Hoffnungsfelder Mennonite Church, Glenbush, Saskatchewan. Wilbert's parents are John and Aganetha Epp, Waldheim, Saskatchewan.

Marcia Fast, Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minnesota, is beginning one to two years of service with the Brentwood (Missouri) unit of Mennonite Voluntary Service as a nursing assistant and child-care aide at a home for emotionally disturbed children. She graduated as a licensed practical nurse from Freeman (South Dakota) Junior College in 1976, and has worked in nursing. Her parents are Ronald and Carol Fast, Mountain Lake.

Elizabeth and Gary Goertz, Freeman, South Dakota, have begun a one-year term under the General Conference's Mennonite Voluntary Service in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Elizabeth is working with abused children and lower-level adult education at an assistance center, and Gary is working in home repair. Elizabeth has worked with mentally retarded persons at the Fort Wayne (Indiana) State Hospital. Her parents are Lynn and Ethel Preheim, Marion, South Dakota. Her home congregation is Salem Church, Freeman. Gary has attended Freeman (South Dakota) Junior College. His mother is Faye Goertz of Freeman. Gary's home congregation is Bethany Church, Freeman. (*Editor's note: Gary's job assignment was run separately by mistake in the Record section of the February 21 issue. We regret the error.*)

Karen Goering Hostetler, Rainbow Boulevard Church, Kansas City, Kansas, is serving for six months with Mennonite Disaster Service as project director and case worker with the flood recovery programs in the Kansas City area.

Mike Kraxberger, Canby, Oregon, began a two-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service in October 1977. His main work is as a van driver for the Markham (Illinois) unit in a service ministry for a sheltered workshop. Mike is a member of Calvary Church, Aurora, Oregon. His parents, Ralph and Betty Kraxberger, live in Canby.

Glen Neufeld, North Star Church, Drake, Saskatchewan, and *Don Regehr,* Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minnesota, are serving eight-months terms with Mennonite Disaster Service. They are currently assigned to the International Children's Haven rebuilding project in Reynosa, Mexico.

Florence Neufeld, Winkler, Manitoba, began one year of voluntary service in January with the General Conference as a day-care worker in Beatrice, Nebraska. Florence attended Elim Bible Institute, Altona, Manitoba, for two years. She is a member of Bergthaler Church, Plum Coulee, Manitoba. Her parents, Henry and Jessie Neufeld, live in Winkler.

David and Alice Suderman, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kansas, have been appointed by the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission to serve two years at the Evangelical Mennonite Center in Asuncion, Paraguay. They left February 28 for South America. David's teaching responsibilities at the school will include music theory, sacred music history, and choral work. He will also serve as part-time technical advisor to Paraguayan educational authorities in music curriculum development. He previously served in South America as national director of the glee club program in Colombia, 1965-67, and six years later the Sudermans conducted workshops among Mennonites in Paraguay for ten weeks. Except for sabbaticals, leaves, and postdoctoral studies, David has taught music at Bethel College from 1936 until his retirement in 1976. This past year he served as staff person in higher education for the General Conference.

Newly elected officers of the Canadian Association of Mennonite Schools are president, *Jack Suderman,* principal of Rosthern (Saskatchewan) Junior College, and secretary-treasurer, *Victor Kliewer,* principal of Elim Bible Institute, Altona, Manitoba.

Calendar

March 27-31—Project Teach, Rosthern (Saskatchewan) Church

Central

June 16-18—Tri-State Festival of Missions, Bluffton (Ohio) College

Pacific

April 2—First concert of West Coast Mennonite Men's Chorus, Convention Center, Fresno, California

April 21-23—California-Arizona New Call to Peacemaking conference, Pacific College, Fresno, California

Western

March 20-23—Holy Week services sponsored by the churches in Buhler, Kansas; speaker, Russell Mast

April 8—Mid-Kansas Mennonite relief sale, Hutchinson

Letters

Also uneasy about Canada

Dear Editor: A friend sent me your editorial "Uneasy about Canada" (January 10 issue).

I have read and reread your thoughts and have felt your deep concern for peacemaking in this nuclear era. I have some hesitation in writing, for I feel that your editorial is a personal conversation with people very dear to your heart (I feel almost as if I am eavesdropping), but I decided that's unnecessary apprehension, and so I respond.

After hearing Ernie Regehr at a 1976 peace conference, I have tried to "follow" the Canadian arms export. You placed this awful state of affairs into clear perspective with the per capita example. Our nations are potentially heinous "merchants of death." But is not our silence equally disturbing?

A Canadian decision that has been very troubling to me is "their" agreement with the US militarists to use the international waters between Canada and the United States as a primary route for trident nuclear submarines headed for their base at Bangor, Washington. Canadian sisters and brothers must cry out against this death strategy.

Canadian Jim Douglass and others are trying to reason with the British Columbia government through repeated "occupations" of the Bangor base. A major event is planned for May 22—saying that this base must not be built.

Each of the eleven planned trident submarines can destroy 408 major metropolitan areas, even while docked at Bangor.

I have been saddened that there aren't more disciples for peace in the Pacific Northwest-Canadian West to stand with this protest. I strongly affirm your concern for Canadians to remember their-our responsibility.

Yes, the focus of the midtriennium conference should be on "obedience to Christ in a militarisitic society." It seems of paramount importance to view our dilemma through the "lens of obedience" rather than as "civil disobedience." I pray that those responsible will hear you *now*, before the thirteen-part process is too far "down the road."

As I now read your last two paragraphs, I am deeply moved . . . how could the truth be more clearly spoken? My conviction on these truths is why I write from jail . . . a few miles from the Pentagon—because on December 28, 1977, some seventy to eighty of us, in commemoration of Herod's awful killing of innocents, cried out to the Pentagon that "the massacre of innocent ones continues." My incarceration of thirty days is nearly over; but another brother, Carl Kabat, was sentenced to eleven months. He is accepting his lot with grace and strength, but would appreciate prayers. Twenty others go to trial on February 3.

You have strengthened me through your call. Only through his strength shall the Spirit of Acts 4 become flesh in our day. For this I pray in Christ. *Ladon Sheats, 1933 Park, Baltimore, Maryland 21217*

January 25

Editor's note: The Sheats letter, because of its length, has been cut. We attempted to include all of his concerns.

It is a global issue

Dear Editor: Frequently I would like to comment on something published in *The Mennonite* but don't take the time to do so. Often my response would be in appreciation for the thought that has been expressed. Such is the case again and this time I must follow through with it.

Your editorial "Uneasy about Canada" (January 10 issue) raises issues that I have been concerned about for some time and have discussed with brothers and sisters in Canada and the United States. I deeply believe that the matter of the "militaristic societies" in which we live has profound implications for all of us on both sides of the border and elsewhere in the world, especially with regard to taxes used for militaristic purposes and to our personal and corporate patterns of consumption, investment, and employment.

Given the current global order (or disorder) best characterized as the dichotomy of affluence (and power) and poverty (and powerlessness), the perceived need for security through militaristic policies by the rich because of their wealth is overwhelming.

This is not a Canadian issue or an American issue, but a global issue and a human issue and a Christian issue. It is imperative, on biblical and ethical grounds, that Christians no longer relegate it to categories that we can pretend to ignore on the pretense of not being our concern. "Obedience to Christ in a militaristic society" is the key issue of Christian discipleship in our time. It demands of us the most compassionate sensitivity to existing injustices and a most thorough process of Christian discernment.

I believe, with you, that the midtriennium conference on war taxes and civil disobedience must clearly relate to this broader dimension and that it should include Christian brothers and sisters in both our countries. It is not a matter of one country being relatively more militaristic than the other. It is a matter of personally and corporately being the people of God in an age and among people who reflect values and life-styles patently different than those Jesus teaches for his people. Peace in Christ. *Weldon Nisly, 315 West Logan Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19144*

January 30

Jesus and Santa Claus

Dear Editor: I feel I need to show appreciation where it is due and so I just want to let you know that I appreciate *The Mennonite* very much. I am going to share some thoughts I had for the long winter months.

Christmas time is a bright spot in the middle of a cold winter. There is much joy and gaiety for a short time and this should make us happy for the rest of the winter. Yet, statistics say that depressions and suicides increase during January and February. Why doesn't Santa Claus's visit keep us full of love and goodwill till spring when other things, such as the appearance of new life in nature, keep us occupied?

I am not a Scrooge about Santa Claus, but that is not what Christmas is all about. Without the celebration of the coming of the new Baby—who can give us peace and fill us with goodwill—this joy cannot last.

We were privileged to have a three-year-old foster child at our house for a few months and then through the holidays again, after several years without small children. Everywhere I took him after Christmas, people asked if Santa Claus had come to his house, as if that was the most important part of Christmas to all. Each time I heard it, I wanted to say instead, "Did Jesus come to your house, too?"

How about it? Did Jesus come to your house this Christmas? *Bertha Krehbiel, Route 1, Box 67, Deer Creek, Oklahoma 74636* January 30

What about the authors?

Dear Editor: I write concerning the article about Billy Graham in the Philippines (January 17 issue).

Have you checked into the backgrounds of Friesen and Stoltzfus as to what qualifies them to objectively report, or draw judgment, on Graham in the Philippines?

Let's not be a disservice to God in the

propagation of his work. *Orvil Klassen, Rural Route 1, Mountain Lake, Minnesota 56159* January 30

Appreciated book review

Dear Editor: Thank you for the gracious and penetrating review of *When You Don't Agree* (January 17 issue). One never knows whether a job is going to do what it should until responses come in. I am glad that you see the book as helpful.

Bless you at *The Mennonite* and may God enrich your ministry. *James Fairfield, Route 1, Box 178, Singers Glen, Virginia 22850* February 1

Atrocity in South Africa

Dear Editor: J. D. Hillson in "Apartheid Signs Are Everywhere" (January 10 issue) has given us a helpful review of life in the Republic of South Africa which at best is mighty grim for people who are black. But the country's greatest insult to human dignity is not the denial of access to certain public facilities on the basis of race, as the cover photo used with this report might seem to have indicated.

Rather, it is in the denial of citizenship to the majority of people living in South Africa on the basis of race that the ultimate atrocity lies. This is the final cruelty of apartheid, the doctrine of separate development which is the government's pretext for racial oppression.

Hillson indicates that the "homelands government of Transkei has conferred its citizenship on every Xhosa living in South Africa." In a legalistic sense, I suppose, this is correct. The constitution of Transkei, the state in South Africa that no other country has yet recognized, does claim that all people related to its major tribal group, the Xhosa, as well as the Sotho, Pondo, Tembu, and Ambo are citizens of the Transkei whether they have even lived inside its boundaries or not, as I indicated in my report, "Transkei—Independence Without Freedom" (*The Mennonite*, November 23, 1976). According to this principle, two million blacks living in the industrial centers of South Africa are without citizenship and without civil rights.

Putting Esau forever in the shade, the leaders of the Transkei homeland sold the birthrights of two million people to their South African heritage. This was the price for Transkei's so-called independence, but also the reason no other nation has recognized its legitimacy.

But it is not the black leaders of the Transkei who have really changed the citizenship of two million blacks outside the confines of their poor little country. This has been the iron will of the white minority administration of the Nationalist party of South Africa.

For the Transkei constitution would have no effect apart from the declared policies of white South Africa already made clear in the Transkei Self-Government Act of 1963 and the Bantu Homeland Citizenship Act of 1970. The latter law said that "every Bantu (black African) person in the Republic shall . . . be a citizen of one or other territorial authority areas (homelands or reservations for blacks)."

Leonard Gering, a former professor of law in South Africa, noted in the Johannesburg *Star* on June 4, 1976, the similarity between the apartheid laws of South Africa which took away the citizenship of its black people and that of the Nazi decree of 1941 which deprived Jews of their German citizenship. The comparison is a nasty one but justified. Both made ethnic and racial origins the test for taking away the citizenship of a group of people.

Patrick Laurence, a senior journalist of the *Rand Daily Mail* of Johannesburg, has described this atrocity in detail in *The Transkei: South Africa's Politics of Partition* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1976). He quotes Desmond Tutu, the black Anglican bishop who is now secretary-elect of the South African Council of Churches, who pleaded for the cause of the blacks exiled from their own country. "Overnight they will become foreigners in what for many of them has been the land of their birth, and be forced to adopt the citizenship of a country that many do not know at all and in whose creation they have played no part at all. They have contributed in their various ways to the prosperity of this beloved South Africa, and now it seems at the stroke of a pen they will forfeit a cherished birthright."

Bishop Tutu was speaking on May 1, 1976. "I speak with words I hope I have chosen carefully—the issue of Transkei citizenship is highly explosive." Six weeks later, the blast came in the black Johannesburg township of Soweto.

From whence will salvation come? Hillson gives attention to the conservative and so-called liberal forces in South Africa called the *verglite* (the liberal or enlightened ones) and the *verkrampte* (the cramped or narrow ones), though he should have noted that by our standards the *verglite* are still exceedingly conservative and cautious. And he fails to identify these parties as both members of the Nationalist party, which is the instrument of power of the Afrikaner people, the descendants of the Dutch settlers who struggled for a century to rid themselves of the oppression of the British.

This, after many defeats, they finally attained in the election of 1948, when the Nationalist party finally came to power. It has been steadily increasing its power ever since. But like so many other liberation movements, the Afrikaners have moved during recent years to restrict the dreams that the black people of South Africa have for their own liberation.

"Many thinking Afrikaners recognize the contradiction between their own belief in identity, freedom, and nationalism, and their steadfast denial of these same concepts when expressed by their black countrymen," says John de St. Jorre in *A House Divided: South Africa's Uncertain Future* (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1977).

If the enlightened among the Afrikaners will give some leadership to the resolution of this conflict, we may see some small flicker of the light of hope for South Africa. *Maynard Shelly, 624 Westchester Lane, Newton, Kansas 67114* February 1

Genesis articles misleading

Dear Editor: On balance, Perry Yoder's recent articles on Genesis 1 were not helpful. "God the Creator" (January 10 issue) was excellent, but the first and last articles were misleading.

In the January 3 article Perry says, "a better translation" of Genesis 1:1 would be "When God began . . . ." That statement is very one-sided. The translation of Genesis 1:1 is still much debated, and, if anything, the traditional rendering is to be preferred.

He implies in that same article that "creation out of nothing" makes God "some impersonal force," but that follows only if "creation out of nothing" is understood deistically. Also, he left me wondering whether something besides the triune God existed from all eternity.

"Creation and Evolution" (January 17 issue) was even more misleading. First, he has far too much confidence both in the theoretical ability and in the theoretical accomplishments of natural science; and second, he misconstrues the nature of the Genesis account (perhaps not historically accurate, but true—what in the world does that mean?) and underestimates its crucial importance as history for the rest of biblical history.

But, most distressing of all, he makes the biblical account a *projection* onto the past of the biblical writer's experience. This not only misunderstands the actual experience of God's people (whose faith rests on his Word and deeds often *in spite of* any present sense of his activity—compare to Psalm 89), but radically changes the truth that Scripture is "God-breathed" (2 Timothy 13:16) and "not of human invention" (2 Peter 1:20, 21). *Monty Ledford, Route 2, Kempton, Pennsylvania 19529* February 1

Meditation

Telephone Ministry

The telephone jangled insistently at the opposite end of the line. Malinda fingered the telephone cord and absently observed the wet, barren branches of a tree outside the window.

Was something wrong? she wondered. Why wasn't anyone answering? From the desk, she picked up the card containing a telephone number. It was then that Malinda noticed the attached note.

"Please allow plenty of time for Mrs. Jones to answer; she has a difficult time getting to the phone."

Finally, she heard the receiver being lifted.

"Hello," came the faint voice of another anonymous face.

"Good morning, Mrs. Jones," Malinda replied. "This is the Telephone Ministry calling to see how you are today."

"Oh, I'm all right, I guess. My back hurts this morning but that's nothing unusual."

Trying to sound cheerful, Malinda attempted to converse on a different subject. "It's rather chilly outside this morning, isn't it?"

"Yes, it looks like it is going to rain, too," Mrs. Jones replied. "It's a dreary, lonesome day."

This is a typical conversation for the numerous volunteers in McPherson, Kansas, who faithfully report to the Telephone Ministry office each morning to await calls or to call secluded, elderly shut-ins. Each person on the Telephone Ministry list is asked to call the office between 9:00 and 10:30 each morning, rather than wait for the volunteer to call them. However, there are always those who forget to call in or perhaps prefer to wait for their telephone to ring. The office is open six days a week, not including Sunday.

Telephone Ministry is sponsored in McPherson by CUM (Churches United in Ministry). An organization of twelve area churches of various denominations, CUM is composed of four lay members and the pastor from each of these churches. CUM undertakes projects for the community that cannot be handled by any individual church. Telephone Ministry is one of these projects.

Like all new programs, Telephone Ministry experienced a slow beginning. Not only did volunteers have to be recruited from each participating church, but someone also had to establish a list of the elderly who needed and desired such a service. At the present time, the First Mennonite Church supplies a person to answer the telephone one morning a week.

The job is usually routine. However, in the event that one of the elderly persons has become ill or injured, assistance is summoned. If one of the persons does not report in, the information card always lists the number of a relative or neighbor who can check on them.

Although volunteers never experience personal contact with the people they visit over the telephone, each individual personality is remembered.

One morning after Malinda had visited with a woman who telephoned the office, she thanked her for calling. The woman's reply was simply, "Thank you for answering me."

Janice Pauls

From the mountaintop

I ascended a mountain to behold the valley below, the quilt of my mundane life—patches of green and gold fields dotted with red barns, white houses, and black specks of people and animals.

A strip of blue water wove in and around the squares, and sturdy brown-threaded roads joined them together. It was a work of patience and care and deliberation—stable, but static.

I gazed up at the heavens, ablaze with light piercing through white movement in multifarious shapes, an ever-changing yet eternal glory—light upon light, space beyond space, time without time.

I could stand only a glimpse of the infinite. It was not to be captured and bound, only beheld through the eyes of the soul—translucent and transcendent.

Awed by the celestial majesty, I turned away and descended the mountain into the comfort of my diminutive home below. Yet every once in a while a throb of glory, transfused from that vision of the sublime, pulsates in my heart. I ply my needle with an inspired alacrity and stitch a purple-pink design, interlaced with threads of gold and silver, into the otherwise drably conservative patchwork of my terrestrial existence.

Theodora Remington

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CONTRIBUTORS

Mary Lou Cummings, Route 5, Box 348, Quakertown, Pennsylvania 18951, is a mother of young children and a free-lance writer.

Lois Barrett, 1505 Fairview, Wichita, Kansas 67203, is the General Conference representative on the New Call to Peacemaking central planning committee. She also served on the NCP life-style task force.

Frank Klassen's summary of the British Columbia conference is taken from his report which appeared in the Abbotsford, Sumas, and Matsqui News.

This week's meditation writers are Janice Pauls, 532 North Eby, McPherson, Kansas 67460; and Theodora Remington, 75 Oxford Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06105.

CREDITS

Cover, David Hiebert, Box 301, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 162-63, Darlene Schneck, 28 Park Valley Road, Schnecksville, Pennsylvania 18078; 164, Rohn Engh, Star Prairie, Wisconsin; 167, 168, RNS; 170, Lynn Roth, MCC.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

God has set a right time

The wise author of Ecclesiastes writes, "He has set the right time for everything. He has given us a desire to know the future but never gives us the satisfaction of fully understanding what he does" (3:11).

For five days, February 10-14, the General Conference's Council of Commissions at Newton, Kansas, reported on the year 1977 and deliberated about the future.

There were many signs that God has graciously blessed the conference's ministries in 1977.

Ric Dalke, Oklahoma Indian ministries staff person, reported, "I'm convinced that there's a new and challenging thing happening in Indian work because leadership was turned over to our Indian Christians." Vern Preheim, chairperson for the Commission on Overseas Mission, said that overseas churches are inviting new teachers and ministers to come and work with them. And if we have enough people available the 137 missionary-staff overseas could begin to increase. COM also reported that early in 1977 the India Mennonite churches voted to split into North and South. Later in the year they reconsidered and decided to remain together. And the Lord added over 150 new converts to the churches in India. Peter Derksen, missionary to Japan, told of the Mennonite church in Japan that pays regular support for a missionary couple in Zaire. The Commission on Education told of the positive response to the first quarter of the new Foundation Series. The Commission on Home Ministries reported fifty new Mennonite church groups have been "planted" in Canada and the United States over the past six years. Mennonite Voluntary Service has twenty-three units and has doubled its volunteers since 1974. The seminary will graduate eight MDiv students in 1978, and all are open to serving in pastoral ministry. Women in Mission is vigorously seeking the Lord's will about women's roles in the conference.

With overwhelming evidence of God's presence and blessing for 1977, surely the mood at Council of Commissions would have to be one of praise and of planning new ways to reach out to a world that is open and hungry for the Bread of Life.

But, there were problems. In spite of programs that experienced obvious results (seemingly in line with some of our greatest hopes), our 1977 budget income fell short by $340,000.

The commissions were advised by the Division of Administration that the economy is in a slump. "You dare not project new programs. Hold the line on budget. Let's try once more in 1978 to raise the same amount that we had hoped for in 1977."

God has set the right time for everything. I believe that. What is he then telling us at this time through the conference financial squeeze?

Some people were quick to say that congregations held back funds because of the tax withholding and abortion issues. They felt that conference leadership has been too slow to speak out on these vital concerns. Hard and bitter feelings were expressed in some of the early meetings.

We have a desire to know the future. That desire is from God. Many wonder about the February 1979 midtriennium conference. But God has not given us the satisfaction of fully understanding how he works. We are called to walk forward in faith.

As the days passed, people shared how they had been together and experienced forgiveness and a change of heart about the ill feelings expressed on the first day. There were many commission members (not a majority) who were ready to ask our congregations for a budget increase and to move boldly into expanding mission opportunities both in North America and overseas.

God has set the right time for everything. His Spirit was among us at Newton in unmistakable fashion. And we human beings were there, too.

The budget squeeze forced us all to look carefully to the central core of all ministries. They will be strengthened because of this evaluation. Tough issues, like war taxes and abortion, made people express their real feelings. Then they were able to discover that those who felt otherwise cared enough to seek forgiveness and oneness in Christ. Several people "found" some of the brothers and sisters for the first time.

God has set the right time for everything. He has given 1978 to the General Conference as a year of tight finances and preparation for a tough midtriennium conference.

We wish that we could know the future. God has not given us that full understanding.

But we can be assured that God holds the future—we saw it and felt it at Newton. Bring on the abortion issue, the civil responsibility question, the budget squeeze, everything that the world can hurl at us. We can face the future—unafraid even as we tremble at our own inadequacies—because God is with us. He richly blessed our conference in all ways during 1977. It must be his will that we tackle new challenges ahead. I believe that.

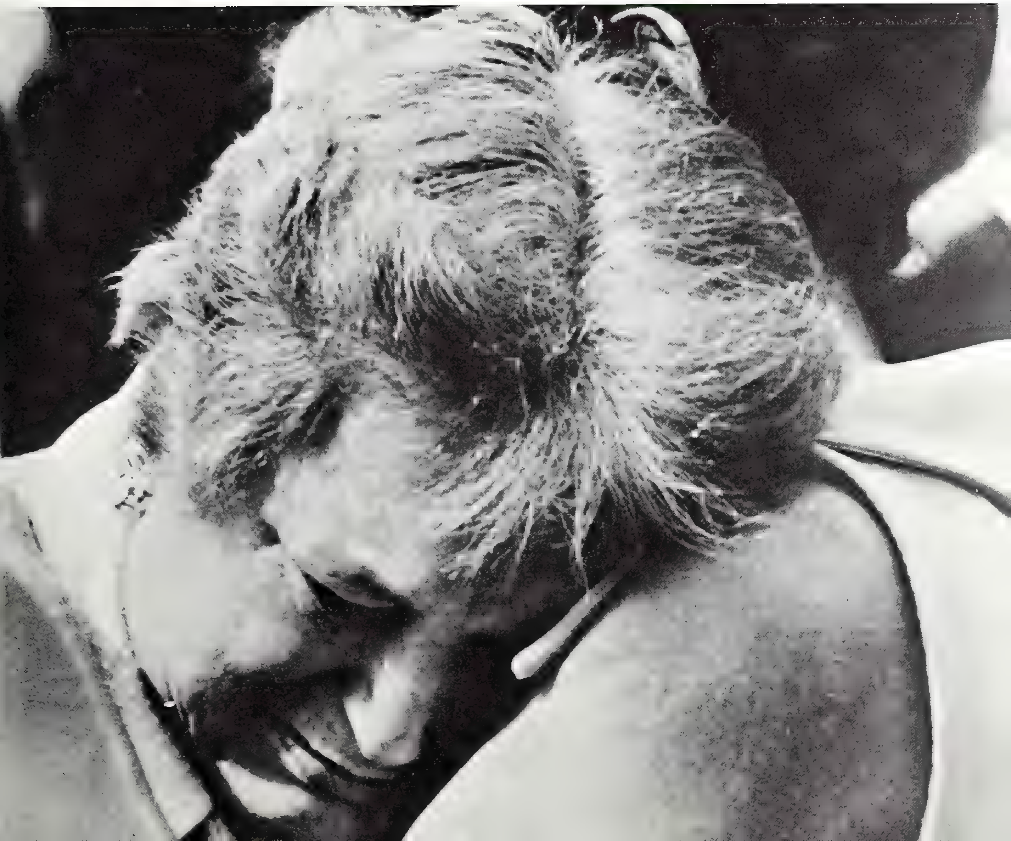
God has set the right time for everything. BW

The Mennonite, WM Edition

WM

MARCH-
APRIL 1978

Window to Mission



the open window

Back a number of years when my husband was a seminary student, I sometimes felt disgust when I heard another student say that such and such was a good place to buy a Christmas tree, or do other business, because they would give seminary students discounts. I would almost tell myself to avoid doing business there because I didn't want special treatment.

This feeling went with me into our first pastorate. There I found pastors are often on the receiving end of gifts, discounts, produce, and other things. I resented it. Not the particular gift, or the person giving it, but the feeling of being a receiver.

Gradually through prayer and inner searching I began to see the giving from the giver's viewpoint. . . the joy of sharing, expressing appreciation, affirming. I saw that through our gracious acceptance we gave others love and affirmation. I realized it was a far different stance than the seminary student looking for a discount!

I still had a need, though, to be seen as a person, a friend. I remember well the evening I felt comfortable enough with another couple we often went places with, to just tell them how much I needed for us to pay our own way, foot our own bill, when out with them. It made us friends, not someone entertaining the pastor. They laughingly understood and agreed.

How do you feel about receiving? Are you a considerate giver? I hope you will read the following pages and give thought and prayer to this area of your life.

— Jeannie Zehr

COVER

"Let us not underrate the joy of giving or the joy of receiving, for these are indissolubly related, and both symbolize the joy of loving and the joy of being loved." —Paul Tournier, *The Meaning of Gifts*

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Light of My Eye

Wang Yang

I WAS AWAKE as Dr. Chou Taohsiang operated to give me a corneal transplant. They had deadened the nerves around the eye, but I could hear metallic instruments clanking and Dr. Chou speaking.

My right eye had been inflamed and swollen for more than three years. When I checked into Taiwan's Tri-Service General Hospital in Taipei, I could hardly see out of it, and my left eye was severely hyperopic. Doctors discovered that I was suffering from keratitis (inflammation of the cornea).

"You could have picked it up from towels, or from swimming pools," I was told. "I'm a swimming instructor," I said. "That's probably how you caught it," the doctor said.

About a year later I learned that a corneal transplant could restore sight to my now blind right eye. When I told my wife, she brought out her savings deposit book. She had managed to save $500 after years of hard work.

"If this isn't enough, we'll try to get more," she said, adding: "You are not like me. An illiterate person is blind though he can see. A man who can read needs both eyes."

I put myself on Dr. Chou's waiting list. A month later, he phoned me. "A driver was involved in a bad car accident," he said "Before he died, he told his wife to sell parts of his body to help support their children. Could you spare $250?"

The operation and hosptial expenses would come to an additional $200. I agreed and was told to check into the hospital the following day. I was extremely lucky. People waited for years before a cornea became available. I told my wife how grateful I was to her for making the operation possible.

As I was being wheeled out of the operating room, my daughter Yung put her lips close to my ear and said, "Everything went well. Mother wanted to come, but she was afraid." "Tell her not to come," I said. "But tell her I'm all right. She is not to worry."

I was nineteen when I married on my parents' orders. (The writer was raised in the days of arranged marriages when children had to obey parents' orders implicitly.) My father and my wife's father were close friends and had pledged that if their wives gave birth to a boy and a girl, the children should be married.

I had never set eyes on the girl who was to be my wife until the day she was carried to our house in a bridal sedan chair. After bowing to heaven and earth, she was led to my bedroom. When at last I lifted her bridal headdress, I gasped in horror. Her face was cruelly covered with pockmarks, her nose was a deformity, and beneath sparse eyebrows her scarred eyelids made her eyes seem swollen. She was nineteen and looked forty.

I fled to my mother's room and cried all night. My mother told me that I must accept my fate. Homely girls bring good luck; pretty ones court sorrow. But nothing she said reduced my anguish. I would not share a room with my wife, and I did not speak to her. I lodged at school. When summer vacation came, I refused to come home until my father sent a cousin to fetch me.

My wife was cooking supper when I arrived and raised her head and smiled when she saw me. I walked right past her. After supper my mother said to me privately, "Son, you are being very cruel. Her face is unattractive, but she does not have an ugly heart."

"No, it must be beautiful," I stormed. "Otherwise how could you have made me marry her?"

My mother's face grew pale. "She is an extremely good girl, understanding, and considerate," she said. "She has been in this house more than six months now and works from morning to night in the kitchen and at the mill. She has not uttered a word of complaint about the way you have treated her. I have not seen her shed a tear. But she is shedding them inside. Do you want her to live like a widow although she has a husband? Put yourself in her place."

My wife and I began to share the same bedroom, but nothing changed the way I felt. She always kept her face down and spoke softly. If I argued with her, she would raise her head to give me a submissive smile, then quickly lower it again. She's like a ball of cotton wool, I thought. No will, no temper.

In the thirty years of marriage that followed, I seldom smiled at my wife and never went out in her company. Indeed, I often wished her dead.

And yet, my wife proved to be endowed with more patience and love than anyone I know. When we first came to Taiwan, my income was barely enough to pay for rent and food. The baby was often ill, and we had to cope with medical expenses as well. When my wife was not looking after the household, she wove straw hats and mats to earn a little money. When we moved to a fishing harbor in the east, she darned fishing nets; and when we moved north, she learned to paint designs on pottery. We never lived near my colleagues because the truth was we both feared her meeting people I knew. I was often away from home, but I knew I needn't worry about our two children or the household with her looking after everything.

After the operation my daughter Yung brought me a transistor radio to occupy the long hours while the bandages remained on my eyes. But I had plenty of time to think, and my thoughts kept returning to my wife. I was somewhat ashamed for telling her not to come to see me.

After two weeks I learned that the stitches would soon be removed. I could not contain my happiness. "When I recover," I told Yung, "I want to pay a visit to the grave of the man who gave me his cornea."

But I was nervous for I knew there was a chance that the transplant would not take. When they removed the bandage from my right eye, I scarcely dared to open it. "Do you see any light?" Dr. Chou asked. I blinked. "Yes, from above."

"Yes, that's the lamp," he said and patted me on the shoulder. "It's a success. You can go home a week from today."

During that week he tested my eye every day. First I could see shadows, then the number of fingers on his hand. On the day I was going home I could see the window, the bed, and even the teacups on the table.

"Mother's making your favorite dishes

to welcome you home," Yung said when she came for me. "She's a good wife and a good mother," I replied, words I would never say before.

Yung and I climbed into a taxi. She was strangely silent all the way home. As I walked into the house, my wife was coming from the kitchen with a plate of food. When she saw me, she lowered her head immediately. "You're back," she murmured.

"Thank you for letting me see," I said. It was the first time I remembered ever thanking her for anything.

She walked past me abruptly and put the food on the table. Leaning against the wall with her back toward me, she began to sob. "It is enough to hear you say this. I have not lived in vain."

Yung burst into the room in tears. "Tell him!" she cried. "Let father know you gave the cornea for his eye!" She shook her mother. "Tell him!"

" I only did what I should," my wife said.

I grabbed her by the shoulders, and looked closely at her face. Her left iris was opaque, as my right one had been.

"Golden Flower!" It was the first time I spoke her name. "Why. . . why did you do it?" I demanded, shaking her hard.

"Because. . . you are my husband," she said, burying her head in my shoulder. I held her tight. Then I got down and knelt at her feet.

C. E. Montague tells a story of a mountain climber who found himself exhausted as he scaled the difficult Schillijoch peak in Switzerland. His fatigue was so great that he felt powerless to lift his ice-axe to cut another handhold. He was sure that within a few minutes he would lose his grip and fall to his death.

Then, suddenly, something hurtled past his head and a voice loudly called the Alpine distress signal. Someone above him was in serious trouble. A climber higher up had lost his ice-axe and with it the power to move.

The exhausted climber responded to the cry of distress, finding strength he had not had a moment before. Calling encouragement he began cutting hand and footholds for himself in order to climb over the projection that hid what was above him. What he saw was a man and a woman. The woman had slipped and was dangling a few inches above a ledge, being held by the rope that tied the two climbers together. The man had braced himself and was supporting the weight of the woman, but he was not able to move.

The previously exhausted climber worked his way over the ice to the woman, cut a place to stand, and lifted her on his shoulder, allowing the man above to get a better position. The three, working together now, ended the climb safely, using the knowledge of skilled mountain climbers to make a successful adventure.

As they discussed the experience around the fire that night, the man who with his wife had been rescued, began to express his thanks. He was interrupted by the rescuer. "In another five minutes, before you called out, I would have been dead. So if thanks are in order, thank you *very much!"*

He, himself, had been saved by another's need.

TWICE BLESSED

It seemed one mother
was quite enough
in the early days
as I grew,
but now it appears
in my grown-up years
that somehow
there are two.

It seemed one mother
was quite enough
to comb my snarled
hair,
but in another place
a dirty face
was washed
with special care.

It seemed one mother
was quite enough
to kneel with me
by my bed,
but in another town
a mother knelt down
and other prayers
were said.

It seemed one mother
was quite enough
to send me off
to college,
But in another state
on a similar date
a boy went in search
of knowledge.

It seemed one mother
just wasn't enough
to unite two young lives
to each other,
so on a special day
in a sacred way
they witnessed a
marriage together.

It seemed one mother
was quite enough
for only so many
years,
but now today
it's for two we pray
"twice blessed" is
the way it appears.

— Helen Coon

PROGRAM 5

Who Really Helps Whom or It's Easier to Give Than Receive

Joyce Shutt

OUR SOCIETY PROMOTES selfishness; it is good for business. Whether we watch TV, listen to the radio, go for a drive, or read newspapers and magazines, we are bombarded with propaganda insisting that happiness comes from having. We measure our worth in terms of possessions. Consequently, we find it hard to share, to be concerned about others, or to see a meaning in life beyond "keeping up with the Joneses."

We hear Jesus' teachings. We ponder the mystery of His life and death. But it doesn't make sense. Our affluence creates the illusion that we are self-made and independent, that we do not need God or each other—except in ways which feed our socially accepted greed and justify our actions.

Sated with possessions, we have lost touch with ourselves and what it is like to be on the receiving end, of really needing and accepting help from others. We see ourselves as "masters of our fate" (God helps us do that), and like being in control. We don't like identifying our weaknesses and needs. What good deeds we do are not so much aimed at others, but at helping ourselves—buying approval from our neighbors and God.

Some years ago a poor family came to our church for help. We helped them find food, clothing, housing and jobs. We gave. They received.

One afternoon I went to see how things were going. After the mother had graciously accepted the used clothing I'd brought and we'd chatted politely, I went to leave. On the way to the door my four-year-old saw a bag of potato chips pushed way back on the kitchen counter. "Want some chips!" she begged. "Don't be rude," I scolded, thinking that they were too poor to spare anything for my chubby daughter. But the mother saw through my self-righteous pose. "Aren't poor people's chips good enough for your child?"

For most of us, receiving is harder than giving. That woman's rebuke turned out to be one of the kindest and most painful gifts I've ever had to accept. In her harsh way, she reminded me that there is more to love than giving of our surplus. She, too, needed to contribute to others.

Wrong Reason Giving

Acts 20:35 points out that happiness comes in freely giving and sharing. But frequently many of us give for the wrong reasons. We give because that puts us in a position of power and control where we can manipulate others and get them in our debt. We give to buy love. We feel righteous and important. It is a way to call attention to ourselves and justify our affluence. It is often a way to avoid relating, for we substitute things for our time and attention.

Receiving, on the other hand, smacks of dependency, sin, inferiority—aspects of our lives which we do not like to face. The receiver has to accept or reject what is given as they are not in a position to choose the particular item or what best fits their needs. They take what is offered or go without. Accepting makes them beholden to the giver and being beholden implies that they are somehow not quite as good. Thus, they not only end up having to deal with their own feelings of worthlessness, but they also have to respond to the giver's unspoken and spoken evaluations and demands of them.

Receiving Is Essential to Relationships

Being able to receive from others, whether in the form of gifts, criticism, moral support, physical help, or compliments is essential to one's health and success in personal relationships. Persons who can graciously receive are persons who accept themselves, who are in touch with their feelings, who recognize their strengths and weaknesses without apologizing for either, who acknowledge their need for others without shame, and who give up their need to control every situation. They have accepted themselves and their human limitations and thus can accept others in the same open way.

Faith is a receiving stance. It is our response to God's initiative. It involves accepting limits. God loves. He gives and forgives. He accepts us because He choses to accept us, not because we give Him our good deeds and thus make Him beholden to us. If anyone is beholden, we are. Because we cannot accept forgiveness and His salvation until we are willing to accept our imperfection, our need for others, and can give up a certain amount of control, receiving is our only possible response to God's grace.

The disciples, and Jesus himself, gave freely of themselves precisely because they had learned to receive, to allow God to be God, and to give up trying to do everything for themselves and others.

Being on the receiving end when you haven't earned the right, bought a lottery ticket, given a present first, etc., has a way of humbling one and exposing our areas of weakness. For the poor woman who has tried hard to make ends meet, who has done all she can to provide for her family, and the power company still cuts off her electricity, accepting help from others is necessary and humiliating. Having a friend come take the children for a day when I'm having a bad day is a help, but it is a painful reminder that I have failed as a mother.

All of us need to be able to give and do for others in order to develop feelings of self-worth. When we work with children, the poor, the aged, the uneducated, minorities, etc. we often do not help them find ways to help themselves and others. We, who are in positions of responsibility and authority, need to be on the receiving end, too, not just to help others grow, but to keep a clear perspective of who we are as interdependent children of God. If not, it is easy to forget that we are in that position primarily by accident of birth, age, race and circumstance, not because we earned that status or are better.

We need to receive so that we can be

sensitive givers. Last summer a friend who works for MCC came to our orchards to glean cherries after the mechanical picker had done its job. When he had finished and had loaded his car with the buckets of juicy cherries, he tried to pay us for the fruit. We refused, pointing out that those cherries would have gone to waste. "But I don't like to take things without paying for them," he protested. Then he grinned. "Besides, I'm not used to being on the receiving end." "Then take the cherries," we said, "so you can remember how it feels."

Two Sides of the Same Coin

Giving and receiving are really two sides of the same coin, for they are really different ways of sharing ourselves. Receiving is as much a form of giving as giving itself, because it affirms the other person's worth and abilities. Friendships which grow are those in which friends give and take according to ability and need.

Both giving and receiving involve risk, though receiving can be more threatening when it involves exposing our greatest areas of weakness and need. Giving more often stems from a position of strength, though it too makes us vulnerable. I have been deeply hurt when loved ones negated gifts I gave (another argument for being able to graciously receive). When that happens I feel as though they have rejected me along with the gift. Yet hurtful as that is, it is different from the terrible feelings of inadequacy I have when I have to swallow my pride and ask for help—like getting stuck in the snow and having the man laugh at me for being "a woman driver." Even worse is the situation when I ask for affection and attention and have my request brushed off or refused. At least when I am on the giving end, even if my efforts are rejected, I can console myself that I did my part. When I am the one with the unmet need, I am left even emptier and more alone.

I have rarely known physical or material want, though my husband's illness is forcing us to depend on others more and more. It is a new experience for us to have friends come to cut our firewood, plow our garden, or fix our eaves troughs. Accepting their help has not been easy. It has hurt our pride.

Several years ago I faced a different kind of need—an emotional crisis which I could not face. Confronted with my "failure," I was sure I was completely worthless. I became angry and distrustful with everyone. I resisted the efforts of others to help because that only accentuated my awareness of failure. Later I saw my experience as a gift because it drove me to new awareness of myself and my relationships. For in my darkest hours I sought not the strong and pious, but others, like myself, who knew the valley of the shadow. With them I felt more trusted and accepted. I did not fear rejection and judgment. And in that atmosphere of mutual trust we were able to give to each other new hopes and insights.

It's strange that we find it so hard to ask for help and to receive from others when we ourselves feel most loved, valued, and trusted when others come to us for help and support. Why then is it so hard to give that kind of affirmation in return when we are in need?

Too often we tend to think that we cannot belong to a church or believe in God until we have "things all put together." Yet it is our brokenness that communicates the promise of forgiveness and new beginnings, not our piety or perfection. The good news is for sinners, not saints.

The pastor or counselor, who has never known or admitted pain and need is not nearly as effective as the one, who having known pain moves from that point of empathy to helping others find new ways of acting and relating. This was as true for Jesus as for us. He didn't really communicate the true nature of God's love and forgiveness until he died a failure on the cross. Only then did his life and teaching begin to make sense.

We in the church have not always been sensitive to others' needs to give to us and to use their gifts because we have been too busy trying to be good ourselves. MCC and mission efforts, when possible, are moving away from direct relief and control of programs to self-help, food for work programs, or local-national autonomy. By allowing people to help themselves and to assume responsibility for their own lives, we recognize their talents and worth.

Giving is truly giving when it flows from interdependence and listening. Listening itself is a way of receiving. It acknowledges that we do not have all the answers and that we need others.

Some years ago a family in our congregation faced an unexpected financial crisis. We immediately moved to help without asking them. Because there had been some misunderstandings between us, we saw this as a good way for us to show how much we really loved them. Unfortunately, we were so caught up in our own need to declare ourselves that we did not consider how they could feel. Within a year they left our church.

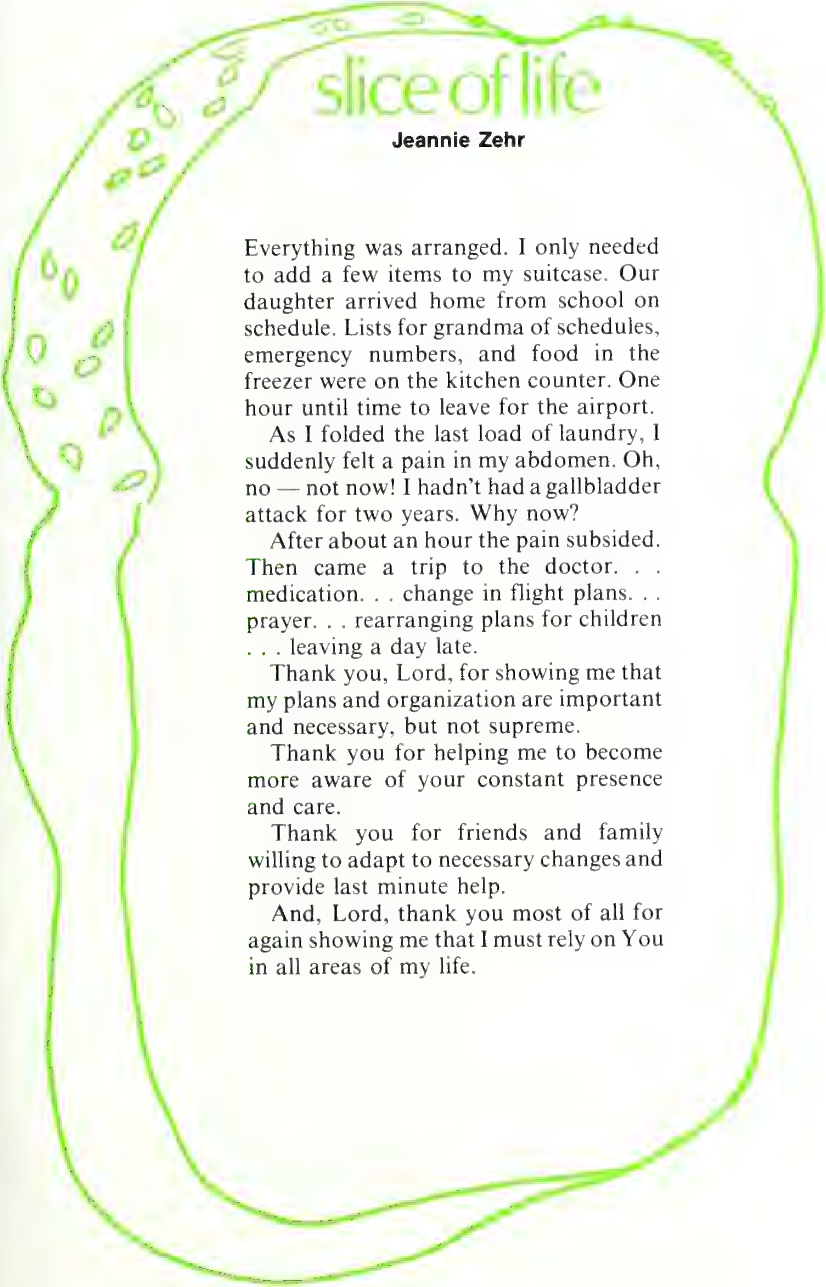
This experience stands in sharp contrast to our usual way of carefully checking with others before acting, of building into the sharing process ways for the receivers to give back in some way. Take, for example, the family who was told, "This is a gift with only one string attached. When you are back on your feet, channel the money back into our sharing fund so that you can help someone as you have been helped."

Help as you have been helped. That is the background for Acts 20:35, "Happiness lies more in giving than receiving" (NEB). For that assumes that we see all of life as a gift that is not ours to own, but to share.

Giving and receiving—two sides of the same coin, both important, interrelated. Receiving—the affirmation and acceptance of our fallibility, our need for God, His saving grace, and life in community. Giving—the using of our God-given gifts, the sharing of ourselves and our possessions for the good of the community, our way of thanking God for all He's done for us.

Program "How-To" Ideas

1. Present this lesson.
2. Show and discuss the film "The Giving Tree" (available from the G.C. audiovisual libraries).
3. Form small groups to discuss the following:
   A. Are you comfortable with compliments? Do you find it hard or easy to accept and give praise?
   B. How do you feel about receiving a gift from someone to whom you have not given anything? About receiving an expensive gift from someone to whom you only gave a small token?
   C. How do you relate to your family? Do you try to do everything for them? What kinds of needs lie behind your actions? What are you trying to tell them? Do you feel unneeded unless you are always doing?
   D. Do you enjoy giving gifts? If so, why? If not, why?
   E. Do you agree that faith is a receiving stance? If receiving is so important, what does that say about ways we go about evangelism and charitable giving?
   F. Is giving really giving when it involves only surpluses?
   G. Share with the group an experience in which you were on the receiving end. Do you find it difficult to accept help when you are in need? Can you ask for help?
4. Conclude your meeting with a period of sharing and prayer. Limit your concerns to those areas where you need to learn to give up control and to receive.



slice of life

Jeannie Zehr

Everything was arranged. I only needed to add a few items to my suitcase. Our daughter arrived home from school on schedule. Lists for grandma of schedules, emergency numbers, and food in the freezer were on the kitchen counter. One hour until time to leave for the airport.

As I folded the last load of laundry, I suddenly felt a pain in my abdomen. Oh, no — not now! I hadn't had a gallbladder attack for two years. Why now?

After about an hour the pain subsided. Then came a trip to the doctor. . . medication. . . change in flight plans. . . prayer. . . rearranging plans for children . . . leaving a day late.

Thank you, Lord, for showing me that my plans and organization are important and necessary, but not supreme.

Thank you for helping me to become more aware of your constant presence and care.

Thank you for friends and family willing to adapt to necessary changes and provide last minute help.

And, Lord, thank you most of all for again showing me that I must rely on You in all areas of my life.

GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL RECEIVER TOO!

Kay Ann Fransen

"MOM, I WANT TO READ my story to you now."

"In a minute, Suzanne, I'll be finished here and then I would like to hear your story." But the minutes passed and I continually went from one small job in the kitchen to another. Suzanne called once more. I did another task before I left the kitchen. The special time was spoiled. As could be expected, I found a sullen, unhappy daughter. She wanted to give, I refused to receive except on my own terms.

Mennonites are known for their giving. They are financially supportive of the church and its institutions. Many have given hours in Mennonite Disaster Service, Voluntary Service, Alternative Service, etc. In daily living they try to follow the words, "It is better to give than to receive."

There is joy in giving for it is an extension of self. However, there are also times when one is a recipient. How does it feel to receive? One can only give provided someone else receives. A gift can only be a gift *if* it is received. Are Mennonites also able and willing to be on the receiving end? If not we are depriving ourselves of a sharing experience and depriving someone else of the joy of giving.

In visiting with several friends who have been on the receiving end I learned some things. Marge is the mother of four children, one of whom has brain damage due to an accident. Her family has received many gifts of money for hospital expenses, time, and emotional energies from friends. The church fellowship has been quite involved in the giving process. I asked Marge what kind of feelings she has experienced being a receiver.

She responded, "A mixture of feelings—gratitude to those who give so much, resentment at being in the position to receive, obligation to those who give. How can I ever repay those who have helped so much? I know I can't, but perhaps I can repay in kind. I wonder if those who must *always* be on the receiving end ever get accustomed to it. It is so very difficult to ask people for their time. It's such an important element to each person."

"Do you realize that by your receiving you are allowing others to give?" I queried.

"If in their giving it brings them happiness, that's good," she replied.

"Do you sometimes refuse a gift?"

"In most cases we have no choice, no other alternative if we want to achieve our goals for our son. In order to gain as much of a normal life as possible, we must rely on others. We feel so grateful for all that has been done. However, in expressing gratitude, I often wonder how it can ever be done adequately. One can only say thank-you so many times, beyond that. . ."

I then asked her, "Are some gifts harder to accept than others?"

"I think you can accept emotional

support more easily than someone's time or money. Money is the hardest to accept."

"What have you gained emotionally by being on the receiving end?"

"Being able to see others receiving something, having a sense of joy or satisfaction, from their giving is satisfying to me also. I've also 'received' in getting to know so many beautiful people as they come in to help."

"Why do you think it is difficult for Mennonites to accept help?" I asked.

Marge responded, "I think Mennonites have the idea that one should be able to manage on their own. If you don't you should be able to pay back later. Perhaps there is a bit of a fallacy in our dealing with indebtedness for in reality all of us are indebted to what Christ has done for us."

Another friend who has received help because of a serious personal injury repsonded to my questions this way. "I think it is easiest to accept help from people who have allowed you to help them, also from someone who shares of herself/ himself. In my case having a basic support group composed of our prayer group was helpful and gratifying. I think it is easier for me to receive because of the environment in which I grew up. The neighborhood was a very sharing group, helping each other as the need arose. I remember my mother giving away her best dining table to a neighbor who had none. She kept the less satisfactory table for our family."

As women we do a lot of giving. A mother gives in a multitude of ways to her children. The professions which have been traditionally female are service oriented: nursing, teaching, social work, etc. We give easily, but find it uncomfortable on the receiving end. In being needy we feel you become the underdog. The giver has power over the receiver. Think about our children. We exert power over them with our giving. Do we allow and encourage them to give in their own special way? Do we accept their small physical or emotional tokens with sincerity. In our sincere acceptance we teach them how to accept—to accept themselves and others and the ultimate gift of Jesus Christ.

Let us take pleasure in the "now" of receiving. It can be exciting and meaningful. It is an acceptance of love, an establishment of a relationship, and if done in the right spirit it exemplifies Christ's teachings.

In Paul Tournier's book *The Meaning of Gifts* Dr. Tournier sums it up well, "Let us not underrate the joy of giving or the joy of receiving, for these are indissolubly related, and both symbolize the joy of loving and the joy of being loved."

The best
Gifts
are tied
with Heartstrings

WM office jottings from Joan

Michiko Takarabe and her husband, Takeomi, from Miyazaki, Japan, are spending this year at Mennonite Biblical Seminary in the Overseas Study/Service program. Their two children, Yurika and Akito, are also here. Michiko is a licensed teacher and has taught kindergarten for a number of years. More recently she and Takeomi have worked as a team in the pastorate. As a loyal committed servant in the Mennonite church, she has served as a Sunday school teacher, organist, choir director, women's group leader, hostess and cook. This year she is enjoying the Christian education class and choir practice, and especially appreciates the fellowship with people of other backgrounds.

Leah Sonwani, director of women's work in India and secretary of the All-India Mennonite Women's Conference writes: "My work load is increasing and it is because the work is prospering. I am thankful to the Lord and you all, who are helping me in this ministry. At present I am working for the village Christian women. Thank-you for sending Martha and Lois to us. Their visit was inspiring to people. In a way we are developing more understanding and love toward our friends from overseas. Lift us up in your prayers. May the blessings of the conference also reach to you."

The Women In Mission advisory council sessions in February were a time of evaluation and discernment. Our base of involvement continues to expand. Discussions centered on the shape of our witness around the world, on using the creative resources of our women in the church and supporting those women who are pioneering in church vocation models.

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to help you serve

While most projects will carry over from 1977 to 1978, several new projects have been approved. You will note one of these listed here.

*CHURCH PLANTING in the United States and Canada is a new thrust which was affirmed at General Conference. (This is a new item.)
Budgeted: $2,000.00

*OVERSEAS WIVES TRAVEL FUND enables women like Michiko, to accompany their husbands for a year of study at the Seminary.
Budgeted: $3,000.00

*THE TAIWAN WOMEN'S CHOIR will sing at the World Conference and will also itinerate in our North American communities in July and August. WM is sponsoring their North American tour.
Budgeted: $5,000.00

*MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY SCHOLARSHIPS provide assistance for women preparing for Christian vocations.
Budgeted: $3,000.00

Send your contributions to Women in Mission, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114

response

"Thanks for your nice little magazine. It was a blessing. If you make it much bigger I'll be tempted to set it aside till I have more time to read it and then it may never get read!"

Mrs. George Rahn

contributors

Helen Coon (Twice Blessed) and her husband, Bob, live in Cordell, Oklahoma. They have three children. Helen does free-lance writing and is deeply involved in the work of her church.

Joyce M. Shutt (Program 5: Who Really Helps Whom) is chairperson of the WM Literature Committee and serves on the Commission on Home Ministries. She and husband, Earl, live with their children midst the orchards at Orrtanna, Pennsylvania.

Jeannie Zehr (Slice of Life) edits *Window to Mission* from her home in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Her husband, Marvin, pastors the Maplewood Church. They have two children.

Kay Ann Fransen (God Loves a Cheerful Receiver, Too) lives with her husband, Werner, and two daughters at 2 Ridemont Rd., Normal, Illinois. She is a new member of the WM literature committee, is on her church education committee, and teaches a nursery Sunday school class.

Erica Esau (artist, p. 13) was born in Brazil and has worked in missions there. She is a minister's wife and substitute teacher. She and her family live at 42413 S. Sumas Road, Sardis, British Columbia, Canada.

Joan Wiebe (WM Office Jottings) works at 722 Main, Newton, Kansas, as coordinator for Women in Mission. She and her husband, Len, have three children.

credits

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Helen C. Coon

Joyce M. Shutt

Jeannie Zehr

Kay Ann Fransen

Erica Esau

forecast

Be sure to read your May-June *Window to Mission*. The program will give you a view through the eyes of Irene Weaver of some of the things AIMM is doing in Africa. Then read about the problems, joys, concerns, and specialness of being a missionary child. This will be shared in several articles by missionary parents, a former chaplain at a school for missionary children, and through interviews and questionnaire responses of missionary children. This view through your "window" will give you information plus a closer understanding of what it's like to walk in the shoes of missionaries and their families.

Printed in U.S.A.

WOMEN IN MISSION: A PAGE OF NEWS AND IDEAS

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED in obtaining a packet of materials on "Women and Development" you are invited to send $3.00 to Herta Funk, COE, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. The materials were put together for the January conference held in Newton.

Also available is an excellent slide set on "Women and Development" prepared by LaVonne Platt. This may be borrowed by contacting Herta.

Old photographs of Mennonite mission work in Oklahoma are needed by the Cheyenne Peace Project. We know these exist among various family collections. Those found will be used in the curriculum text being compiled, or placed in the archives of the Cheyenne Cultural Center. Please mail an inventory of such photos to Lawrence Hart, R.R. 1, Box 89, Clinton, OK 73601.

Why not involve your women's group in praying for missionaries as one Northern District group did. They pasted a different missionary's picture in each program booklet. This became that member's special missionary to remember in prayer during the year.

Have you ever thought of inviting one of your district or provincial officers to speak to your local WM group? Central District has even published a list of their WM persons who are willing to share in this way. It's a good way to become better informed about the work in which you are involved.

Many groups use the prayer-share partners idea. A variation on this was done by the Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kansas. They divided their group in half and one half drew the names of the other half. Through the year the partners prayed for one another, visited with each other's families, and for one month's meeting the two women went together to visit a shut-in.

Menno Church, Ritzville, Washington, collects aluminum and paper for recycling. They donate the proceeds to the Pacific District Conference treasury. Are any of the rest of you involved in recycling projects? Tell us about them.

It's always exciting when we see a WM group's program booklet using the program theme sketch and topics suggested in *Window to Mission.* Recently we saw this as done by First Church, Newton, Kansas. The clapping hands sketch is on the cover and plans inside show they will use five of the program topics. Let us know about your group.

Oak Grove Church. Smithville, Ohio, has assigned volunteer families as Sunday hosts to make certain guests at Sunday services receive an invitation for the noon meal.

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARIES
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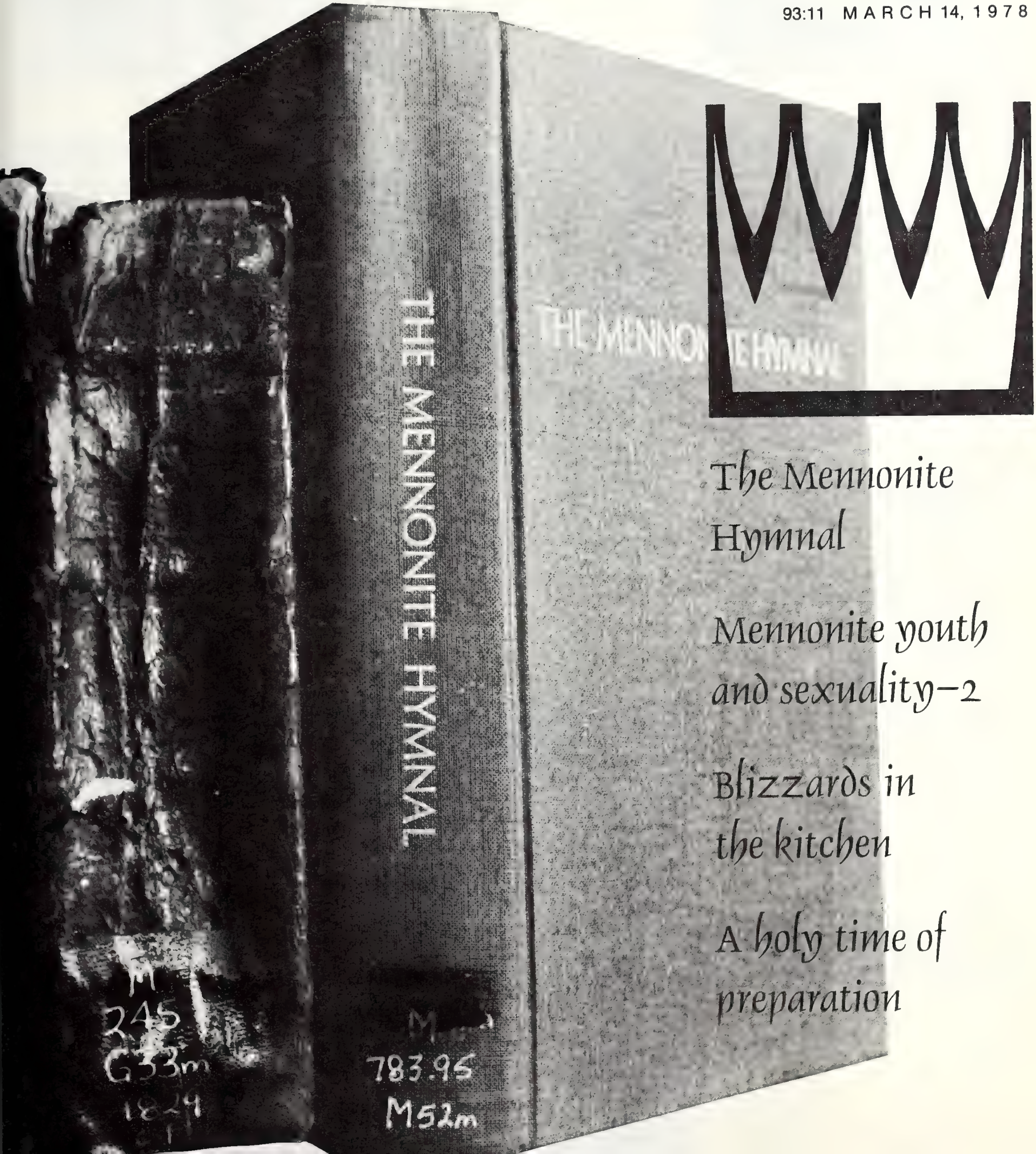
The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:11 MARCH 14, 1978


THE MENNONITE HYMNAL
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The Mennonite Hymnal

Mennonite youth and sexuality—2

Blizzards in the kitchen

A holy time of preparation

The Mennonite Hymnal

Esko Loewen

Some ninety hymnbooks have been produced in North America by the Mennonite Church (OM) and the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), the two sponsoring bodies for *The Mennonite Hymnal.* This is only part of a much larger list of hymnbooks produced by Mennonites in other countries and other Mennonite groups in North America. These statistics underline the importance of hymnody in our tradition.

Browse through any historical library's collection of hymnals and you will be overwhelmed by their number and variety. There is the "postage stamp" hymnal, so called because of its small size, used for weddings in Holland. You will see the thick *Ausbund,* first issued and claspbound in 1583—the latest issue (1950) has no clasps. The rectangular, awkward-looking *Harmonia Sacra* by Joseph Funk first appeared in the 1830s. The *Gesangbuch mit Noten* (Hymnal with Notes), published at Berne, Indiana, was so named because songbooks without notes—just the text—were generally used; one *with* notes was unusual. Canadians produced the Old Colony *Gesangbuch* (Hymnal), which sets the tune with numbers instead of notes—each number has a pitch value.

The hymnbooks determined the singing. The hymnal that had no notation necessitated a *Vorsanger* to line out the hymn. That German name is so descriptive: *Vorsanger*—one who sings before and the congregation then follows.

Out of all these materials, our current Mennonite hymnal has emerged. It contains a rich variety of hymns for a diverse set of purposes.

Of course, our hymnbooks always drew on the larger stream of hymnody. Today our denominational name on the book speaks more about who the book is for, than about who wrote the hymns. The majority of hymns are the common property of all Christians and all churches.

I want to look at several hymns for the purpose of whetting your curiosity about many others. I do it also for the purpose of inspiring our singing of the hymns, that this be not rote or without meaning but with appreciation for what they really are.

The Zinzendorf hymn "Heart with Loving Heart United" is number 386 in *The Mennonite Hymnal.* Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf was an unusual man. He was a blue blood, an aristocrat of a noble family. He discovered the Pietist movement, which at that time was stirring up a doctrinaire, cold, and impersonal church. Pietism focused on the experiential—a strange warming of the heart in those who have found Christ.

In the early 1700s, the Bohemian Brethren, followers of John Hus (who was martyred in 1415 for ideas that a hundred years later sparked the Protestant Reformation), were being crushed by the Counter-Reformation in Bohemia. Zinzendorf gave the Bohemian Brethren asylum on his estate in Saxony. His act resulted in the remarkable Moravian movement, a part of the larger Pietist movement of the time. Zinzendorf became their leader.

This group of Moravians soon fanned out as missionaries to Greenland, the West Indies, Africa, the Far East, and among the American Indians. They established *Herrnhut* (Lord's shelter) centers in Bethlehem and Lititz, Pennsylvania; Salem (now Winston-Salem), North Carolina; Zeist, the Netherlands; the Herrnhaak, near Buedingen, Germany, and others.

The particular reason for looking at Zinzendorf's hymn is to be aware that the Bohemian Brethren were the forerunners of Protestant hymnody. The first hymnbook produced by Martin Luther was, in large part, Bohemian hymnody. These were a singing people. Their worship was congregational singing in good measure. They were uninhibited in their use of all kinds of instruments with their singing, so that

Some of the many Mennonite hymnbooks

GESANG
BUCH

Ken

Zinzendorf

guitars, trumpets, strings, organs—all were freely used. They so keenly felt the joys of the gospel, they simply had to sing—there was exuberance!

Reading about and visiting Moravian centers has been a hobby of ours. We have visited all the places mentioned above, except Lititz. There you sense the fervor and enthusiasm of these people. Because of this, Moravian hymns have extra meaning. James Montgomery also is Moravian—note the number of his hymns in our hymnal. Oh yes, acquaint yourself with all the indexes in the back of the hymnal. The author index shows that we have fourteen Montgomery hymns and three Zinzendorf hymns.

Johannes Dekknatel, pastor of what today is the Singel Mennonite Church, was deeply moved by the Moravians. At one time he was a member of the Moravian fellowship in Amsterdam and of his own congregation.

When we visited the *Herrnhut* in Zeist, we were told by an elderly Moravian woman that the Mennonites were a very important factor in Dutch Moravian life. In the 1730s and later, when the Moravians settled in Holland, many Dutch Mennonites were wealthy merchants. One had just purchased a castle, now Zeist's city hall. The Moravians arrived in Holland and were looking for a place to settle. This man gave them a portion of his castle until they were able to develop their own center. Today the *Herrnhut* or Moravian Center is right next to that old castle. She said, also, that Mennonite merchants were very helpful to them. When their missionaries went abroad they often sailed on Mennonite merchant ships, without a charge.

Gerhard Tersteegen is another person you should know. His hymn "O Power of Love" is one I grew up on. How often that hymn has been sung! In my college years, I visited the Bruderthal Church near Hillsboro, Kansas. It's no longer there because the Marion Reservoir now washes on its foundations. Bruderthal was my parents' childhood church. They had a reed organ and a resonant sanctuary. Arnold Funk was the pastor. I recall their singing "Ich bete an die Macht der Liebe" (O Power of Love, All Else Transcending). Old Uncle Paul Monttet sat in the corner to the right of the pulpit and his thundering bass voice gave foundation to those words. It was a memorable expression of the faith of a quiet rural people.

Much, much later I learned who Tersteegen was. He also was a part of that larger Pietist movement of the eighteenth century (1697-1769). He lived near what today is Wuppertal, at Mulheim in Westphalia. He was Reformed in family background, but he withdrew from the church because he found the sins of its members too offensive. He lived a very simple, almost hermit life, earning only enough to sustain himself and devoting his time to an independent ministry to many people who found their way to his cottage. He often preached at the Krefeld Mennonite Church and from 1730 made annual pilgrimages to Amsterdam.

Since I was involved in the restoration of the old van der Smissen cabinet pipe organ, owned by Bethel College's Kauffman Museum, Tersteegen has become even more interesting. He was a good friend of Jacob Teschemacher, who we learned was the builder of that organ. Teschemacher, also a Pietist, lived in Elberfeld, now a part of Wuppertal. An intriguing and unresolved question is, Could Tersteegen have been the contact between Dekknatel in Amsterdam and Teschemacher in Elberfeld?

So far, no valid evidence has come forth. But in the search one becomes aware of the vitality and the vigor of the Pietist movement of that time. It sparked the Wesleyan revival in England and America, the first mission efforts of the Moravians, and the renewal of the church in Germany, Holland, and elsewhere. As this was happening, there was at the same time a very stout resistance to Pietism. In Westphalia, where Tersteegen lived, it was forbidden to hold public meetings. In Holland, many Dutch Reformed leaders openly opposed Pietism—even as Wesleyanism was vigorously resisted in England.

Now, knowing this as the setting, look at Tersteegen's "O Power of Love" or his other hymn in our hymnal, "God Reveals His Presence." Read those words with the new meaning provided by such a background. So strong and so sturdy are those words of affirmation.

Thomas Ken (1637-1711) is another personality to know better. He wrote several hymns in our hymnal, such as 485—"Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun," and 496—"All Praise to Thee, My God." These are morning and evening hymns. They each end with the doxology, "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow." The popular version of this doxology, 606 in the hymnal—called by some the "Mennonite doxology" because it is used so much in some of our churches—is by Thomas Ken.

He would have been a colorful person to know. Ken was Anglican, and he was unafraid to declare his convictions. He was appointed chaplain to the British embassy in The Hague. There he was so outspoken and uncompromising in confronting the loose-

THE MENNONITE seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published weekly except biweekly during July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton, Kansas 67114, by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kansas 67114, and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions in United States and Canada, $9.00, one year, $17.00, two years, $24.00, three years; foreign $9.50 per year. Editorial office 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Canada R3P 0M4. Business office 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

THIS CHOIR SINGS FOR A MILLION

Bernie Wiebe

Quick, can you think of a network TV show that has lasted more than ten years?

Among Canadian television shows, few people would have ever dared to believe that a simple format of sacred songs could provide the script to maintain a TV viewer-rating of one million or more at 5:30 p.m. on Sundays, for thirteen years.

The "Hymn Sing" chorus of sixteen singers began as a largely Mennonite ensemble from Mennonite Brethren Bible College, Winnipeg. In the original group, twelve were Mennonites and the Mennonite participation has been strong all along.

On a recent show the choir sang "Into a Tent Where a Gyspy Boy Lay," and it triggered special letter responses from its electronic congregation. Over the years the letter response to "Hymn Sing" has averaged more than twenty letters per week and has been as high as 7,000 in a year. The audience rating has at times been greater than that of the national news and has never been much under a million. Research shows a typical "Hymn Sing" viewer to be over fifty years old.

David Waters, CBC producer and manager of "Hymn Sing," said in an interview, "Our aim is to present a half hour of good musical entertainment from the whole spectrum of sacred music. The audience response indicates that we do also provide a ministry of sorts."

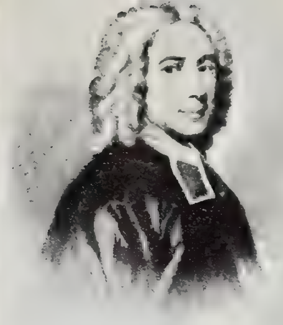
Mrs. Paul Amirault, Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia, commented, "Hymn Sing" is the best show on TV. . . . I hope it will never ever get off the air." Dorothy Parker, Simcoe, Ontario, wrote, "Everything about the show is uplifting . . . ." Mabel Brown, St. Boniface, Manitoba, wrote, "Week by week these programs grow better."

R. J. Rupert, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, said, "Today's program was especially inspiring and touching for me. It awakened many happy as well as sad memories." Another viewer from Berkley, Michigan, addressed his letter, "To the director of the heavenly choir and all the angels."

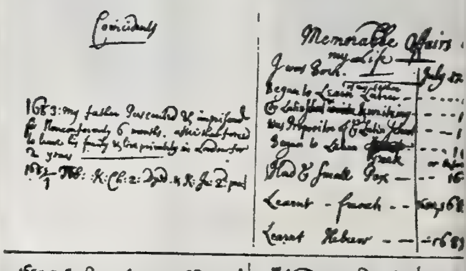
Sylvia Dyck, voice teacher from Winkler, Manitoba, has been a mezzo-soprano with "Hymn Sing" from its beginning. Another Mennonite, Mel Braun, bass singer of Altona, Manitoba, quadruples on piano, oboe, tuba, and guitar.

Some of the older Mennonite viewers say that "Hymn Sing" is the only program they care to watch on TV. For it they don't even mind that it's in the English language instead of in German.

As part of the 1977 twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations of the CBC, former "Hymn Sing" persons were invited to join the chorus for a special celebration at one of the Winnipeg churches.



Left, the Reveren
Isaac Watts. *Belo*
Watts' own hand,
of "memorable a
in his early life.



The Mennonite Hymnal *(cont'd)*

ness and debauchery that he lasted barely a year and was recalled.

He served for a time as chaplain in the court of King Charles II. The king was impressed by his straightforward sermons and said of Ken, a man of slight stature, "Little Ken tells me my faults." Once the king came to Winchester to visit the sumptuous palace he was building there and, among others, brought his mistress Nell Gwynn with him. Ken's house was picked as the best place to lodge Nell. Ken refused to take her. Ken stated, "A woman of ill repute ought not to be endured in the house of a clergyman, least of all in that of the king's chaplain. . . . Not for all his kingdom will I comply with the king's commands." And he didn't.

In 1691 Ken lost his bishopric because he refused to swear fealty to William and Mary. He said that so long as James II lived, to whom he had sworn fealty, he could not in good conscience change his loyalty simply because James had been deposed (unjustly, as Ken felt). All of this underlines the sturdiness of this man and his unbending submission to the dictates of his conscience.

So, sing Ken's hymns with new fervor and enthusiasm.

And, surely you will want to know Isaac Watts (1674-1748). We have thirty-seven of his hymns in our hymnal. Where Ken was Anglican (Church of England), Watts was a Dissenter or Congregationalist. Watts was a little man, five feet tall, with a large head that looked even larger with the wig he wore. He had a hooked nose, small piercing eyes, and a frail and sickly body.

Ill health was his lot, perhaps prenatal in origin. His father, before Isaac's birth, was jailed for "playing the deacon in the Independents' meetinghouse." To be a Dissenter exacted its price. Twice more during Isaac's childhood his father was jailed; and his mother would sit on a stone mounting-block opposite the jail, nursing the infant and conversing with the father.

Isaac was precocious. His father taught him Latin at age four, he learned Greek at eight or nine, French when he was eleven, and Hebrew at age thirteen. He had smallpox when he was nine, and in 1689, at age fifteen, had "a great and dangerous illness."

He was an insatiable reader and was making verses in season and out. His conversation was so amazingly metrical that, after numerous prohibitions against rhyming, his father started to whip him. Isaac cried through his tears:

O Father, do some pity take,
And I will no more verses make.

At twenty-six he became pastor of the Mark Lane Independent Chapel in London. He preached there for twenty-two years. His parishioners loved their brilliant, but sickly, pastor. Later when a parishioner, Sir Thomas Abney, became Lord Mayor of London, Abney invited the sickly Watts to spend a week at his country seat—with surprising results. He remained for thirty-six years. Here he wrote almost all of his hymns, plus some fifty volumes of other works on a wide range of subjects.

At fifteen, Watts had started writing hymns. At the time he said, "The singing of God's praise is the part of worship nighest heaven, and its performance among us is the worst on earth."

Isaac Watts instituted a revolution in English hymnody. It had, until then, been bound to the psalms and was heavy and uninspiring. He substituted hymns "of human composure." There was a great struggle to accept this change; the church had held to using the inspired words of the Bible as the only fit offering of praise that people could make. Watts held that our songs are a human offering of praise to God and thus should be our own. Finally his position was accepted and his hymnody resulted in new life for English worship.

And we continue to use his hymns—so many of them—and they are such excellent material for worship. Some of the Watts hymns are "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"—167; "Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun"—203; "Joy to the World, the Lord Is Come"—122; and "O God Our Help in Ages Past"—84.

MENNONITE CHILDREN'S CHOIR ON TV NETWORK

Bernie Wiebe

The Mennonite musical heritage is also being promoted among our children. Last December 21, the internationally known Mennonite Children's Choir of Winnipeg was featured on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's television network show "Musicamera" in a half-hour concert of Christmas carols.

CBC producer Ernie Zuk put up three sets at Camp Assiniboia (a Mennonite camp near Winnipeg), and featured the choir singing German and English favorites around an outdoor campfire in the snow, inside by the fireplace, and around the harp.

George Einarson, from the CBC public relations office, said that this program brought an unusual letter response, all favorable. A Northfield, Vermont, doctor and his wife wrote: "We were tremendously impressed . . . the diction was remarkably clear, singers obviously were enjoying it, and the repertoire was most extensive."

Donald Hanna, from Mansonville, Quebec, said, ". . . the children's choir from Winnipeg was outstanding. I seldom write about TV programs but am breaking my rule for this production. . . ."

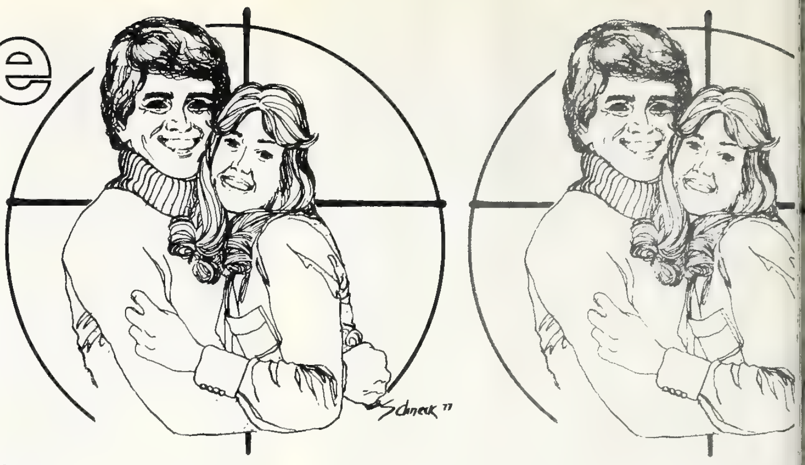
Miss L. F. Reishus, Calgary, Alberta, writes, "Never have I enjoyed a program of Christmas carols as much as I did the Mennonite Children's Choir. Thank you for bringing us such superb singers."

The *Winnipeg Free Press* decided to use a full-color photograph of the choir on the front page of its Christmas issue.

Helen Litz, director of the choir, comments: "I'm happy that people like our performances. But I am even more pleased that many people receive a spiritual ministry through the choir."

The Mennonite Children's Choir, Winnipeg, sings for the Christmas TV special.

Mennonite youth and sexuality—2



Mary Lou Cummings

To gain some insights into the way Mennonite young people view the subject of sexuality among Christians, a questionnaire was sent to a group of Mennonites, ages 17-23. Their responses, submitted anonymously, were identified only by age and sex. A large percentage did not respond, perhaps reflecting the reticence many young people feel about telling us their honest views on this subject.

Growth. In the miraculous creation of our personhood, God created a unique set of checks and balances. He gave us minds to quest, plan, control, study, and think. He also created in us spontaneous, restless, and dynamic emotions that cry out for immediate gratification. In the push and tug of the two, we grow and take shape.

Part of the force for growth is, of course, one's sexuality—often experienced at puberty as an indirect restlessness, melancholy, shifting moods, a desire to be loved, loneliness, and direct sexual desire.

Lewis Smedes, in the well-done *Sex for Christians* (Eerdmans, page 43), says that our basic biological sexual needs motivate us to move to a second and deeper level—to share, develop intimacy, move out of childhood's self-absorption, and experience another person deeply. This relationship-building, in turn, moves us toward a third still deeper level—self-knowledge. Here we work at understanding the mystery of our own self, an assimilation of the first two levels.

Sexuality is God's gift. It is helpful to see that the sexual part of the self is a God-given gift which helps us move beyond ourselves, into union and understanding with another person and our own unknown.

Unfortunately, many of our young people, having heard little or no honest Christian dialogue in this area, have been taught intellectually that "sex is beautiful," but emotionally struggle with its taboos.

"I've found physical needs to be a strong threat to the life of my soul for many years. I was the typical inquisitive teenager who heard all the dirty stories and would look at *Playboy*, and I had a lot of desires to fulfill those physical needs. . . . After becoming a Christian, I found myself on a guilt trip usually. . . . Now that Jesus has my full attention, I don't really think about my physical needs unless I'm thinking about marriage and the gift it is to us. . . . It's then I thank God for sex. . . " (23-year-old male).

"I suspect that many young people have suppressed doubts and questions and have never developed firm beliefs about sexuality. This may lead to feelings of guilt and insecurity later when they begin engaging in sexual activity" (18-year-old female).

"I think that the sex drive is a gift from God. It creates a lot of tension and temptation in my life, but I feel that through this struggle God can help make me a stronger Christian" (19-year-old male).

"As in all aspects of life, for all humans, a Christian's physical needs can be either a 'gift to the life of the soul,' or a tension, a threat, and even a curse. Which it is depends on the attitude of the individual and on how you use what was originally given as a gift" (18-year-old female).

Many of the respondents, speaking of their peers' struggle with sexual behavior, speak in terms of commitment to God. In youth, as among adults, the small minority—those who are in a growing commitment relationship with Christ—rely not on culturally outmoded rules, but on their faith that there is a reason for the Bible's connection between the sexual act and lifetime commitment. They believe that the Christian's view of sexual morality is valid despite the revolutionary advent of contraceptives and antibiotics.

Mennonite youth have some strong Christian ideals about their total sexuality. They want and need the help of parents and other adults in making these ideals into a reality that they, and we, can live with.

"If God tells me to wait, I will wait. What God declares holy, we should keep holy, and if he wants something to be special for us, let us keep it special. I have the promise that what he has planned is far better than I had hoped for" (17-year-old male).

"I want to do what the Bible says. If God really did give us our sexuality as a gift, I want to use it in the way he intended" (19-

year-old male).

"I may not know all the reasons, but I trust that God is perfect and knows what he's doing" (23-year-old male).

Another student says, "While I do not believe that all sex outside marriage is wrong, neither do I feel that sincere affection is enough basis for establishing an intimate relationship. . . . A deeply caring commitment must come before sexual intercourse . . . whether this is in the form of a legal contract or a very private agreement is irrelevant" (18-year-old female).

These young people generally agree with Smedes, who suggests that just as taking communion—without intending to accept God's death for us—is acting out a lie, so intercourse—with no intention for real committed, ongoing union—is acting out a lie. It is trying to skip a step in order to achieve the end—fulfillment—without the commitment which gives it meaning.

Nevertheless, they are also quick to point out that sex is not the unforgivable sin. It is only one of the many areas of our lives that needs to be brought into a consistency with the lordship of Christ and with the brotherhood and sisterhood we have with each other.

"I think Jesus is saying that each man and woman should be looked at as a human being, with deep and fragile feelings; not as an object to be used—sexually *or* for economic *or* social gain" (18-year-old female).

"We should make the promises and claims of Jesus well-known; then there is hope that our young people will see that Christ can and will fulfill their needs . . ." (23-year-old male).

"Jesus was a man, too, and I'm sure he was as much a sexual being as the rest of us. He showed us that whole persons aren't ones who have sex with everybody they meet, but that in finding and sharing his love, we will become the kind of persons that God made us to be" (19-year-old male).

Sexuality is special. "The motivation to engage in sexual activities comes from the desire created in us for love. We need to love and be loved, but we keep teaching ourselves how to be mindlessly and heartlessly efficient. . . . When I do not show people that I love them in the way that Christ showed me, I drive them to find their fulfillment in sex. As the Body of Christ forgets to show love, it will lose its younger members as they search to find some other kind of pleasure . . ." (17-year-old male).

"There is something special about sexual intercourse, a depth of mutual understanding and openness that should not be shared outside of marriage, outside of a deeper commitment. This gift, this potentiality, should not be squandered on just anyone—some things were meant to be special, and this is one, I guess" (19-year-old male).

"As an unmarried person, I often wonder why God gave me such a large sex drive—if I'm not supposed to actively express my sexuality. But I have the feeling that when (if) I get married, it will be obvious that such an intimate sharing is only for two persons who are bound and committed to each other for life. I'm anxious for that time to come, but in the meantime, I know that sex is only a small part of the whole person" (17-year-old male).

Youth are lonely. What are the forces that move single persons into sexual activity? In some cases, coitus is a vehicle for rebellion and hostility. But in others it is motivated by something deeper.

"It is, I think, a mistake to suppose that single people are all lustfully rushing to get into bed with someone. What is happening is that single people are infected with a terrible loneliness, and the filling of that closeness gap is uppermost in their needs and desires . . . . They are looking for a chance to experience the reality of a personal, trusting, and complete communion; and they have been led to think that sexual intercourse has the most intense promise of providing it" (Smedes, pages 112-113).

Each of the responses indicated that the widespread and deep needs for closeness and commitment are something that Christianity could, and should, relate to. There were also specific requests that the church solicit solid input from psychologists, etc., on how to deal with homosexuality.

"I feel there's a lot of ignorant judgment going on . . . " says one. Another writes, "Living in the Chicago area and walking around the Old and New Town sections and seeing homosexuals and transvestites, I'm lost on their reasons for it, and on how to witness to it. . . . We need insights into solving the complex problems on dealing with and accepting these people. . . ."

Two other observations need study by Christians: Our young people feel a lot of fear about making lifetime commitments in a rapidly changing world. Restraint, though called for in the church, is being experienced less and less. Mennonite youth have some strong ideals about their total sexuality. They want and need our help in making these ideals into a reality that they, and we, can live with. *Second article in a series of two*

News

Saskatchewan undecided on camps

Swift Current—Saskatchewan Mennonites continue to make waves about summer camps. This year's annual conference, February 24-25 at the Zion Mennonite Church, was expected to chart new directions for the camping program of the 4,300-member Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan. But delegates waffled on a decision made last year to move ahead with new camp facilities.

In 1977 the conference instructed the provincial education committee to make plans for one campsite, and to phase out the three campsites the conference operates at Elim, Pike Lake, and Rosthern. The committee went to work, investigated several locations, and came to Swift Current with a recommendation to purchase a river-front 484-acre site for $110,000 twenty miles north of Saskatoon. The recommendation was squashed. Yet, in other action delegates approved the sale of the two-acre Pike Lake campsite to the provincial government for $57,500. Further, in contradiction to their thinking in 1977, they affirmed the continued operation of the two remaining sites, Elim and Rosthern.

Supporters of the one-camp concept fought a tug-of-war throughout the conference. In one form or another three motions asked delegates to authorize purchase of land for a new camp. The first two were defeated. A two-thirds majority was called for and accepted on both votes.

However, in the last hours of the meeting, a third motion, passed by simple majority, directs the education committee to look at another site, or the same site, and then go to the churches for approval. This motion was passed when approximately fifty of the 130 delegates had already left. In the light of earlier votes, conference officials were left wondering what this decision really meant.

Friday evening, members of Grace Mennonite Church, Regina, presented the 2½-hour musical "Chasing the Wind."

The yo-yo action was not governed by cost factors. In fact, the Saskatchewan churches, with the sale of the Pike Lake property, have about $75,000 on hand to invest in a camp. Some delegates didn't like the river location for safety reasons. Others spoke for a camp in northern Saskatchewan, among pine trees and lakes.

But the main thorn in the body was theology. About half of the delegates consistently favored a site and a program which views camping as part of the Christian education effort of the church. Other delegates alleged that this meant a camping philosophy devoid of evangelism.

Conference treasurer Werner Zacharias said, "We have mixed up our theology and our campsite." John Janzen, pastor, asked, "Are we trying to solve a problem over theology with a facility?"

Others wondered how to meet the needs of various groups within the conference. One delegate noted, "If we don't get with it in camps we will lose our children to other denominational camps." Another suggested, "We don't all have to have the same camp philosophy."

"Nineteen seventy-seven has been the best financial year we've had," reported treasurer Zacharias. Donations from the forty-one churches making up the conference were $5,000 over budget at $184,000. Additional income from investments, farm operations, and an $8,000 estate donation brought receipts to $233,000, about $13,000 over expenditures. This surplus, added to a carry-over from 1976 of $40,000, provided a book balance of $53,000 at year-end 1977. About a third of the reserve is tagged for a campsite. Delegates approved, with little discussion, a 1978 budget of $242,000 which anticipates using $30,000 from reserves.

Decisions in ministries other than camps came easier. The Swift Current Bible Institute (SCBI) board was authorized to buy additional land as a buffer against commercial enterprises which could be built next to the campus. The board was also given the green light to solicit funds for capital improvements. The board expects to build dormitory facilities but will come back to the conference for final approval, probably next year.

Discussion about SCBI program had to be prodded. Board chairman John Bueckert observed that a motion on whether to sell 400 acres of farmland owned by the conference near Rosthern received more discussion than the program of SCBI. After this comment several delegates cautioned against SCBI becoming more specialized in its curriculum. They said the school should not become an institution for training pastors.

The 400 acres will not be sold. Further, the conference placed a five-year moratorium on the sale of the 640-acre parcel of land on which the Mennonite Youth Farm and Mennonite Nursing Home in Rosthern are located. The votes reflected sentiments among the delegates that the land is serving a worthwhile purpose in various Christian ministries, and that other land-based ministries could evolve in the future. "The land," said Christian service board member Walter Funk, "is an expression of Christian community ownership."

Youth ministries were also given attention. One resolution calls upon the executive of the Saskatchewan Conference to study the feasibility of provincewide youth programming. The education committee is also moving ahead with a series of seminars to encourage Mennonite youth to learn after high school. "Our high school youth need counseling about the benefits of higher education," stated committee member Esther Petkau.

Radio ministries will be expanded in cooperation with the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba. Church planting will be explored, although Regina pastor Erick Sawatzky wondered whether the idea of establishing a second church in that city simply meant taking members out of his congregation. Another delegate asked whether church planting was simply for whites, and suggested that the conference needed to work with the Native Ministries Board of the Canadian Conference.

Benno Klassen, farmer, and deacon in the Tiefengrund Mennonite Church, was elected chairman for 1978. He succeeds Henry Funk, pastor of the Drake congregation.

Approximately half of the $242,000 budget for 1978 is subsidy for the two schools—SCBI and Rosthern Junior College—which the conference relates to. The balance is to be spent mainly in ministries to offenders and to the aged, for camps, a conference pastor, and a hospital chaplain. *Vic Reimer*

Ontario divided over school issues

Staff of the Welcome Inn voluntary service unit at Hamilton, Ontario, do a choral reading presentation that describes the mission of their work. The audiovisual sign on the right reinforced the words by adding signs which elaborated the theme "I Am the One Who."

"You are our missions and service committee for the United Mennonite Conference of Ontario (UMCO), but your work does not relate to those issues which are the sore spots in our congregations. We need help on divorce, remarriage, abortion, birth control, and alcohol usage. Why don't you speak to these issues?" This was one delegate's response to the missions and service report at the annual provincial conference sessions held at Leamington, Ontario, February 17-19.

It was explained that the General Conference is working on resolutions about divorce, remarriage, and abortion; and Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) continues to study the problem of alcoholism among Mennonites. Also, the theme of the 1978 conference was "The Christian Life in the Familial Dimension," with addresses by Bernie Wiebe on family issues.

Peter Janzen, chairman of the missions and service committee, stated that "the time for missions is now. New opportunities are facing us at home and abroad. It is too bad that just when these opportunities are here, our budgets have not been met. More giving is needed."

Delegates from the 5,000 members in seventeen Ontario churches gave major discussion to three issues: (1) a proposal to join the Rockway Mennonite School Association (RMSA) as a supporting conference by appointing two board members and budgeting $1,500 for the school in 1978; (2) a recommendation from the Inter-Mennonite Conference to amalgamate UMCO, the Western Ontario Mennonite Conference, and the Mennonite Conference of Ontario over a period of five years; (3) a resolution that the $4.35-per-member levy for Conrad Grebel College (CGC) be increased to $7.50 per member.

When the first Rockway proposal was defeated, a new resolution was made to include in the budget an amount equal to $100 for every UMCO student attending private schools. This money would be made available when congregations submitted student lists to the conference. It would be paid toward tuition wherever the students attended.

Discussion was divided about this new resolution. Conference chairman H. P. Epp finally said, "I feel that the emotions are too high on this issue. Neither result will be widely acceptable. We need time for further study and clarification. I ask for a tabling motion." The motion came and passed.

The inter-Mennonite merger never got to the resolution stage. Instead, a motion was passed "that the UMCO executive appoint a committee to prepare a paper on the pros and cons of amalgamation, which is to be submitted to congregations for study in preparation for the 1979 conference."

Leonard Epp, CGC board member, reported that the college had an operating deficit of $77,000 in 1977. This was largely covered through cash reserves. Projections were that the 1978 deficit could be as high as $40,000. The other conferences were raising their levies above the former $4.35 per member.

A resolution to raise the UMCO levy from $4.35 to $6.00 for 1978 was defeated. Later, in the budget discussion, a new resolution was introduced to give permission for CGC to solicit extra money directly from individuals in the conferences. This motion was passed after another round of heavy discussion.

Other action by the UMCO delegates included approval to investigate possible establishment of a Mennonite Insurance Service for church buildings and liability; approval for the Silver Lake Camp board and the UMCO executive to plan a process for conference takeover of the camp; approval of the $114,000 budget for 1978; and election of Peter Janzen, pastor of Faith Mennonite Church in Leamington, as new conference chairman.

It was noted that the UMCO is without a conference minister, a youth worker, and a student services worker. No immediate plans were announced about these vacancies. *Bernie Wiebe*

Believers' churches in Canada to hold conference

Winnipeg—For the first time, church leaders and scholars representing Canadian denominations in the believers' church tradition will meet for an important invitational study conference in Winnipeg, May 15-18. The conference is sponsored by the Baptist Federation of Canada and Mennonite Central Committee (Canada). Observers from other major Christian communions will be present as well.

Four conference objectives have been stated as follows: (1) to evaluate the major contributions of the free-church tradition in Canada; (2) to examine the present state of these communions and their impact upon life in Canada; (3) to consider the future witness of the believers' church in Canada; (4) to worship and fellowship together with brothers and sisters in Christ. More than fifty Canadian scholars and church leaders will deliver addresses, present seminar papers, or prepare critical responses. Mennonites will make a major contribution to the program.

Conference addresses and papers will be published in book form and thus made available for wider study by individuals and churches.

Apart from two evening rallies open to the public, attendance is by invitation. Denominational quotas have been set in order to safeguard balanced representation. If you wish to receive more information about the program, costs, and registration, write to Daniel Zehr, 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8.

Personnel, funds authorized for India

Akron, Pennsylvania—Authorizing expenditures of up to $500,000 through 1978, Mennonite Central Committee has designated an experienced disaster couple for a three-year term in cyclone-battered India. Shorter-term personnel and several food-for-work projects will also be funded.

At the beginning of February, MCC sent $100,000 to India through Village Reconstruction Organization (VRO). During the emergency phase $40,000 was spent. Some funds were used to support volunteer teams from the Mennonite Christian Service Fellowship of India (MCSFI) for survey and cleanup. Other funds went for purchase of blankets, medicines, and for repairs and other emergency needs. Besides sending funds, MCC supplied the services of disaster-coordinator Paul Kennel.

The remaining $60,000 is being used to fund the second phase of the program involving rehabilitation and reconstruction in the villages.

Asia secretary Vern Preheim and J. M. Klassen, executive secretary of MCC (Canada), participated in a program reevaluation and planning session when they visited India February 27 to March 11.

The Asia office of MCC has also announced the appointment of administrative personnel to Gunter where the VRO offices are located. Going to India in June will be Fred and Minh Kauffman, who have had experience in the Guatemala earthquake disaster program. Fred will serve as project coordinator between MCC and VRO, thus releasing Kennel to resume broader assignments in responding to needs throughout southeast Asia.

Additional personnel include Kathy Good, former office manager at Akron, Pennsylvania, headquarters, who arrived in India February 1 to help in the VRO office for approximately six months or longer. Willard and Selma Unruh, North Newton, Kansas, transferred from Nepal to India February 10 to help for three months in reconstruction. Harold and Marianne Penner, Arnaud, Manitoba, are also assigned for a projected three-months period before going to Bangladesh.

The Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu along the eastern coast of India were battered by cyclones on November 12, 19, 22, and 23, 1977. The worse disaster occurred in Andhra Pradesh from the November 19 cyclone.

To date an estimated thirty to eighty thousand are dead and two million people are reported homeless. The cyclones have also caused loss of property to some eight million people.

Harder to head curriculum project

Harder

Helmut Harder, Winnipeg, Manitoba, has accepted a two-year assignment as executive director of a youth-adult curriculum project sponsored by five Mennonite and Brethren denominations.

The curriculum project, building on the experience of The Foundation Series for children, will provide a believers' church curriculum for high school youth, and a three- or four-year "core curriculum" for adults. Materials are scheduled to become available by September 1981.

Harder has served as chairman of the editorial council of The Foundation Series and has written various Bible study materials for the Commission on Education of the General Conference. Currently he is an associate professor of theology at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg.

Interest in a new adult and youth curriculum has emerged, in part, from the concern of whether believers' churches, with an emphases on discipleship and adult conversion and commitment, should invest a half million dollars on children's curriculum—The Foundation Series—and not give equal effort to adult education concerns. The five denominations which have said there is a similar need for youth and adults are the Brethren in Christ, Church of the Brethren, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Brethren, and Mennonite Church.

Four of these groups agreed in 1977 to become cooperative publishers for this project. The Mennonite Brethren involvement will be as cooperative users.

According to the proposal, the four-year high school curriculum will replace the Uniform Series youth Bible study guides presently in use by several of the denominations. The three-year adult "core curriculum" will be considered an alternative to the Uniform Series curriculum. The Uniform Series International Lessons will still be available.

There is also a general concern that the curriculum focus on the unique aspects of the Anabaptist-believers' church tradition and understanding of the Bible. This is not to be simply another Protestant or evangelical curriculum.

In organizing for the project two groups have been formed: a publishing council to deal with budget, administration, and scheduling; and an editorial council to deal with theological, educational, and editorial concerns.

Harder will work from a Winnipeg office, although the details of the employment arrangements are still to be arranged with the publishing council and Canadian Mennonite Bible College, from which Harder has a sabbatical leave beginning in July 1978.

Black leadership needs stressed

"There is a great need for leadership development for black churches," according to Eugene Seals, Dayton, Ohio, founder of the James H. Lark Fund for Leadership Development at Goshen (Indiana) College.

Seals said in a recent interview that the real need for black leadership is at the congregational level. Many pulpits are vacant, and pastors now working within the congregations shoulder heavier responsibility than they should.

There is a parallel need for black leadership in the local institutions formed to meet needs in the community, he said. Blacks should also be utilized in conference and denominational agencies as witness to the universality of the gospel.

"We need to reassess current delivery systems," Seals said. "There is a notion that black colleges have traditionally done the best job of developing blacks for leadership and effective support roles. But these schools do not teach certain important concepts such as the believers' church vision, peace, and voluntarism."

What aggressive role can Mennonite institutions of higher education take? Seals suggested that administrators and faculty create courses dealing with the sociology, psychology, and anthropology of black people; American and world history from a black perspective; church management; the gospel as it speaks to the black subculture; and the history of Mennonites in the black community.

He also suggested publicity of financial aid options, the use of counselors sensitive to issues important to blacks, and an interim reference group of students and local black Mennonites who would have semiannual audiences with college officials.

Words & deeds

Menno Travel Service has chartered an aircraft for persons interested in traveling from the East Coast to Wichita, Kansas, in connection with the tenth Mennonite World Conference, July 25-31. The Boeing 707 jet, chartered from American Airlines, will depart Philadelphia on Tuesday, July 25, returning on Monday, July 31. This schedule will enable interested persons to participate in all sessions of the conference. Cost is $168 per person, a saving of more than 30 percent over the current coach fare. For further information or booking, contact Menno Travel Service, 102 East Main Street, Ephrata, Pennsylvania 17522, phone (717) 733-4131 or (717) 626-1600.

"Evangelism is part and parcel of Mennonite theology and life-style," said Myron Augsburger during a seminar of thirty Mennonite evangelists held in Smoketown, Pennsylvania, February 2-4. He asserted that in each century since the beginning of the Mennonite church there have been significant evangelistic movements. The seminar participants affirmed the servant role in evangelism, the need for every Christian to be evangelistic, the importance of speaking to felt needs of society, and the evangelist's need to relate to a home church. It was pointed out that Mennonites need to develop evangelism as they have their peace witness. The seminar was sponsored by the Mennonite Christian Leadership Foundation of Landisville, Pennsylvania.

More-with-Less Cookbook, by Doris Janzen Longacre (Herald Press, 1976), is outselling all other cookbooks in the seventy stores of the Logos Bookstore chain, according to a Logos spokesman. The Division for Parish Services of the Lutheran Church in America, Philadelphia, is sending 2,000 free copies of the cookbook to the pastors of that denomination.

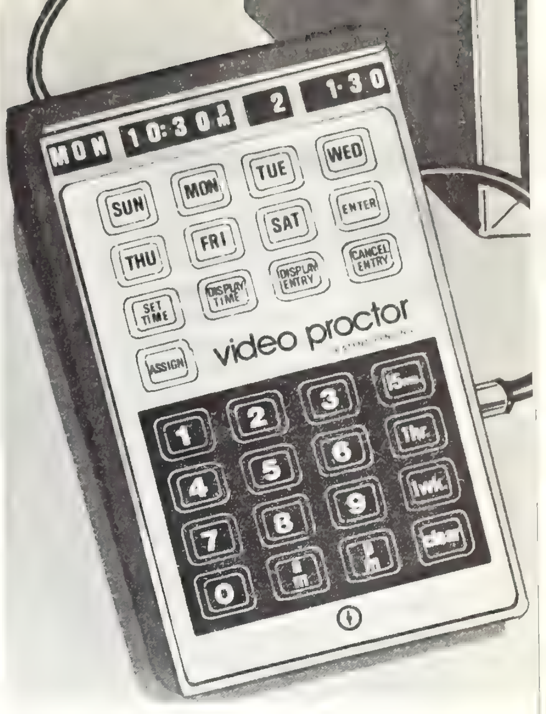
Mennonite Mutual Aid's seventeen-member board of directors recently was granted longer tenure by the General Board of the Mennonite Church, parent body of MMA. Directors now may serve continuously up to twelve years instead of eight consecutive years as before. This will allow "greater continuity for the board to better serve our congregations," said William Dunn, board chairperson. Gordon Schmidt, board member for the General Conference, is among those affected by the longer tenure. Among board members terminating in November 1977 was Howard Raid of Bluffton, Ohio, who had served a total of twelve years as General Conference representative. To further improve MMA services, the mutual aid program and the field services committee have been combined to form the mutual aid services committee. George Dyck of Newton, Kansas, is chairperson of the committee. Dyck and Wayne Clemens, chairperson of the finance committee, have been added to the board's executive committee, increasing it from five to seven members. Other executive members are William Dunn, William Zuercher, Miriam Weaver, Edwin Karber, and Gordon Schmidt.

Around 140 persons attended the workshop on worship January 30-February 3 sponsored by Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana. Plans are already under way for a January 29-February 2 workshop for 1979 on the theme "The Pastor as Person, 'Professional,' and Man of Prayer in the Believers' Church."

Mennonite Hispanic Immigration Service (Centro de Immigracion Menonita) opened last month in Washington, D.C. Sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee US Ministries, the new office will gather information relating to immigration and legislation and share it with local congregations, and will work at consciousness raising in non-Hispanic Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. The service adjoins the MCC Peace Section Washington office in the Methodist Building, 100 Maryland Avenue Northeast, Washington, D.C. 20002.

Zaire—Rabbits and home economics are not usually connected, but at a girls' training school in Nyanga teacher Lodema Short combined the need for improved nutrition with a rabbit project. The girls received help from SEDA, the church-related agricultural development ministry which has promoted rabbit husbandry for years. Her home is also used for Bible studies by the girls, and on two consecutive Sundays near the end of 1977 a total of nine students accepted the Lord. Also from Zaire, missionary Elmer Dick tells of gasoline selling as high as $350 per fifty-five-gallon barrel, when available. "Such a price," he writes, "hardly fits into a mission budget. Unless the present trend can be controlled, our entire style of doing things will have to be drastically changed."

Giving to Bluffton (Ohio) College's annual fund in the first six months of the 1977-78 fiscal year has exceeded its projected goal by $17,500, according to Richard Ramseyer, director of development and public affairs. In the first six months, ending December 31, 1977, Bluffton received $92,197. This year's goal is $240,000, the largest in the college's history. According to Ramseyer, the increased giving is crucial this year due to increased energy costs, minimum wage increases, and a $58,000 carryover deficit from 1976-77.



Device controls viewing

This electronic censoring device for home television sets has been designed to enable parents to regulate the number of hours and kinds of programs their children may watch on TV. The miniature computer, which has been dubbed the "Video Proctor," is hooked to a TV set and "programmed" so objectionable programs cannot be viewed. If a child switches to an excluded program the screen remains blank and the audio silent. It is expected to sell for under $50 and be on the market in one year.

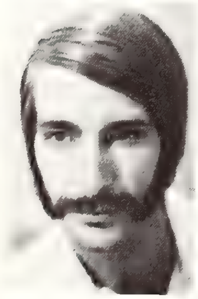
A second set of Proverbs radio spots is now ready for youth and congregational leaders to place on local stations. The first set of fourteen Proverbs spots has been, or is being, used on about ninety stations. The short announcements paraphrase wisdom sayings of the Bible to help youth and other weekday listeners evaluate and choose Christian values. Youth or congregational leaders who are interested in placing the announcements on stations either on free or paid time may write to Lois Hertzler, Mennonite Broadcasts, Box 1252, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801.

Record

Workers

Henry Dueck has resigned as director of Grosvenor Place, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Grosvenor Place, sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee, consists of two Winnipeg residences housing twelve men assigned there by the courts in lieu of prison sentences. Henry and Marie Dueck served as houseparents in one of the residences for the initial two years of the Grosvenor project. For the past five years he has been coordinator of the total program. Prior to his assignment with MCC he served as principal of Elim Bible Institute in Altona while also pastoring the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference congregation there. The Duecks plan on assuming responsibilities with the EMMC mission board.

Max Ediger, Liberal, Kansas, has begun a three-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Thailand. He will be functioning as MCC contact person on loan to the Church of Christ in Thailand. It is expected that Max will be seconded to a government hospital for rehabilitation of drug addicts. He has served previously with MCC in Vietnam for six years. Ediger is a graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.


Ediger

Hybels

Ginny Hybels, Kalamazoo, Michigan, is beginning a two-year term with the General Conference's Mennonite Voluntary Service in Clinton, Oklahoma. She will be responsible for youth activities at the Youth Service Center in Clinton. A graduate in social work from Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas, she has experience in teaching English to Vietnamese refugees. Ginny is a member of Maple Hill Community Church, Kalamazoo. Her parents are Harold and Jerri Hybels, Kalamazoo.

James Nickel, Dauphin, Manitoba, began ten months of work in home repair with the Wichita (Kansas) unit of Mennonite Voluntary Service in November 1977. James is a 1977 high school graduate, and is a member of First Baptist Church, Dauphin. His parents are Jacob and Hilda Nickel, Dauphin.

Nickel

Voth

Pat Voth, Hesston (Kansas) Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, is beginning one year of voluntary service with the General Conference as a recreation worker in Hammon, Oklahoma. He has attended Bethel College, North Newton, and worked in a variety of jobs. His parents are Melvin and Ellen Voth of Hesston.

Calendar

April 16-18—Dunamis Institute, Dayspring retreat, Church of the Savior, Washington, D.C.

April 28-30—Biennial convention, Mennonite Camping Association, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario

Canadian

May 6—Annual meeting, Manitoba Women in Mission, Winkler

Eden Mental Health Centre, Winkler, Manitoba, invites applications from nurses (RPNs or RNs with psychiatric experience) to work in an established community-centered psychiatric hospital. Direct inquiries to the Director of Nursing, Eden Mental Health Centre, Box 1300, Winkler, Manitoba, R0G 2X0. Phone (204) 325-4325.

An evangelism seminar is scheduled April 5-7 at the Mayfair Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Resource persons are Floyd Bartel, Don Yoder, Lynn Liechty, and Dennis M. Oliver. Registration fee is $15 with traveling bursaries available. Write Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Letters

Divorce and forgiveness

Dear Editor: I have been following your articles and letters on the issue of divorce and remarriage with great interest. All items, both positive and negative, have been helpful and enlightening. However, Eugene Thiessen's letter, "Bible Clear on Divorce" (January 17 issue), saddened me. I have difficulty understanding a God who forgives with strings attached. I cannot feature a God who does not forgive completely. I cannot believe that God would say to me, "I forgive you for what you have done, but you cannot serve in the church and you must not remarry."

I did not experience a forgiveness like this from the members of the congregation I attended and still attend. When people can forgive unconditionally, how much more can and does our ever-loving God forgive. I cherish and appreciate the love and forgiveness that my God and fellow human beings have given me, and I accept this love and forgiveness humbly and completely.

I believe that God forgave all mankind long ago when he sent Jesus to live and die for us on this earth. It is up to us to open up a relationship with him and accept his forgiveness. *Pete Dyck, 1311 Osler Street, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 0V1*

February 6

Creation and evolution

Dear Editor: Amen to Perry Yoder's article on creation and evolution (January 17 issue). When are we evangelical Bible-believing Christians going to stop spending our energy on trying to disprove evolution? We have such a short life for Bible study and fellowship and so many unanswered scriptural questions, especially as we read the great theologian Paul. Let's all say amen to Yoder's stand on the relative lack of importance of the subject. You know it, I know it, and God knows that his Word is written in the Bible, and that his Word explains the great *why* or meaning in life, while the scientist's theories attempt to explain *how* it might have happened. Both can exist, side by side. *Robert O. Cummings, Route 5, Box 348, Quakertown, Pennsylvania 18951*

February 6

God's Word on creation

Dear Editor: In the January 17 issue, the article "Creation and Evolution" says there is no conflict between the Genesis story and evolution. How can you say that?

Evolution says higher forms of life evolved from lower forms of life and that people evolved from animals.

The Bible says man was created in the image of God and formed out of the dust of the ground. There is a conflict here. My question is: Which do you believe, God's Word or human theory?

The issue at stake here is whether we accept God's Word as the final authority. Jesus said, "I am the Way, the *Truth* (italics mine), and the Light" (John 14:6). This is a statement we must face, and then decide if we accept God as the source of all truth. If we don't accept the first story in the Bible as it is written, we throw doubt on all the other Scripture as well.

This issue is something I have spent much time thinking about. It wasn't easy to come to a decision, but I had no peace of mind until I accepted the Bible as truth. Now I have a conviction that I won't compromise. *Erland R. Thieszen, Henderson, Nebraska 68371*

February 7

Some comments

Dear Editor: Good intentions that never get done are worthless. I have thought many times of sharing some thoughts and observations.

The Mennonite is received here and read with much interest and, as can be expected, with more interest in some pieces than others. The diversity within the fellowship, however, reveals a rather wide gap on many issues.

My wife and I and four other members from our church community had the privilege of attending the 1977 General Conference in Bluffton. It was a very impressive experience. Participation in the conference deeply amplifies the significance of the February 10-14 sessions in Newton. A united prayer support in behalf of the leadership should certainly receive top priority by the constituency. The decisions to be made are far reaching and must have God's guidance through the leading of the Holy Spirit. Intercessory petitions to God on behalf of others is a vital ministry.

The conference theme, "Family in Focus," was very appropriate and timely. The editorial series on Christian familial relationships was overdue. It appears many times that the emphasis of our priorities is more on salvage than prevention (for example, divorce and remarriage, abortion, offender ministry, and unwed mothers). Needs, true, and worthy ministries, but cannot the church give more help to minimize the increasing numbers of victims? Seldom is the virtue of chastity and the sin of adultery presented as a prevention of marital failures, abortions, and unwed pregnancies. The absolutes of God's Word to man cannot be ignored.

The resolution on TV has received no coverage, to my knowledge. Our society is beginning to become aware of the *power* of the tube. Secular publications are editorializing about its influence (*U.S. News and World Report*, November 21, 1977, issue, and others); the polls are revealing attitudes that are of concern to the networks and sponsors; many church groups are taking action; and Christian periodicals are publicizing the need for awareness (*Christian Herald*, February 1978 issue, and others).

The resource material suggested in resolution 21-22, III, 9, has not been reviewed or even mentioned in *The Mennonite* to my knowledge. The amendment to the original resolution was presented because the violence part of TV programming is only one of several negative values constantly drilled into the minds of viewers. *The Plug-In Drug, Television, Children, and the Family* is written from a psychological and sociological base and the strong reference to the family and the development of values by adults, and especially children, made it a natural for the conference. Disciplined use of the TV is a preventive measure that needs to be emphasized.

To me, J. Winfield Fretz's addresses on the family were masterpieces. Is there not some way that they can be made available to the congregations for in-depth study and application?

Is not an affirmative position to Anita Bryant's courageous efforts against the unlimited sphere of degradation by the media justified?

I appreciated very much Ralph Lebold's "Evangelism in Dispersion" (October 25, 1977, issue). It is a real challenge to integrated believing and living. Also, Edgar Stoesz's "When Is Enough Enough?" (November 1, 1977, issue) lays the whole materialistic bundle in our laps.

P.S. This letter did not get mailed before the January 31 issue was received, so I will add a postscript. The influence of the spiritual family values upon the biological family, as listed in Paul M. Lederach's book, included the deficiencies I mentioned in my letter. Maybe it's a start to an expanded admonition about the "homogenization of the sacred and the profane," as Brother Fretz would identify many of the values accepted today as the norm or right.

Also, Gary Franz's comments about the agriculture strike and the Christian farmer are very discerning and courageous. I agree with him. *James Elliott, Route 1, Box 137, Versailles, Missouri 65084*

February 7

Forgiveness and repentance

Dear Editor: When reading "Abraham—The First Mennonite?" (January 4 issue), I was strongly reminded of the passage in Matthew 15:1-9. The Pharisees had set up "progressive" laws to supersede a direct command of the Lord, and Jesus was not exactly amused by it.

Klassen sets Abraham as an example to us; he is concerned for the citizens of Sodom and he pleads for them. This argument is in complete accord with the New Testament. We, too, are admonished to love and show consideration to all fellow people, irrespective of their background.

But, in the second last paragraph, Klassen advances an argument that is rather surprising. "Abraham desired that the righteous be allowed to live with the unrighteous. Too often we, calling ourselves children of Abraham and Menno and followers of Jesus, would like to have the wicked destroyed from amongst us—removed to prisons or *banished out of our churches.* What hope is there for their redemption if they are removed from the community of God's love?"

The state churches usually interpreted the parable of the tares in Matthew 13 as justifying the retention of sinners in the church, for the Lord commanded to let the wheat and tares grow together until the harvest. The Anabaptists, however, held that the parable of the wheat and tares supports the principle of toleration. Saints and sinners should be allowed to live together *in the world* until Christ's return. The church, however, should restrict its membership to converted people who take the Christian life seriously, and who give evidence of newness of life in Christ.

To the Anabaptists, church discipline was of the utmost importance. Menno Simons wrote three books dealing with this topic. They are *A Kind Admonition of Church Discipline, 1541; A Clear Account on Excommunication, 1550;* and *Instruction on*

Excommunication, 1558. His recurring topic is "To be the church calls for biblical discipline, and such discipline must proceed according to the Word of God, and not according to human laws and standards."

In *Articles of Faith of the Mennonites in Canada,* compiled and revised in 1930, in section 16 dealing with church discipline, we read: "We believe and confess that, according to the command of Jesus and the teaching of the apostles, members of the church who live in gross sin and works of the flesh must come under the discipline of the church according to Matthew 18:15-17 . . . and Galatians 5:19-21. In these cases there should be an immediate ban from the church according to 1 Corinthians 5:7 and 13, or if there is true repentance and remorse, he shall be required to make an open confession or repentance before the assembled church according to 1 Timothy 5:20.

"Connected with the ban is avoidance of the punished one according to 1 Corinthians 5, and 2 Thessalonians 3, although we should be careful that hate and enmity may not develop due to avoidance (2 Thessalonians 3:15). If a banned member confesses his sin and shows true fruits of repentance, then we consider it our Christian duty to accept him into the church again (2 Corinthians 2:6-10)."

In the catechism used by our congregations for generations, question 166 asks: "What is to be done with those who will not obey or those who live in coarse sin?" The answer given is: "Such a one is to be excommunicated from the congregation and is to be avoided in order that he may be ashamed" (Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15).

When our congregations have taken this stand and followed this practice for generations, it was not because "they found gratification in the punishment of the wicked," but because they desired to be obedient to the Word of God. Modern talk about "we are the forgiving community" is no more than the unwillingness and possibly the inability to take a stand against evil. It agrees with the general permissiveness of our time. But there is no forgiveness. God does not forgive unless there first has been repentance and separation from known sin.

Regarding such situations, Menno Simons wrote in 1558: "It is evident that the congregation or church cannot continue in the saving doctrine, in an unblamable and pious life, without the proper use of excommunication. For as a city without walls and gates, or a field without trenches and fences, and a house without walls and doors, so is also a church which has not the true apostolic exclusion or ban." *Gerhard Lohrenz, 261 Renfrew Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2N 1J5* February 10

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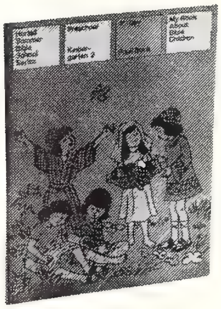

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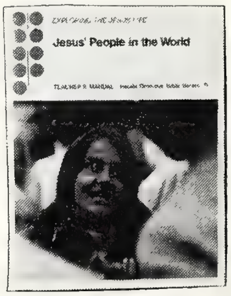

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Meditation

Blizzards in the kitchen

During a recent snowstorm, some mothers wondered if the blizzard was out-of-doors or inside the house. One mother said, "If I ever see snow again, it will be too soon. The children were off school six days and I didn't get a thing done." For that mother the blizzard outside spelled chaos. At our house the kitchen floor was speckled with flour and it may have looked like the blizzard was indoors. The children were trying out new cookie recipes.

I'm wondering if the training of children includes the use of our kitchens. Letting children learn to bake and cook means allowing them to become self-sufficient in that area. It also means learning the difference between baking powder and baking soda (one sour tasting batch of cookies did that job very well). And we discovered that the birds are still willing to eat them! Those black cookies also taught our daughter that the oven control should be on bake—not broil.

An acquaintance recently said, "My sister desired so much to work in the kitchen that one day she actually locked her mother out of the kitchen and herself in. Mother would not allow any of the children to bake or cook. We were allowed to wash dishes and clean, but not to use the stove." She wished that she had had the courage of her sister. Instead, she learned by observing her mother very carefully. The tasty date pudding, which she served me, was proof that she had managed to learn the art of cooking, even without mother's direct help.

Parents understand the importance of teaching children about personal hygiene and other things, but when it comes to teaching children things in the kitchen, some parents leave the total responsibility of this learning experience to home economics teachers.

The time I have spent in the kitchen with our children, ages twelve, ten, and five, is reaping yummy dividends. Our ten-year-old daughter has learned to bake delicious peanut butter cookies. Being able to bake and cook has provided our children with opportunities to serve God. For example, our name is on a baking list at church to help provide cookies for retreats. The children who attend these retreats are potential delinquents or first offenders, and the retreats are part of a rehabilitation program. My husband and I also encourage the children to bake cookies for relief sales and for camp.

The children especially love to make cut-out cookies for Easter, Christmas, and other holidays. Last Christmas, they made cookies for residents of the Fort Wayne State Hospital and Training Center. They took the cookies to a party, sponsored by the women of our church, for ten mentally retarded residents who could not be with their families.

One of the highlights of that evening was to watch the expressions on the faces of the residents as they took the lids off the boxes of cookies. Their shouts of "Cookies! Cookies!" could be heard throughout the church. These residents cannot go to the kitchen and put their hands into cookie jars any old time. Our children could hardly believe that a box of cookies could make people that happy.

Our twelve-year-old son likes to make treats for room parties at school. He makes cookies and other things, like butterscotch brownies. He is proud that he can do this himself. This also saves time for mother. One word of caution: Children do have flops, therefore have an alternate plan handy for emergencies.

Some parents find creative ways to encourage their children; for example, surprise an aunt or grandparent by baking a birthday cake. Other parents make their children responsible for planning and cooking one evening meal per week. One summer our daughter was invited to a tea. Her girl friend had prepared all the refreshments and planned the games for the little party. She learned kitchen *and* hosting skills.

Although it may appear that blizzards go through our kitchens, they can be signs that God's will is being done.

Donna Lehman

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CONTRIBUTORS

Esko Loewen is pastor of the Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pennsylvania 18964.

Mary Lou Cummings, Box 348, Quakertown, Pennsylvania 18951, is a free-lance writer and the mother of young children.

Donna Lehman, 3211 Ponema Court, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46815, is a member of the Maplewood Mennonite Church.

CREDITS

Cover, 178-180, Dennis Stoesz, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4; 180, 181, CBC Public Relations, Winnipeg; 182, 183, Darlene Schneck, Schnecksville, Pennsylvania; 184, Vic Reimer, GCNS; 185, Albert Willms.

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Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

A holy time of preparation

Lent is a word that can't be found in the Bible. It comes from the Anglo-Saxon *lengten* or *lencten* for the lengthening spring days. Churches observe Lent during the forty days from Ash Wednesday to Easter.

Lent probably began in the early church as a two-day fast from Good Friday to Easter in remembrance of Jesus' death and burial. Based on Mark 2:20, "The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day," many Christians did not eat or drink during these symbolic days of separation from the Lord.

By the fourth century, many Christians had adopted a forty days' fast in commemoration of Christ's fasting in the wilderness. It was considered a spiritual discipline and, for some, the savings from fasting were given as alms to the poor.

Easter falls on a different date each year because the Council of Nicea (325 A.D.) set it as the Sunday following the first full moon after the spring equinox. Ash Wednesday, forty days prior to Easter, was named from an earlier practice of marking the foreheads of Christians with ashes in the form of a cross at the beginning of Lent. This was done to remind people of Genesis 3:19b, ". . . you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Lent is today most rigidly and most elaborately observed in Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Episcopalian/Anglican churches. They tend to "give up" specific things for this season.

The Protestant churches sometimes prefer not to speak of Lent; to them it symbolizes some of the ancient dead rituals which necessitated the Reformation.

In our General Conference Mennonite churches, Lent is recognized on the church calendar and the observance is left to the discretion of individual congregations. Many church bulletins indicate that some special attention is drawn to this season.

I believe that all churches would do well to consider Lent as a time for reexamination, recommitment, and renewal. The purpose of fasting, among early Christians, was to set their minds and bodies free to concentrate upon their souls—to seek a more intimate communion with God. This often resulted in repentance, confession, and forgiveness. New relationships were created and deeper dedication was made to the Lord. It was a recognition that we human beings need to come apart from the everyday world, even as Jesus did, in order to face up to some of the greatest issues that life can bring to us.

Recently, a young graduate student told me that she had to go outside of our Mennonite churches to find people who understood her need for prayer and fasting. Since finding other believers who joined her in this discipline, she feels that her life has taken on a new sensitivity to God's Spirit and also to other people. She wished that all of us could experience the new depth of peace and joy in her soul.

In our world of running and then running some more, who would deny that we could stand a time of slowing down? Among all the hurts, fears, and suspicions so common to almost every congregation, who doesn't see a need for confession, repentance, and reconciliation? With a society preoccupied by an obsession for materialism, who can't feel the aching void of personal closeness to Jesus and to other believers?

Maybe it seems too legalistic to give up meat or coffee or desserts during Lent. Discipleship is a year-round calling.

However, many of our churches will hold special Holy Week services. We will try to meditate again upon the suffering and death and resurrection of Jesus. Through that special emphasis we want to become better prepared to share in the victorious Easter celebration.

Through some specific acts of sacrifice during Lent, you and I could also capture anew the significance of the Gethsemane and the wilderness experiences of Jesus. If we could thereby gain only a small portion of the inner victory that Jesus won in these experiences, it could mark the daybreak of new spiritual power among all of us. As surely as Jesus needed such times of holy preparation, we all need them. Similarly, if Jesus found victory, peace, and joy in such struggles (spiritual discipline never seems to come easily), these rewards are waiting for you and me.

The beginning for such a holy time of preparation could begin for us by looking seriously at Mark 9:23b-24, "'All things are possible to them who believe.' Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, 'I believe, help my unbelief!'" New dimensions of the Christian life are before us. Our present faith will grow larger as we seek to have more of our unbelief come into direct contact with Jesus Christ. BW

The Mennonite
Overseas Mission Edition
encompass

MARCH 14, 1978

ASIA OVERVIEW

by Verney Unruh,
COM Secretary for Asia

JAPAN
Kyushu
Woodstock
INDIA
TAIWAN
HONG KONG

V. Unruh

Asia is a vast complex of diverse cultures and peoples, a continent in conflict and tension, striving to attain self-reliance and human dignity. Its destiny, now in the hands of Asians, wavers between hopes and dreams, frustrations and disappointments. In this environment, COM missionaries and national church leaders have been sharing the gospel in word and deed and building Christ's church.

India

The 1974-77 triennium saw rapid change, trauma, and conflict, but also signs of new life and hope. From a postwar high of thirty-four missionaries in Madhya Pradesh in 1961, the number was down to six in 1976.

> “Along with visible church growth is an increasing awareness that the gospel speaks to the total needs of persons.”

Changes came as a result of the Raipur agreements drawn up in September 1973 by the Bharatiya Mennonite Church Conference leaders, missionaries, and representatives of COM. These agreements, though not fully accepted by everyone, accelerated the shift from mission to church.

Missionaries had laid the groundwork. In the early 1950s, boards for the administration of the mission institutions were formed with church conference representation. Capable Indians were trained and placed in administrative positions.

The Raipur agreements opened in a formal way direct communication between the Bharatiya Mennonite Conference and the commission. In this new relationship, COM seeks to be a partner-brother with the church in new programs of outreach.

In spite of changes and periodic reverses, there are signs of hope. The church is developing a sense of its own identity and accepting new challenges in outreach. With some COM financial help, a new thrust in evangelism has been carried on with encouraging response in commitment to Christ and baptism into the church.

Many church leaders have attended Union Biblical Seminary. The seminary is in the process of moving its campus from a rural setting to an urban-rural setting at Poona, 120 miles southwest of Bombay. Lubin and Tillie Jantzen and Helen Kornelsen represent COM on the teaching and administrative staff. COM also supports five persons at Woodstock School.

Japan

For the first quarter of a century, COM work has primarily centered on Kyushu Island, with one church in Kobe. In 1975 the church leadership broadened its vision and declared, “We want to start work in major cities all over Japan.” To reflect that larger goal the name was changed to Japan Mennonite Christian Church Conference (JMCCC).

Along with a new vision for outreach, the church in Japan seeks to be sensitive and flexible in developing new models for evangelism. The Japanese are among the least responsive people in the world to traditional evangelistic methods. The church is experimenting to find appealing ways to present the gospel.

The church in Japan has worked hard at trying to understand the gospel in the context of Japanese culture. They are seeking to develop an indigenous theology that is true to Scripture but expressed in Japanese thought patterns.

The Japanese church has also been involved in overseas outreach, in the Greater Tokyo Cooperative Evangelism Committee, the Anabaptist Center, and the World Friendship Center in Hiroshima.

Taiwan

In 1972 the Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan (FOMCIT) set ten-year goals. Last year they met to evaluate progress, make mid-course adjustments, reaffirm original goals, and establish new ones.

1. Increase church membership to 1500.
2. Increase offerings, working toward a tithe.
3. Plant two new churches (five were established between 1972-76).
4. Attain financial independence for all churches (six have reached this goal).
5. Strengthen training for laypeople and Sunday school teachers.
6. Encourage entire families to become Christian families/homes.
7. Train one gifted person as an Anabaptist/Mennonite professor/scholar.
8. Strengthen the relationship between the churches and Mennonite Christian Hospital.
9. Send out one overseas missionary/couple.
10. Recruit and train new ministers.

The steady growth and strength of the Mennonite church in Taiwan is due to wise planning, sacrificial giving, and the close partnership between nationals and missionaries.

Along with visible church growth is an increasing awareness that the gospel speaks to the total needs of persons. The Poverty Program projects carried out in two mountain villages on the east coast in 1970-73 led FOMCIT to form a social concerns committee. This committee has assisted typhoon victims, underprivileged children in their education, families in financial distress, and recently sponsored the opening of a learning center in Hwalien for retarded children.

Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hwalien continues to provide primary health care in the 120-bed facility and carries on a vital training program.

Financially the hospital meets its needs from patient income. A subsidy from COM makes possible the social service department and an outstanding chaplaincy program.

China

COM is looking forward to more involvement with the Chinese in Hong Kong. Grants have been given to the China Graduate School of Theology for library development. There has been serious discussion on and an initial exploratory visit for a joint Mennonite evangelism and church planting ministry in Hong Kong with the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions.

Miyazaki Christians Answer the Question:

What Do You Think of the Church, Missionaries, and Evangelism?

Henry and Nellie Kliewer are first term missionaries in Japan. Their home community, Otsuka Dai, is a new residential part of Miyazaki, a city of 240,000.

The Kliewers asked some of the church members of the two existing Mennonite churches in other parts of Miyazaki and persons from their own fellowship what their ideas of the church, of missionaries, and of evangelism are. "Their responses (which follow)," writes Henry, "were as helpful and eye opening to us as they might be to any person not directly related to our situation."

Mr. Ishii (retired high school teacher, still highly active in community affairs and church work):

"The church must be a place where believers worship God with Jesus Christ in the center, and where they can have fellowship in a warm atmosphere. However, Christians cannot be distinguished from the rest of the human race by country, language, or custom.

"Recently, a meeting place has been started by Mr. and Mrs. Kliewer at the Otsuka Dai Bed Town (Otsuka Dai residential area). There thousands of people are enjoying their comfortable life in a most modern setting. Yet recently a resident told me that, though he had been living there for five months, he didn't know who was living next door to him or what he was doing. Something very important seems to be lacking. What is it?

"More than twenty years ago the first missionaries came to Miyazaki and since then many of the seeds they have sown have grown into rich, strong plants. These days another seed is going to be sown among these enormous buildings where the people are truly hungry for love, for someone who will care deeply for them. It is my hope that as we, missionaries and church members, receive God's love, our love will naturally overflow to these people too."

Mr. Mitsushita (retired government worker, Christian of two years and now an active church member):

"Every person has problems and the solutions are not simple. The residents in Otsuka Dai have various kinds of problems. The church which is gradually developing there should be able to help solve their problems as well as teach the things about God. And it should be a fellowship in which persons can grow. To make the church as it should be, everybody (missionaries and members from the existing churches) should take part."

Mr. Hidaka (Japanese conference bookstore manager and one of the church leaders):

"New Christian church forms should be sought that can meet the needs of the people. Evangelism should not be regarded as imposing something on people without taking their needs into account. Every Christian who has a spiritual burden for the souls of men should approach his neighbors and friends with a whollistic understanding of man, that is, we must take human development from the Christian point of view into our own thinking as we continue working in Otsuka Dai. It is an assignment given each of us, including leaders and missionaries."

Mrs. Tada (a widow, long time active member in the church):

"The Christian gospel is so wonderful and so convincing that I cannot help but share it with my friends and neighbors in spite of my weakness and lack of understanding. The work in Otsuka Dai is a responsibility not only of our own congregations, but also of all Christians in Miyazaki. Mission work cannot be done with our own power. Without the Lord's leading, the work entrusted to us will not be fulfilled. In Otsuka Dai, persons willing to be catalysts by living there and spending most of their time there, like the missionaries we have, are indispensable. God uses catalysts to make His grace known and available to the residents there. I'd like to support this work through my visible cooperation and with prayer."

Mr. Matsuoka (middle-aged widower, one of the leaders in the church):

"The informal church meeting in Otsuka Dai seems to be a good approach in reaching the neighbors. Although we naturally are looking for results, we are not in a hurry to find them. Every good fruit takes time to grow."

Mrs. Yanada (wife of the pastor of the two Mennonite churches in Miyazaki):

(Continued on page 6)

Mr. Ishii

Mr. Mitsushita

Mr. Hidaka

Mrs. Tada

Mrs. Yanada

Henry and Nellie Kliewer

Woodstock Sunday Specials

For many years, Woodstock School in northern India has been home and school for hundreds of missionary children. Today, with a decreasing missionary body, it is developing into an international Christian school with a mission in its own right, educating Indians and nationals from many countries in addition to missionary children. General Conference continues to supply staff.

As Woodstock School chaplain, William Block counsels students and staff, prepares and leads Sunday worship periods, and teaches a course in religious education. Kermit Gingerich is guidance counselor at the school. He is also responsible for developing and administering a program of testing for college, vocational, academic, and personal counseling. Here Block describes the Sunday evening program, an important aspect of Woodstock School life.

Woodstock School is really a small community, rather than just a school. My work as chaplain is not unlike the pastoral ministry at home, though there are some differences. I work primarily with high school students. The classroom experience is very challenging, especially because the students come from twenty-two different nations and a broad spectrum of religious backgrounds.

One aspect of the work here is Sunday evening activities—Christian Endeavor (CE) and Youth Fellowship (YF). Kermit and Clydene Gingerich are involved in the CE program. Kermit writes:

"Christian Endeavor is held each Sunday evening for students in grades seven and eight. Since many of the school activities are designed for high school students, CE provides a much needed activity for middle school youth. Over half of the fifty students who attend each week are Moslem, Hindu, and Sikh.

"I'm sure some of the students are here because CE is the only Sunday evening activity, but most seem genuinely interested and take an active part. Our activities include games, singing, a Bible lesson, a competitive activity, and refreshments. The students ask many searching questions and we may never know what effect the sowing of seed in these early years may have in later life. We thank God for the opportunity to witness to these young people."

My wife Dolores's and my responsibility is Youth Fellowship. YF usually meets at our house, which is centrally located—one minute from the boys' hostel and about five minutes from the girls' dormitory. Singing with guitar accompaniment has become a popular item and we usually begin our meetings with about thirty minutes of this activity. The main feature of the evening is a discussion on a topic chosen by a committee of youth and teachers, or suggested by one of the young people. Then we have some "chai" (very authentic, even though made by my wife) and small biscuits or sweets. Students have to be in their dorms by nine-thirty.

The young people come for various reasons. Some are drawn by the topic of the evening; others come because their friends pull them along; still others to escape boredom since Sunday nights can be lonely in the dormitory; some, I am sure, come for the singing, the snack, and the homey atmosphere. Many of the twenty to thirty who come are from Christian homes, but usually a fair number from other faiths are represented.

Topics we deal with are: coping with failures, dating, forgiveness, reliability of the Bible, etc. This last topic attracted a large number of students and developed into a rousing discussion on "Is there more than one way to God?" (We don't always stay on the topic, especially when we have wall to wall kids and four or five want to speak at the same time.) Occasionally, however, the attendance is disappointing and the topic does not catch fire.

About once a month we have a social type of activity, such as a games evening, a hike to Whispering Pines Cottage for a wiener roast, or a variety evening. In addition we try to plan larger specials about twice a semester. Recently we had a coffee house in the boys' hostel lounge. There were a few entertainers and a Street Theater style religious drama (very funny, but with a positive witness about the power of Christ). Plans for a progressive supper to wind up the semester are under way. This is quite exciting since it involves climbing the hillside to reach about five different faculty homes. We are also speaking of a retreat in spring.

Dolores and I enjoy working with the YF group. The international, inter-faith character of the group means that we have to make fewer assumptions and be careful about those we do make. We cannot always provide convincing answers to questions asked, and so we need the prayers of people who also love youth. Our work brings a mixture of joys and frustrations. The joys usually win, especially when we keep in mind that it is "only God who gives the growth" (1 Cor. 3:7).

Fukuoka Frontier Established

When opportunities beckon everywhere, how do you locate and begin your new assignment in a city of 1,000,000? George E. Janzen describes Japan Mennonite Church's latest adventure in evangelism outreach in Fukuoka, Kyushu's largest city.

George and Martha Janzen

Although the Japan Mennonite Church had long been thinking and praying about outreach evangelism in the city of Fukuoka, the first concrete steps were not taken until February 5, 1975, when Pastor Takashi Yamada and I made an investigation tour of the city. A Presbyterian missionary friend, Glen Davis from Nova Scotia, volunteered to spend a whole day driving us around the city.

Opportunities seemed to beckon everywhere, but our attention was drawn particularly to the southern and western sectors of the city. Late that night as we bedded down on the floor of the Fukuoka Korean Church, Yamada sensei recalled Acts 18:9-20: "Be not afraid . . . for I am with thee . . . I have much people in this city," and I read from Acts 20:24: ". . . none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God."

Shortly after that Martha and I went on furlough and the work was delayed another year. Next summer, however, we were back in Japan again and at three o'clock on the morning of August 26, in a steady rain, we arrived at the rented Baptist mission house that was to be our home for a year.

Next morning the truck with our baggage was at the gate and the rain stopped just long enough for us to unload. At the same time a Japanese friend from a neighboring city arrived with fourteen elementary school children to "help." Later they all sat around the cluttered living room eating their box lunches. Then two ladies from our previous church in Miyazaki arrived with five more children, also to help. Two days later, with the house appearing much more orderly, we joined in the living room for our first worship service in Fukuoka. (We have not missed a single Sunday since.)

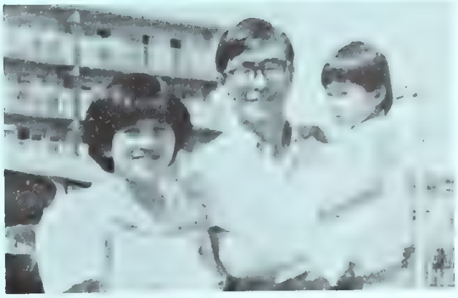
The next pressing task was to enroll our children, Sandra and Stephen, in their new school, Fukuoka International, which has twenty-eight pupils from Grades 1 to 8 and three teachers. The children's good adjustment we take as a distinct answer to prayer.

Then followed a task much more formidable: to acquaint ourselves so thoroughly with the city that we would be able to make a responsible decision as to where to locate our permanent work. This took time and patience. As before, we were drawn to the southern and western parts of the city. Finally, after much prayer and consultation, we determined to locate in the rapidly-developing western ward.

This led to the next big steps: choice of a lot, drawing up plans for a residence-meeting place, and finding a contractor who would give us the most building for the least money. With the help of Japanese friends we found an excellent lot and the right contractor. We moved into the new building on June 29, 1977.

Meanwhile, the work has grown to where four different groups meet in our

(Continued on page 7)



Mr. and Mrs. Takeji Nomura and their twenty-month-old daughter Kaori (Fragrance), co-workers with the Janzens in the Muromi area of Fukuoka.

Muromi Christian Center, meeting place of the house church in Fukuoka and home of the Janzen family.

Two of the thirty-seven apartment buildings in the Muromi residential area, all located within a five-minute walk of the Janzen residence. Ten minutes in another direction are ninety-six such apartment complexes and fifteen minutes in a third direction sixty more. In addition, the area contains thousands of one-family homes.

"King's Daughters" in China Mission Church

"The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold" (Psalm 45:13).

I like to apply this concept to students from Yǘn Deh Girls Boarding and Day School at Taming, where my husband William and I worked during our first term as missionaries in China. Some have by now entered the "king's palace." Others perhaps have had to endure suffering.

Love-Joy was perhaps twelve when this episode opens. She called forth love from all of us. One morning during the 1927 revival I bared my soul in a chapel talk. Teachers and pupils all got down on their knees and we prayed aloud in Chinese fashion. I was surprised, however, when Love-Joy came to my office and wanted to confess some particular sins. I asked her to pray and confess to God. How wonderful to make a clean slate before Him! She felt free and happy.

Her parents, who were not yet Christians, had her engaged to a non-Christian young man. The Christians at the hospital station were consulted and a young man in nurse's training was taken into confidence. He made his way to Taming for an interview. When confronted with this young man, Love-Joy soon made her decision.

How the Lord blessed that union! On our first visit to Kai Chow after furlough, the couple with their two small sons came to see us. They were joyful about the Lord's leading. Love-Joy later attended and graduated from Bible school while her husband worked at the Nurses Training School. When the Sino-Japanese war began, they joined the trek to the far west and there continued to serve the Lord. My husband had the privilege of baptizing their oldest son in the first baptismal group in Chengtu in 1948.

I had heard that Chun Ying, another former boarding school student, had been married and was ill with tuberculosis.

"We did not have proper food where we lived," she had told me when I visited her.

Now it was Christmas Day. The last group of serenaders and well-wishers had been sent on their way with treats of peanuts, Chinese sweets, and dried persimmons, and we were at the breakfast table. I looked toward the gatehouse, and whom should I see but Chun Ying in padded winter clothes laboriously making her way up our driveway. Quickly we opened the door and invited her in.

"You shouldn't have come," I said. "This cold air is bad for your illness."

"But I wanted once more to bring you personal holiday greetings," she said. "The memory of how we used to come out here when I was in the mission school is still very vivid."

After her visit we called a ricksha and had her taken home so that she would not have to walk in the cold December wind. After that, whenever I visited her, I would find her propped up in a big chair in the sunny courtyard, trying to keep warm and get strong.

"I learned about 250 songs when I was in Mission School," she recalled one day as we were singing together. "How I loved those songs!"

Regretfully we saw the disease taking its toll. The home was poor, her upbringing not the best. In school she had been somewhat wayward, but she found the Lord and all was changed. Her hope was in Him and she loved Him to the end. Our fellowship was sweet and I hope to meet her again some day—in the "King's palace," where it is "all glorious within."

Matilda K. Voth

BLESS YOU, TEACHER

A teaching note from Shirley Hildebrand:

I had a heavy teaching load at Taiwan Theological College (last year). There was an added burden because the course in Hymnology had not been offered while I was on furlough. Consequently, I had forty-nine students in that course alone. Since the class was so large, I felt I could not assign topics for class presentation, as I have in past years. Instead, I assigned two hymns to each student for written reports, one for a detailed analysis and one for teaching. One of the students wrote at the end of her term paper:

As I was searching for material on the author and the composer, I realized how much I have to learn in this area. I only do research when I need to make a report; I really ought to make contact with this type of knowledge more often. Many composers had short lives. I think it must be because they used their brains so much and had little rest. I felt that way by the time I finished my report: my neck hurt, my eyes were sore, and I could hardly move my body. Miss H., you must work even harder than that. May God bless you.

What Do You Think . . . ?

(Continued from page 3)

"Almost three years ago we started praying for this project. So it isn't a new plan. We are happy that we have the Kliewers, who are helping us to realize our long anticipated work by coming to live in Otsuka Dai and by quietly sharing the Christian gospel through their presence. This is our joint effort and we feel the task is given evenly to Christians from another country and to the people of this culture. We want to see emerging in Otsuka Dai a small part of the kingdom of God which will consist of various people with various backgrounds."

Henry and Nellie Kliewer:

"These responses are a real encouragement to us as we continue to seek direction for our lives, especially in terms of evangelistic work. Church members are willing to stand by us and do their share in this outreach work. We are learning to trust them and to have confidence that we are not doing this work by ourselves. We all share in this evangelistic endeavor and are together discovering the meaning of the Anabaptist concept 'priesthood of all believers.'"

Current State of the Church in Japan

by Hiroshi Yanada

Mr. Hiroshi Yanada

At present the field of operation for our Conference consists of Kyushu and the Kobe area. Of the congregations belonging to the Conference, two work primarily in rural villages, two are in large city centers with populations in excess of 1,000,000, and the remainder in localities ranging in population from 50,000 to 330,000.

This represents a major change, for in its inception the Mission had determined that its central purpose was rural evangelism. The shift can probably in large measure be attributed to the recent remarkable urbanization of Japanese society.

All of the member congregations are independent and self-governing, and have their own simple church buildings or meeting places. All churches conscribe to the congregational form of church polity. In most instances churches are served by a pastor or missionary, but in several cases the pastor is assisted by a number of lay leaders.

While there are some variations in the programs of the local churches, activities generally consist of Sunday worship services, weekly prayer meetings, Bible classes, men's and women's groups, youth groups, and children's Sunday school classes. The worship meditation or sermon is given not only by pastors, but also by laymen. Several churches have their worship services in small groups at several locations rather than at one central place.

The Japanese government allows complete liberty to engage in evangelism. Church growth, however, is not making any significant progress. In this regard we are no different from other Protestant denominations. About 120 years have passed since the beginning of Protestant work in Japan, but the total number of Christians is still less than one percent of the population. There are many reasons for this.

The different local churches employ a variety of methods in their evangelistic work. In the beginning tent evangelism and radio broadcasting was a common method, but now churches no longer have special evangelistic meetings. Some congregations seek to reach out through film meetings and English classes. But the most common form of evangelism is witness by the laymen. In the context of their daily life Christians witness to family members, friends and fellow employees. In some churches more have been brought into the fellowship of the church in this way than through special meetings. Daily witness does not consist only in direct evangelistic witness, but also in the prophetic witness to society as a whole. We are not yet doing enough in this area, but there is a visible growing awareness among the believers.

The age level of the believers differs from one church to the next. In some young people and children are in the majority, while in others the middle-aged bracket is larger. Professionally, most of the members are students, company employees, public servants, teachers and housewives. There are also some medical doctors, private business operators and factory workers. Farmers, fishermen and forestry workers are rare.

In most cases church members are the only Christians in their families. Through the personal witness of a Christian in the home, or through a Christian marriage, there is an increasing number of Christian homes, but there are almost no cases where an entire family joins the church at once. Whether in parent-child relationships, or in husband-wife relationships, the same general principle holds true—one does not become a Christian even if the other does. Occasionally, after a period of "seeking," two close friends will decide to join the church together. In general, however, faith is a personal matter, and people become Christians individually. There is no pattern of mass or group conversion.

Christians are generally respected in society, and there is no public pressure against being a Christian. In Japanese society, when conflict occurs, it is between individuals. Conflict frequently occurs because of the differences in Japanese customs and Christian practice, especially with regard to ceremonial occasions such as marriages and funerals.

Fukuoka Frontier Established

(Continued from page 5)

home each week. To be sure, the groups are still small, but all have good growth potential.

The best development so far, no doubt, is the fact that God has sent Mr. and Mrs. Takeji Nomura to Fukuoka to work with us. They have moved into an apartment close to our new location. More good news is that the man who brought the fourteen children to help us unload, tells us that he and his wife want to be the first to receive baptism in this place. There are also other prospects for baptism.

Fukuoka is a city of approximately a million people and fifty small churches.

We believe that God does, indeed, "have much people in this city." We offer ourselves to Him for the performance of the ministry He has given us and pray that Fukuoka will become more and more a "Hill of Blessing," as its Japanese name implies.

Church Hesitant to Face Growing Problem

Tapping Potential in the Annex

Sophie Brown

"For the past two years I have spent some very challenging hours at Mary's Inn, operated by Mustard Seed, Inc.," writes Sophie Brown, missionary to Taiwan since 1960. "It has been a most interesting and sometimes demanding experience. I feel it has taken most of my capabilities and has stretched my potential to the fullest. The work there requires a person (woman) who can communicate both in Mandarin and Taiwanese as we deal with people from all of Taiwan's ethnic backgrounds. It is demanding emotionally and spiritually because most of those referred to us . . . have deep needs and come seeking help."

Mustard Seed, Inc. is an independent, non-denominational service organization ministering to many of South East Asia's destitute. It operates orphanages, homes for delinquent boys, schools for mountain children, and tuberculosis minimal care hospitals. It provides mid-wife and maternity care for mountain women and scholarships for poor students. Its staff members work with prisoners, crippled children, and others who need help. Mary's Inn is a minimum care maternity center for women. It contains an annex for unwed and prewed mothers. Mrs. Brown's work has been primarily with the girls in the Annex, who come from all over the island.

"Ideally," continues Sophie, "someone is needed to bring a word of hope daily, be a friend at a time when there is no friend, hold a hand through a difficult delivery, find work during the long months of waiting, find a teacher for sewing, typing, cooking, or knitting . . . Sometimes we need to send a social worker to patch up a lovers' quarrel, to find a prospective home for an unwanted baby, to hold a hand in court as a baby is given up, etc., etc., etc. This kind of work cannot be done spasmodically, nor without understanding."

In spite of the need in this area and a growing awareness that Taiwan should be doing more to help, there are very few resources available. The church is reluctant to recognize this as a legitimate field of service "since it is felt that this does not necessarily add the kind of people who will build up the church." Yet Mrs. Brown says that she has found the work rewarding and exhilarating and has discovered much "hitherto untapped potential. It is a growing problem and sooner or later the church will need to face it."

One of the Pre-Wed "graduates" who asked to stay on with Mustard Seed to work in the home for mentally and physically handicapped children is helping a child write with his toes as his fingers are paralyzed.

Hualien Pre-Wed Home (The Annex). Mrs. Brown has ministered to about fifty of the more than one hundred girls who have come through the home.

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:12 MARCH 21, 1978

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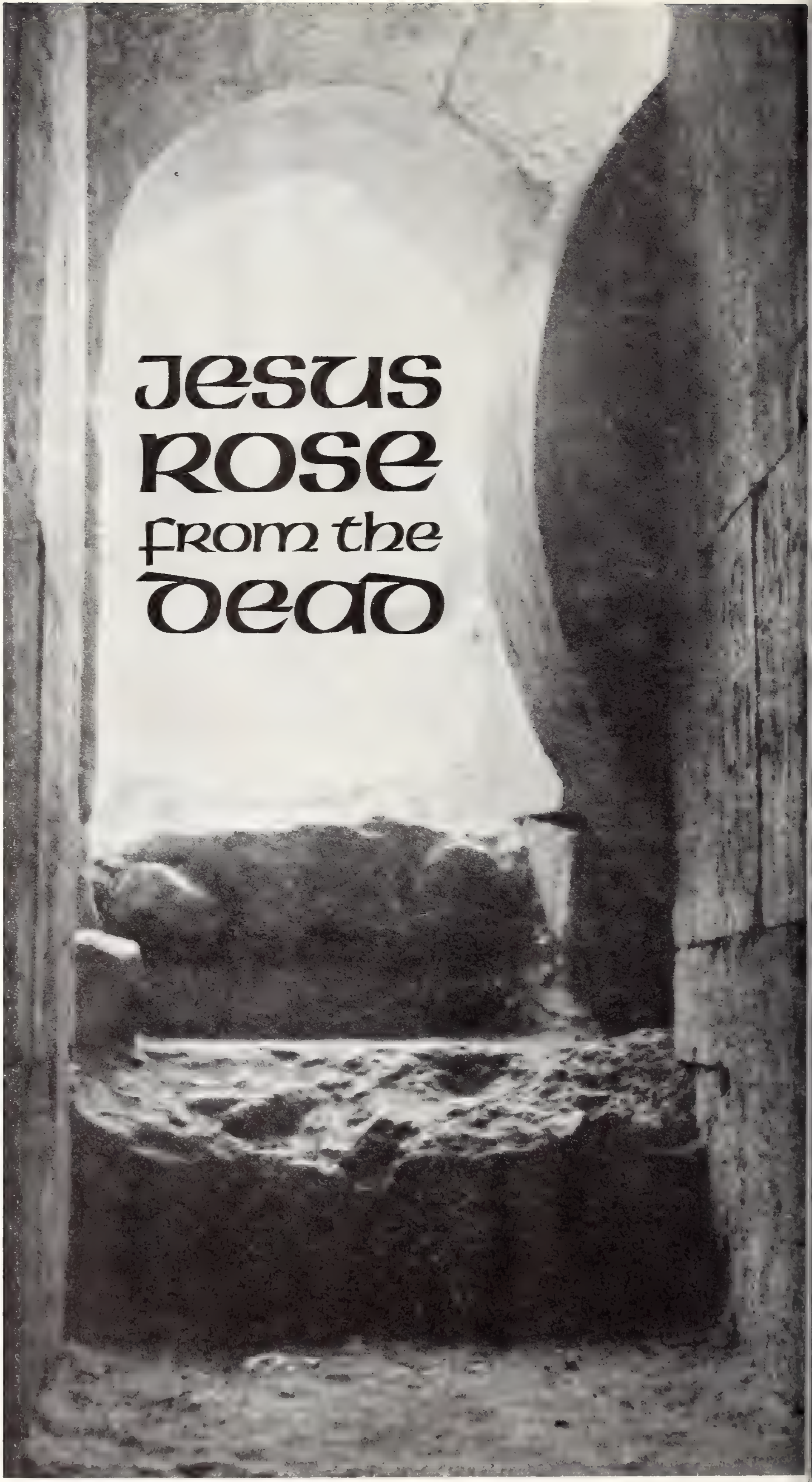
...just as he was raised
from the dead by that
splendid revelation
of the Father's power
so we too might rise
to live on a new plane
altogether. If we
have, as it were, shared
in his death,

let us rise and live our new lives with him!

JESUS ROSE from the DEAD



Charles Ludwig

Ever since Jesus stepped out of the tomb on Sunday morning, skeptics have tried to disprove the fact. They have used every type of argument that skilled minds could devise. They have done this because the resurrection of Jesus is at the very heart of Christianity.

Some disagree

When the women went to the tomb early on Sunday morning, they were so shaken with grief and their eyes were so swollen from weeping, they mistakenly went to the wrong tomb. Another insists that Jesus was never crucified. Moslems contend: ". . . yet they slew him not, and crucified him not, but he was represented to them by one in his likeness, and verily, they who disputed about him, were in doubt concerning this matter: They had no sure knowledge thereof, but followed only an uncertain opinion. They (the Jews) did not really kill him . . ." (Galwash, *The Religion of Islam,* Hafner Publishing, New York, page 184).

One argument contends that the body of Jesus was stolen. Others, of course, try to make out that there are contradictions in the descriptions of the event in the Gospels, and that these contradictions prove that the whole event was nothing but a hoax, or, at best, a record of mass hysteria.

Contradictions

As far as *apparent* contradictions are concerned, we must admit that there are difficulties. John tells us: "Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb" (John 20:1). In Matthew's account, Mary Magdalene was accompanied by "the other Mary . . ." (Matthew 28:1). Mark identifies "the other Mary" as "the mother of James," and he adds "Salome . . ." (Mark 16:1). Luke, on the other hand, speaks of the women who went to the tomb as "they" (Luke 24:1), and later (24:10) he identifies them: "Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told this to the apostles."

The stone was rolled away on that first Easter Sunday and Jesus became the firstfruit of the resurrection.

Strangely, Paul in I Corinthians 15:5 does not even mention the women. Instead, he says: "And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the Twelve."

These problems are really not problems, nor do they contradict. The fact that John mentions only Mary Magdalene does not mean that the women mentioned by Luke were not present. Indeed, the apparent discrepancies give the story strength; this is so because they prove that the writers did not get together in order to compare notes and make their "hoax" flawless. Moreover, this could have been done; *for all of these writers were alive at the same time.*

The final proof

But the final proof of the resurrection does not rest on who was first to see the empty tomb, nor even on the appearances of Christ during the forty days before the ascension. The final proof rests on the reaction of the disciples to the resurrection. *This proof is so solid that the most learned skeptic cannot deny it.* In order to follow through on this, let's turn our microscope on Simon Peter.

If, immediately after the body of Jesus was taken down from the cross, one had quizzed the centurion who had supervised the execution, the conversation might have gone about as follows:

"Sir, do you believe any of the Twelve will continue to follow him?"

"If any one does, it will be John, for he was the only one with sufficient courage to stay at the cross while Jesus was dying."

"How about Peter? He was always up front—"

"Never! It will take courage to follow the teachings of Jesus at this time. You should have heard Peter deny that he had ever known Jesus when a girl quizzed him as he warmed his hands by the fire in the courtyard of Caiphas. He blistered the air with such oaths, the soldiers near him were amazed."

"But didn't Jesus call him Cephas?"

"Maybe so. But if he's a rock, he's a very soft kind."

"Then you don't think he'll be a follower of the Way?"

"Never. Simon Peter doesn't have as much courage as a sparrow."

Such an assessment was about correct and can be shown to be true by Scripture. Then came Easter morning.

When informed that the stone in front of the tomb had been "taken away," Mary Magdalene "ran, and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him'" (John 20:2).

Startled, Peter and John ran to the tomb, "but the other disciple (John) outran Peter and reached the tomb first" (John 20:3). Although John arrived first, he stepped aside and allowed Peter to be the first to enter.

What was the reaction of Mary Magdalene and the two disciples? It was mixed. When Mary Magdalene reached the disciples and panted out the news, she said, "They have taken away the Lord . . . and we know not where they have laid him." The pronoun *they* in that passage clearly indicates that she believed the dead body of Jesus had been removed by people, and the *we* clearly indicates that there was at least another person with her. This, of course, verifies the reports of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. But, at this time, did she believe in the resurrection? Probably not.

How about Peter, was he convinced? Again, the answer is probably not. In Luke's description of the event, he wrote: "Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulcher; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass" (Luke 24:12, King James Version). The *Amplified Bible* renders this: "wondering and marveling." The *Living Bible* retains the word: "wondering." The Revised Standard Version and the New English Bible skip this verse, and quote it under the heading, "Other ancient authorities add . . . ."

With John, however, it was different. He wrote: "Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed" (John 20:8).

From this passage it can be inferred that John was the first of the Twelve to believe in the resurrection. John then explained: "For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead" (20:9). What was the Scripture? Certainly it was not from the New Testament, for the New Testament had not yet been written. Perhaps he was referring to a passage such as Psalm 16:10: "For thou dost not give me up to Sheol, or let thy godly one see the Pit."

It took time for Peter and the others to really believe in the resurrection. But believe they did—all of them.

What did this belief do to them? It changed them completely. Before the resurrection, Simon Peter was afraid of the servant girl and began to curse. After the resurrection he stood up as a prisoner in the Sanhedrin, and as he faced his accusers said: "Be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by him this man is standing before you well" (Acts 4:10). It took courage to say that.

History, Scripture, and legend tell us that all of the Twelve, with the single exception of John, died deaths of violence. Why did they keep preaching when they knew that their preaching would bring about their deaths? Because they were utterly convinced that Jesus Christ was alive. They believed this because they saw the empty tomb, and because they had seen and conversed and eaten with the resurrected Christ. Moreover, they had witnessed the ascension. That is all the proof one needs—even in this skeptical age.

THE MENNONITE seeks to witness, teach, motivate, and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published weekly except biweekly during July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton, Kansas 67114, by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kansas 67114, and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions, in United States and Canada, $9.00, one year, $17.00, two years, $24.00, three years, foreign $9.50 per year. Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Canada R3P 0M4. Business office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114

RESURRECTION— RELEASE FROM DEATH-STYLE

Maynard Shelly

When the message hits us, we should run for miles. Driven by our burning hearts, we should be shouting all the way, "The Lord has risen indeed!"

So did the disciples who sped from Emmaus all the way to Jerusalem after they had experienced the risen Lord (Luke 24:31-34).

They did; but we don't. We could. But, you see, we know too much. And it's really not our life-style, largely because we're steeped in death-style.

We've read the book, as it were, after a peek at the ending. We've robbed ourselves of the burst of energy that the bright flash of new discovery can bring. We've known something of the fact of the resurrection from our earliest hearings of the gospel. We've known the reports that the Jesus who walked in Galilee is the risen Christ who gave new power to the disciples in Jerusalem and who has been stirring the church ever since.

Yet, we've had problems with the resurrection facts. Even though everyone around us seems to understand, we're not sure that we really can. How can everyone be so sure when we're nagged by doubt?

The distance between us and the resurrection is greater than we sometimes realize. It's an event in history, yet we've let it drift beyond the bounds of history. We must put the resurrection back into the dullness of the daily grind we call life.

Let's make a trip back into time with the disciples of Emmaus. They came to an understanding of the resurrection by going once more through the Scriptures, "beginning with Moses and all the prophets" (Luke 24:27).

Begin with Moses—in this case, the First Book of Moses—and live for a brief passage in the dimness of those Old Testament days. Holding onto the promises of God, let's become as little children, living in that dark and narrow world before the smallest flicker of a resurrection faith.

We'll walk with Abraham, who has instructed many in the meaning of faith. But

We've robbed ourselves of the burst of energy that the bright flash of new discovery can bring.

even he had his days of gloom. Like so many of his neighbors, he could not think of God apart from the shedding of blood and the burning of sacrifices. In such a world, even when God spoke of life, people heard only death. So when Abraham heard God calling, he wanted to give God the best he had: the life of his beloved son in a holy but deadly sacrifice (Genesis 22:2).

Thus, he with Isaac journeyed to Mount Moriah. Abraham carried the instruments of death. And Isaac, like Christ bearing the cross to Golgotha, carried the wood for the altar. It was a parable of the crucifixion of Christ. But is it more?

From the earliest times of human thought, the Greeks noted that human beings are set apart from animals in that they, unlike the beasts, can contemplate their own deaths—"contemplate" being an educated word for "worry about."

And worry we do, even when we're so worried we forget we're worrying about death. For why are we busy about our homes and farms and businesses and schools except that we know our days are numbered? We have houses to buy, children to raise, books to write, and promotions to earn—all because it must be done now if it is ever to be done.

The bottom line in this world of ours is death. Death-minded as we are, we see God in our image. So did Abraham carrying the knife to slay his son. He believed that death was the most powerful expression of life.

And is not the dying sacrifice the greatest gift that human beings can give? Don't look down on Abraham. Remember all the drive we derive from the death of Christ on the cross. For we see in the cross all that was good and great about God. In God's self-giving of himself through Jesus, we gain salvation.

We can now understand Abraham. With Isaac, he acted out for us a parable not only of the crucifixion, but a parable also of the resurrection. For with hand upraised, Abraham heard the voice from God, the first whisper of the resurrection faith that will come in Jesus Christ.

God opens his heart to Abraham. I know you love me, God says. You love enough to give me the death of your son. Love me more. Give me your living child.

Isaac, all during the three-day journey to Moriah, had been under the sentence of death—in a sense, he was as good as dead. But when God intervened, he was restored to life and resurrected from the dead.

The Epistle to the Hebrews says of Abraham, "He considered that God was able to raise men even from the dead; hence, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back" (Hebrews 11:19). Like Abraham, the disciples at Emmaus heard God speaking through the Scriptures and in the breaking of the bread they received the risen Christ.

They had put it all together. And in that real event, the resurrection happened; they perceived the risen Christ and received the gift of God—the gift of life. The Christ who God exalted had the features of the Jesus who had lived in Galilee with them.

And they, like Abraham, were released from the death-style of their world. They received Jesus Christ back into their lives, for God is not the God of the dead but the God of the living, the God of the risen Christ. They knew then that death was not the end.

Paul envisioned in full what Abraham saw only in part when he said, "I appeal to you . . . present your bodies as a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1). Let's give the gift of life to God for he has given us life in Jesus Christ.

Israeli law said threat to religious liberty

What the *Jerusalem Post* calls "the first real antimissionary legislation ever attempted here," was passed into law by the Israeli Knesset December 27, 1977.

The new law provides for stiff penalties for anyone who offers any "material inducement" to an Israeli to change his religion. The bill was sponsored by orthodox Knesset member Rabbi Meir Abramowitz as a private member's bill.

The new law is aimed at Christian missions, but it is so broadly construed that all Christians in Israel feel they are now placed in jeopardy. Discounting a Knesset member's charge that the Abramowitz law was "anti-Christian," Binyamin Halevi, acting chairperson of the law committee, said the law would make it a crime for anybody to encourage a Christian to become a Jew—just as it bars a person from encouraging a Jew to become a Christian, the *Post* story said.

After the bill was passed in the Knesset, Rabbi Abramowitz wrote in his Agudat Israel Party newspaper, *Hamodea*, "Now that this law prohibiting *enticements* on the part of *The Mission* has been passed, we have breached the blocked wall preventing harming *The Mission*. In due time we will produce an amendment to the law that will effectively halt the activities of *The Mission*."

Introduced for first reading in the Knesset on December 6, 1977, the bill was rushed into law on December 27. It was given less than twenty-four-hour's notice on the Knesset agenda and introduced without being printed in "The Order of the Day." Two-thirds of the Knesset members were absent when the vote was taken.

A January 23 *Time* magazine story said, "The controversial bill slipped through the Knesset two days after Christmas, when attention was focused on Middle East diplomacy," the Sadat-Begin talks in Cairo.

The penalty, effective April 1, for anyone offering material inducements to someone to change his religion will be a $3,200 fine and five years in prison. The matter of offering material inducements does not appear to be the central issue, Christians in Israel suggest. The United Christian Council in Israel the day following enactment of the law sent a cable to Prime Minister Begin. They said in part, "We hardly think it necessary to state the obvious, namely that we are all opposed, as we have stated publicly on repeated occasions, to the use of improper inducements to bring about the change in anybody's religion. None of the member bodies of the United Christian Council in Israel engages in such practices. None of the other Christian communities in this country known to us engages in such practices."

Christians in Israel are concerned about the loose wording of the law and its implications for the continuing presence of Christians in Israel. The Christian council said, "We are bound to add that we simply refuse to believe that either the government or the majority of Israelis have properly understood the meaning of what is being forced upon them by some determined extremists, nor with such understanding that they would agree to this bill."

The lack of clear definition in the bill raises such possibilities as a recently converted Jew, who would come to a Christian hospital or who would send his children to a church-run school, potentially being charged with accepting an inducement. The matter raises questions of religious liberty and basic human rights, suggested opposing members in the Knesset, and Christian observers.

One Knesset member found the bill objectionable because "it is ironic that after withstanding assimilation during 2,500 years of dispersion among the nations, we now feel so insecure in our own sovereign land that we must pass a law to ensure that nobody convinces us to change religions." *John Bender*

Manitoba will build new Bible school

The Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba (CMM) has decided to build a new Bible school at Altona. At its thirty-first annual sessions, February 24-25 at Winnipeg, the 235 delegates adopted a long-range plan that will gradually move the Elim Bible Institute (EBI) from its present facilities to a new five-acre campus on the west side of town.

For 1978 one fourplex will be built on the new site to house male students. A further fourplex and other buildings, at an estimated cost of $550,000, are to be built upon conference approval of financing.

The Elim school issue has been on the CMM agenda for several years. Before the votes were taken, discussion ranged widely. Elim board chairperson J. K. Klassen stated, "We have had wide and strong criticism for not having concrete proposals to vote on; today we have them ready." Delegate Ernest Wiebe replied, "I feel internal anxiety about voting on this resolution. We have had no chance to discuss it with our congregations." Frank K. Isaac, board member, responded, "We have been delaying for too long; it is time for action. The decision really boils down to Elim or no Elim." George Dyck, Whitewater Church delegate, said, "The West is prepared to go home once again with our teeth battered in."

In other action, the CMM voted to develop a file of resource people at its conference office, to give aid to congregations in lieu of providing a conference minister. This action was taken as an interim arrangement.

Henry Loewen, chairperson of Faith and Life Communications, presents a plaque to D. D. Klassen commemorating Klassen's twenty years as speaker on the Manitoba Conference Low German "Wort Des Lebens" broadcast. Klassen has retired from the work.

Newly elected to the CMM executive were Otto Hamm, chairperson; Henry D. Penner, vice-chairperson; and Edwin Teichroew, secretary. The 1978 budget calls for $27 per member, a 5 percent increase over 1977.

The missions and evangelism committee reported a growing ministry through the Winnipeg Mandarin Church.

Trinity Mennonite Fellowship, the outgrowth of an internal split within the Mather Mennonite Church, was accepted into conference membership. *Bernie Wiebe*

MDS meeting celebrates past history, future challenges

Phoenix, Arizona—One of the most diverse gatherings of North American Mennonites and Brethren in Christ occurred here February 10-11. Nearly 600 people assembled for the annual all-unit meeting of Mennonite Disaster Service.

The mood was strikingly that of a joyous family reunion. The celebrative spirit of the family getting together was evident almost immediately through singing, testimonials of experiences on disaster sites, and informal fellowship at meals. Reports from the units were sprinkled with good-natured comments. Ed Bearinger, Region V director from Elmira, Ontario, stated that he was as "proud as a Mennonite could be without sinning" of the work of MDS units in Canada during 1977.

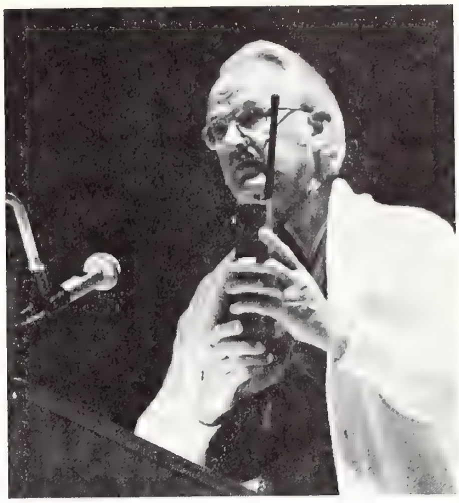
The inspirational messages by Harry Martens and Dan Yutzy coupled with the testimonies of many an MDS worker also gave the meeting a revival flavor. Numerous MDS workers shared how MDS had enabled them not only to reach out to someone in need but also to be enriched themselves. A tangible indicator that such feelings are mutual is the fact that one-third of MDS contributions last year came from nonconstituency sources in appreciation of MDS service.

Harry Martens, MDS pioneer, reflected on the beginnings of MDS, not the least of which was a change in image for Mennonites from being a queer, peculiar people to a people who are known for helping others. "We are not a sending people," he declared. "We go ourselves." He also made a strong plea for commitment to Christian volunteerism which would leave "a new portrait of the living Christ."

The prophetic voices did not only come from the keynote addresses but also from MDS workers. Myron Schultz of Bloomfield, Montana, brought out the need for patience in MDS work. "We must not force our standards of efficiency on everyone else," he cautioned. There was a call for greater involvement of women and senior citizens in MDS.

Sprinkled throughout the conference were indications that disaster work is becoming more complex. Newly appointed national communications coordinator Richard Weaver will work closely with MennoNet, an association of some 200 Mennonite ham radio operators, in an effort to develop a disaster communications network.

When all the speeches and meetings are over, one still has to ask, "What makes an organization like MDS tick?" The answers to this question are found not so much in the long speeches but in the one-liners of the people who have been out on the job. "MDS gives people a chance to smile again," says Paul Roth of Canby, Oregon. "It is sharing, but also receiving." *Ken Neufeld*



Richard Weaver, recently appointed national communications coordinator for MDS, demonstrates disaster communications methods. Weaver is pastor of Broad Street Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Tenth assembly enthusiasm in Asia "incredible"

Lombard, Illinois—Returning from a visit to Mennonite churches throughout Asia, Jim Juhnke of Newton, Kansas, reported, "I was just there and the enthusiasm is incredible."

He was speaking about a new phenomenon that is emerging in the planning for the tenth assembly of the Mennonite World Conference to be held in Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30.

In many Third World countries, groups of people are organizing to travel to the tenth assembly. They are coming as music groups or private tour groups. They will come from Japan, Taiwan, India, Argentina, Costa Rica, Jamaica, and Kenya. Some will come at their own expense, others will be assisted by interested mission or church groups.

Their presence will lend an international character to the tenth assembly and provide opportunity for dialogue, sharing, and interaction on a worldwide level.

While this is an international gathering, it will not be complete without North Americans. For the first time in thirty years MWC is meeting in North America.

All North Americans are invited and urged to attend. The program is designed as inspirational rather than business. There will be singing, Bible study, discussion, music, drama, and fellowship. Provision is made for nursery and children's activities. This is *not* a delegate meeting. The tenth assembly is open to all.

Preregistration is strongly encouraged as this will greatly facilitate advance planning. Persons are free to walk in and register at the time of the conference on a daily or weekly basis. However, if large numbers of persons do that, there may be inadequate registration materials, meeting room space, and housing.

Registration forms have been circulated to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregations in North America. They may also be obtained by writing to the Tenth Assembly Registrar, Mennonite World Conference, 528 East Madison Street, Lombard Illinois 60148.

Retreat for singles, July 2-5

A retreat for singles, to which married folks are also invited, is scheduled for July 2-5 at Grand Lake, Colorado.

Named "Growing Edges," the retreat is sponsored by the Commission on Education for men and women who are single, widowed, separated, or divorced, as well as ministers and all interested persons.

Among the resource persons are Lee Carlson, resource minister for the Kansas Baptist Convention; Katie Funk Wiebe, professor of English at Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas, and author of *Alone: A Widow's Search for Joy;* Gary Stucky, professor of chemistry at Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia; Cornelia Lehn, director of children's education for the Commission on Education and one of three editors of The Foundation Series; John Gaeddert, musician and executive secretary of COE; and Herta Funk, director of adult education for COE.

Among the purposes of the retreat are to provide biblical resources for living the Christian life as single persons, to offer opportunity for single people to share experiences in structured and informal ways, and to explore the relationship of single persons to the church.

The retreat begins Sunday evening and concludes Wednesday evening. A registration fee of fifty dollars includes room and board. The deadline for registration is June 1. Space is limited, so early registration is advised.

Applications may be sent to Herta Funk, Box 347, 722 Main Street, Newton, Kansas 67114, or telephone 316-283-5100.

Unruhs appointed as missionaries to Taiwan

Ten years before the normal retirement age of sixty-five, Verney and Belva Unruh are leaving Newton, Kansas, to begin work as missionaries in Taiwan.

They have been appointed by the Commission on Overseas Mission, and after a year of Chinese studies will begin their ministry in Hwalien, Taiwan, in 1979.

Verney has served as secretary for Asia for COM since 1966. Previous to that time the Unruhs served as missionaries in Japan. Last year Belva completed an associate degree in nursing. Verney's service as administrator for Asian missions will terminate May 26. Peter Kehler will assume administrative responsibilities thereafter.

Verney's work in Taiwan will encompass evangelism, church planting, and pastoral ministries. Belva will contribute to the ministry of Mennonite Christian Hospital, possibly in the area of public health.

Despite the need to learn another language—a difficult task—the Unruhs said they were not only challenged by their appointment, but also excited. A number of factors motivated them to accept the call to return to mission work.

The primary reason was an invitation from FOMCIT (Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan) to come. In his letter of invitation to the Unruhs in November 1977, Andrew Lu, chairperson of FOMCIT, said the Unruhs were needed because four churches are presently without leadership, their previous work in Japan would minimize adjustment to work in Taiwan, and Belva's nurse's training would be useful. Further, he said, there are still many people in Taiwan who can speak Japanese, learned during the occupation of Taiwan by Japan in World War II. The Unruhs' fluency in Japanese would be an asset.

Verney commented that they had considered mission work in Hong Kong, and also in Nepal, but that the request from Taiwan was the one in which they were most able to "capitalize on previous experience."

Reflecting upon his twelve years as an administrator, Verney said, "The shift from mission agency programs to national church centered relationships is the biggest change in mission work during the past decade." He recalled that in 1966 his correspondence was with missionaries, and the Commission on Overseas Mission related primarily to mission structures. In the intervening years there has been a shift to national structures, decision making has been indigenized, and now correspondence is usually with the secretaries of national church organizations.

Belva and Verney Unruh

"This is not unique. Other mission organizations have undergone the same change," he said. "It has been a very satisfying experience. I have the highest respect for our overseas church leaders. They have always been an inspiration to me."

A second significant change is the interest of churches in Asia to begin mission outreach themselves. The Japanese have been the most active, and have given consistent support to Asia Mennonite Services. However, differences in language and wealth continue to be problems dogging cooperative work among Asian Mennonites.

Indigenous church active in China

Hong Kong (EPS)—A recent issue of *China Talk,* a newsletter published by the China Liaison Office, Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Church, Hong Kong, recorded an interview held in Hong Kong with a young Christian from China, Ms. Wong, whose entire family is Christian and peasant.

Explaining the system of worship, Wong said that Saturday is observed as the Sabbath, as normally there is no work on that day. "People attend various house meetings whenever they are free and interested," she said. She explained that singing, praying, reading the Scripture, and preaching all took place in their services and that everyone was expected to share in those activities.

Wong also revealed that about 100 people in her area were baptized recently. "It was during the winter," she said, and "one local cadre jokingly told us we should not baptize so many small children and elderly people. They might catch cold and have to report to 'sick bay' the next day." The cadre said that if that happened, he might get into trouble with the boss. Wong assured us that "nothing happened and no one caught cold."

It was also stated that the indigenous house church from which she came frequently celebrated the Lord's Supper using a "traditional" order of service. She was also insistent that her church was never related to "foreigners." "We do have some members whose job is to travel around our country visiting other house churches and shepherding members and recent converts," she said. "As far as I know, they have no difficulty in doing that. They receive a monthly stipend from us. This money comes from our regular offerings," she said.

Lesotho leader advises partnership

Akron, Pennsylvania—"Our goal is to enable people to realize what God wants of them. Development should bring out of people the best they have," says Father Motanyane, chairperson of the Christian Council of Lesotho (CCL), during a visit to Mennonite Central Committee offices.

Historically a part of South Africa and today an island completely surrounded by South Africa, Lesotho is caught by some of the same struggles that plague its neighbor. Although independent, black-ruled, and harboring refugees from South Africa, Lesotho's economy is dependent upon a sizable percentage of its labor force working in South African mines.

Surface travel in and out of Lesotho requires passage through South Africa, and flights leaving the country head for South Africa's Johannesburg. Thus Lesotho must maintain some degree of official cordiality with South Africa.

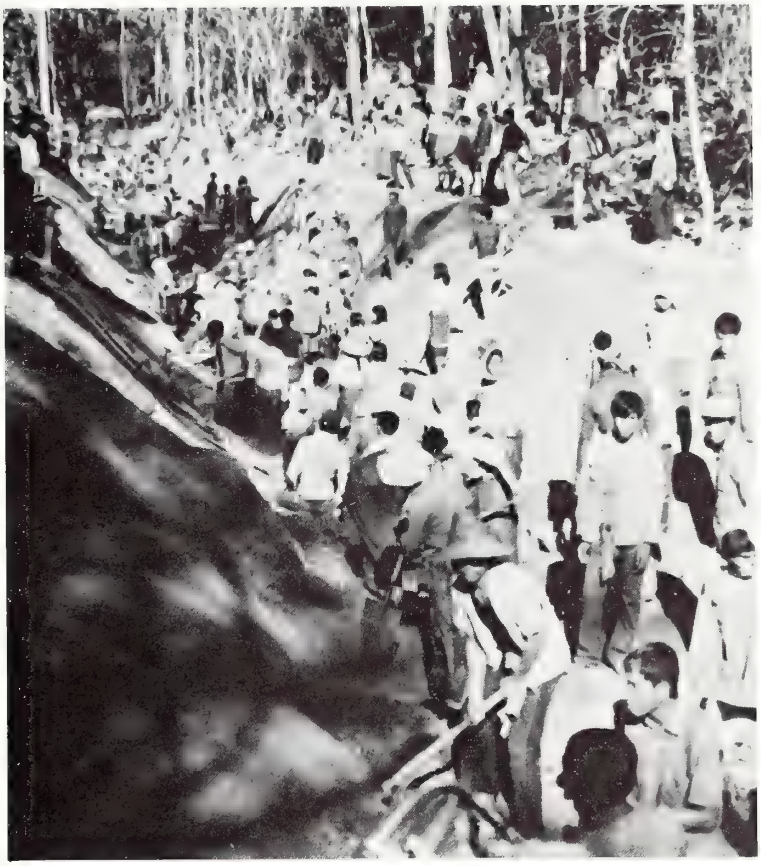
Given the apartheid policy and superior attitude taken by whites toward blacks in southern Africa, MCC workers in Lesotho sometimes question how helpful they are as blacks struggle to develop their own identity and country in the face of white oppression.

"Continue to work through organizations like the Christian Council of Lesotho," Motanyane encourages. "We need encouragement to help us work at our needs." But involvement from outside church agencies such as MCC must be in partnership with an indigenous organization, Motanyane stresses.

What do his statements mean in terms of MCC's work with the Christian Council of Lesotho? "Send us people who can be resources to particular projects," Motanyane suggests, "but let us make the decisions and then take responsibility for success or failure."

MCC workers in Lesotho are involved in developing fisheries, teaching at church schools, helping local hospitals with health care and nurses training, and working with refugees from South Africa.

Food to aid drought-stricken Laos


Laotians dig a 7½-mile irrigation canal.

Akron, Pennsylvania—Mennonite Central Committee is gathering a shipment of forty tons of canned beef, twenty-five tons of vegetable oil, and twelve tons of sugar for drought-plagued southern Laos. The shipment will be used in a food-for-work project to build a 7½-mile irrigation canal in Saravane Province.

Currently 6,000 people are digging the six-foot-deep canal by hand in 1,000-person shifts and have completed about three miles, report Linda and Murray Hiebert, MCC workers who returned in February from 2½ years in Laos. John and Beulah Yoder replaced them. The canal, to be fed from the Mekong River which forms the western edge of the province and the country, was destroyed by heavy bombing in 1968-1971.

A drought in southern Laos has emphasized the need to complete the canal. "The food situation will be critical in the spring," the Hieberts say. "The harvest was in November and December, so food is available now. However, the harvest was only 40 percent of what it usually is, and protein deficiency is widespread. The people digging the canal are existing on one bowl of rice a day."

The Laotian Government has requested food aid from the American embassy in Vientiane, which has passed the request to Washington, D.C.

Drought is not the only difficulty facing the Laotian farmer. In areas where fighting or bombing was heavy during the war, the ground is still littered with small bomblets the size of tennis balls. The Laotian farmer who strikes a bomblet with his hoe is usually peppered with pellet wounds and sometimes loses an arm, a leg, or his sight.

Metal detectors have proven useless in locating bomblets, since the ground is filled with empty shells and shrapnel, triggering continuous readings and making it impossible to tell whether the reading is caused by a bomblet.

The Hieberts were exploring the use of a pitchfork to till the soil by gently lifting it rather than the traditional hoe which comes down from shoulder height in a forceful chop. "The question is, after 2,000 years of using the hoe, will the Laotian farmers want to use a pitchfork?" Murray Hiebert observes, "If they do, will they be able to sustain the concentration needed to feel the texture of what they are lifting during a long day in the field?"

Laos is slowly getting reorganized after the war ended two years ago, the Hieberts report. Sandwiched between Vietnam and Thailand in central Indochina, Laos received a lot of fallout from the Vietnam War. Bombers returning to their bases in Thailand, where it is illegal to land carrying live ammunition, dumped their loads over Laos.

In addition, Laos was fighting her own civil war which pitted the Pathet Lao of the northern mountains against the ruling government of Prince Souvanna Phouma. It was a war between ethnic tribes as well as political ideologies. Many highland minorities were represented among the Pathet Lao, who took over governing the country when Souvanna Phouma ordered government troops to stop fighting in May 1975.

Despite the hardships of the war and the constraints of Laos' new leftist government, the church is active, the Hieberts report. New vigor exists among the young people of the church. "They are living within the government's constraints, testing them here and there, and claiming to the fullest the freedom they are allowed," says Linda Hiebert. The Hieberts were able to establish friendships with several young pastors.

Living in Laos during the first few years of its new government has been a test in loneliness and patience for the Hieberts. During their initial months the new government was busy reorganizing things, and officials were not very accessible to foreign agencies that had been allowed to remain in the country.

However, as MCC showed tangible evidences of their sincerity in wanting to meet human needs in Laos, more consideration was slowly extended toward the Hieberts. Late last fall they were among the first North Americans permitted to visit Xieng Khouang Province, an area that was heavily bombed because of the major supply trails leading through it. *Sarah Ann Eby*

Words & deeds

The People's Place Writers Conference has been rescheduled for March 31-April 1. The postponement was caused by the January blizzard. The conference will include workshops and lectures ranging from fiction, to film and drama, to inspirational articles and features led by writers Rudy Wiebe, Katie Funk Wiebe, and Merle Good. Registration is limited to eighty persons. Information is available by writing The People's Place, Intercourse, Pennsylvania 17534, or telephone (717) 768-7171.

"Six American Families," an award-winning TV documentary series, will return to Public Broadcasting and Group W (Westinghouse) stations starting April 4. Each of the six hour-long shows examines the daily life of a particular family. The series presents a mosaic of America to give viewers a deeper understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of family life today. It was produced by Group W in association with the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church. Study materials are available from Six American Families, 1525 McGavovk Street, Nashville, Tennessee 37203.

Christianity has capitulated to the times, conforming to the shape of the materialistic culture rather than outlining the sharp requirements of the kingdom. This judgment was made by Ladon Sheats of Jonah House in Baltimore, Maryland, during a February New Call to Peacemaking conference at Arvada Mennonite Church, Colorado. People from seven central Colorado communities took part in the afternoon workshops on various peace issues including world hunger, simple life-style, tax resistance, and the planned protest April 29 at the nearby Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant.

Placing Scripture portions in taxis is a successful ministry which has gained nationwide publicity. Claude Frazier initiated the concept. One plan is for an individual church to adopt one taxi company, and then talk it over with the owner and come to an agreement about keeping Scripture portions in that fleet of taxis. A medical doctor, Frazier may be written at Doctors Park, Building 4, Asheville, North Carolina 28801.

The 1978 Michael Sattler Seminar is scheduled May 13-19. Just as the previous seminars have focused on specific events, people, and places—such as the Schleitheim Confession—this year's tour will take a closer look at early Anabaptism in central Europe. Starting in Luxembourg, the tour includes southern Germany, Austria, northern Italy, and Switzerland. Providing leadership will be David Hostetler and Arnold Cressman. David is editor of *Purpose*, and news editor of *Gospel Herald*. Arnold is program director at the Laurelville Mennonite Church Center. For further information write or call TourMagination, 1210 Loucks Avenue, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683, (412) 887-9436.

Greater visibility enjoyed by evangelicals today has its dangers, says Kenneth Kantzer, editor-elect of *Christianity Today*. He spoke at the annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in Minneapolis. He said that the visibility meant that mistakes could not be buried, there would be public image problems caused by the extremes in the movement, and there would be sharper attacks. "We must reverse our role," he said. "We must stop acting like guerrillas on the defensive and become heralds—persuaders. We must move back into the mainstream of society, back into the marketplace."

A tropical agriculture seminar will be held at Goshen College June 19-30. The seminar is sponsored jointly by Mennonite Central Committee, Bethel College (Kansas), Eastern Mennonite College (Virginia), and Goshen College. The primary emphasis will be on agricultural production practices in the tropics, such as soils, vegetable production, fruit, and small-animal production. Discussions will include sociological, anthropological, economic, and theological concerns as well. The course may be taken for credit. Tuition for the three-hour course is $265. Room and board is $72.50. More information can be obtained by writing Franklin Bishop, Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana 46526.

Record

Calendar

March 27-31—Project Teach, Rosthern, (Saskatchewan) Church

March 30-April 2—Central District Conference annual sessions, First Church of the Brethren, Wooster, Ohio

May 4-6—Eastern District Conference annual sessions, Deep Run Church, Bedminster, Pennsylvania

June 15-18—Northern District Conference annual sessions, Dawson County High School, Glendive, Montana

June 15-18—Pacific District Conference annual sessions, Mount Elden Southwest Conference Center, Flagstaff, Arizona

Canadian

May 26-28—Art, music, and drama festival, First Church, Calgary, Alberta

Western

April 6-8—Conflict and conciliation assembly, Park College, Kansas City, Missouri; sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee's Peace Section (International); resource persons, John Howard Yoder, James H. Laue, John Adams

Ministers

Wendell Badertscher, assistant pastor in youth ministry and Christian education of Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio, since 1975, has resigned his position. He plans to increase his carpentry work as soon as he can be replaced.

John D. Bleam was ordained February 12 at the East Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pennsylvania. He served a voluntary service assignment under Mennonite Central Committee at Junior Village, Washington, D.C., from 1966 to 1968. In 1974 he graduated from Grace College of the Bible, Omaha, Nebraska, with a BA in Christian education. He served as minister of Christian education at the West Brook Evangelical Free Church in Omaha for three years before beginning a similar assignment at the East Swamp Church in August 1975.

Martha Smith was ordained January 22 to the pastoral leadership team of Stirling Avenue Church, Kitchener, Ontario. She had formerly served on the pastoral team of the Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Indiana, and as assistant pastor of Oak Grove Church, Smithville, Ohio. She is a graduate of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana.

Camp administrator needed

Applications are now being accepted for a new camp administrator at Camp Men-O-Lan. The camp is sponsored by the Eastern District Conference of the General Conference and provides summer camping and retreat facilities. If interested, write directly to: Camp Men-O-Lan, Route 1, Quakertown, Pennsylvania 18951.

For we being many
are one bread, and
one body: for we
are all partakers
of that one bread.
I Corinthians 10:17

Christ through His broken body unites believers across national, racial and economic barriers. An important goal for MCC is to work in partnership with local churches around the world in a ministry to the hungry, the captives, the blind, the oppressed.

Mennonite Central Committee
21 South 12th Street, Akron, PA 17501
or
201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Man. R3T

Letters

Mennonites and divorce

Dear Editor: The article of November 29, 1977, on "The Question of Divorce" by La Vernae J. Dick, and subsequent letters to the editor, prompt several comments.

First, dissolution of marriages among Mennonites may be even more common than the author suggests. It would be useful to have statistical evidence.

Second, a climate of tolerance and acceptance is necessary if we are to come to grips with divorce in the church community; labeling divorce a "sin" at the outset can only alienate.

Third, to term divorced Mennonites "adulterers" in need of "forgiveness" by the church community is rather presumptuous, particularly in view of the many marriages that perpetuate themselves on the tolerance level.

Fourth, the debate about whether divorced members may serve as church leaders is probably irrelevant. We already have divorced pastors serving successfully.

The difficulty Mennonites run up against when trying to solve moral problems is often one of language. We seem unable to work with problems like divorce unless they can be translated into the pseudo-biblical jargon of "sin," "adultery," "forgiveness," etc. But such language is wholly inadequate to deal with the complexities of our personal relationships. We need a more sophisticated moral idiom and a more comprehensive theory of human relationships which will take these social, psychological, and moral complexities into account.

The problems of marriage must be set in a social context. The rapidly changing role of women, for example, and the shift among Mennonites from closed rural communities to open urban groups are two factors which certainly affect the rate of failure in Mennonite marriages.

We must also ask ourselves hard questions about whether we can require permanence of any human relationship, or if, under present social conditions, failures in marriage are inevitable, or whether marriages at the tolerance level are morally acceptable. Ingmar Bergman's powerful film *Scenes from a Marriage* would provide a starting point for a discussion of such questions.

Finally, divorce is not only a personal but also a professional matter for Mennonites. Mennonite lawyers, psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers frequently handle marital problems and divorce cases. Do they treat divorce as a sin, clients as adulterers? In many cases I suspect that the church's lack of creativity regarding moral problems has also forced Mennonite professionals out onto the fringes of the church community. *David P. Suderman, 1110 South 121st Street, Tacoma, Washington 98444* February 3

Shocked at alcohol report

Dear Editor: Like Peter Derksen of Clearbrook, I, too, was shocked at the result of the MCC study on alcohol consumption and particularly at the dismal record of our General Conference people.

Now that we know, perhaps we should spend much time in studying Romans 12:2, "Adapt yourselves no longer to the pattern of this present world, but let your minds be remade and your whole nature thus transformed. Then you will be able to discern the will of God, and to know what is good, acceptable and perfect" (NEB), and to see what it means to us as GC Mennonites.

I really like our magazine *The Mennonite* very much. It has much good admonition and food for thought. I wish we could get many more people to read it. *John H. Loewen, 2406 Munroe Avenue, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7J 1S7* February 3

Change the name

Dear Editor: If your objective is to witness, teach, motivate, and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scripture and the Holy Spirit, why do you call your magazine *The Mennonite*? Please consider changing the name to *The Christian* so that Christ can be glorified even more. *John D. Klassen, Morden, Manitoba R0G 1J0* February 3

Thank you for uneasiness

Dear Editor: I wish to express appreciation for your thought-provoking article entitled "Uneasy About Canada" (January 10 issue). It comes to me as encouragement because I, too, have been uneasy about the seeming quietness or complacency among my Canadian brothers and sisters.

I, too, wonder why we are not speaking more clearly and articulately to issues like the Canadian arms industry, nuclear development, and northern development. Certain efforts are going on, but somehow they remain but faint "voices in the wilderness."

In answer to your question, I would say no, our hands are not clean. I say this even after having read Frank Epp's latest book, *Mennonite Peoplehood.* I do not believe that the issue is better defined national structures. Instead, I believe the cleansing must come via doing some of our Canadian homework.

I am proud to be a Canadian, but I am grateful to be a Christian. This gratitude I am privileged to share with my American brothers and sisters. Yes, we are one people in Christ, and I do hope that we will act accordingly. Thank you for the gentle admonishment. *Jake C. Froese, 1701 Ruth Street, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7J OL7* February 13

Who made the soup?

Dear Editor: The three articles by Perry Yoder (January 3, 10, and 17 issues) on creation remind me of grapenut flakes (containing neither grapes nor nuts). What he says is neither biblical nor scientific. I believe this same Perry Yoder was once sent out as one called a "People's Teacher of the Word" and I note at the lower left corner of each of his articles is a picture of the Bible with the motto "Open your Bible." I suggest that is a good idea. If we want to find out the truth about creation and whether or not God created material out of nothing and what his purpose in creation was, let's open our Bibles.

I am really not sure at all what Yoder was trying to say or prove by his articles. The whole thing sounds like confused double-talk by someone who has swallowed, hook, line, and sinker, the godless theory of evolution and is now trying to reconcile it with the Bible; or like some cult trying to explain the Bible as interpreted by evolution. Even the evolutionary ideas he uses are so outdated, it's kind of funny. Doesn't the author know that the basis on which the evolutionary hypothesis is built changes every few years? The evolution that was taught when I was in college would sound like cartoons even to the evolutionist today.

It is not only Genesis, John, and Hebrews that speak clearly on creation, but also the Ten Commandments; and almost everyone believes or at least they say they believe the Ten Commandments. Exodus 20:11 states, "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day. . . ." This statement follows God's command to remember the Sabbath day and work six days, resting one. I'm old-fashioned enough to believe he did it all in six literal, twenty-four-hour days. After all, Jesus could create fresh, homemade whole-wheat bread in just a moment of time with the break of the hand, not to mention baked fish. Bread in the normal process takes a number of months from seed planting to baking.

Yoder seems to play on the idea that God always used existing material and assumes that there was always what he describes as "primal soup." He seems to avoid discussing who made the soup! My Bible states in Hebrews 11:3, "Through faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible" (NIV); and in John 1:3, "Through him all things were made, without him nothing was made that has been made" (NIV).

Now if the reader is still wondering why God created everything, open your Bible to Revelation 4:11, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created," and also Colossians 1:16, "For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: All things were created by him, and for him."

Yoder says, "It is usually assumed that there is a conflict between these two points of view" (creation and evolution). I say yes, there very definitely is. They are diametrically opposed to each other. He mentions that fifty years ago you could lose your job as a public schoolteacher for teaching evolution in the classroom because it was felt that this was an attack on the Bible, but he says nothing about the possibility of losing your job for teaching the Bible account of creation today.

He says, "A lot of people still feel that evolution is a threat to the Bible," and suggests that the church is fighting a losing battle which will make it look silly in the future. I wish that Yoder would read up on the latest findings of science as well as the volumes of good scientific creation material which makes evolution look silly today.

I really don't understand why such articles were ever allowed to be printed in *The Mennonite*, the paper that should at least in some respect represent what we believe as a Mennonite church, or has my head been buried in the sand too long? Maybe I don't realize that most Mennonites don't really believe the biblical account of creation as understood throughout our history. I would really like to know, does Perry Yoder in these three articles represent the General Conference Mennonite Church when he says "that God is not so much the originator as the one who orders the universe and causes its fertile flourishing"? Then, who is the originator? Where did the soup come from? There must be a God who originated all things, who called into being that which did not exist before—and for me and my house that God is Jesus the Christ, my Savior and Lord. *Norman J. Schmidt, 25 East Swamp Road, Quakertown, Pennsylvania 18951*

February 14

Comment on Panama Canal

Dear Editor: We continue to appreciate *The Mennonite*. Your back-page editorials are forthright and fresh. All the contributors bring us stimulating reading.

Thank you, Suellen Fenstermaker, for your open, sharing letter, "Parenting Must Be Learned" (February 14 issue). That day-care center is very fortunate to have you.

May I comment concerning Anna Hofer's feelings about the Panama Canal treaty in the same issue?

Our American history books and the heavily financed antitreaty forces have done their work well, if I judge public feeling correctly. Truth gets lost in emotion, and fair judgment becomes impossible.

I continue to feel guilt and distress after ferreting out the Panama Canal's history and reading in a number of church periodicals the united appeal from South American church leaders to Christians in North America to petition our government to deal justly with the oppressed masses in their hemisphere.

We just might meet some of these sisters and brothers in Christ at the Mennonite World Conference. Did you read this appeal when it appeared in *The Mennonite*, Anna? *Mrs. D. P. Ewert, 309 South Cedar, Hillsboro, Kansas 67063* February 17

Panama Canal sentiments

Dear Editor: Thank you to Mrs. Anna Hofer for her letter in regard to the Panama Canal (February 14 issue). She has expressed our sentiments perfectly. *Dan U. Dalke, Route 2, Bluffton, Ohio 45817* February 17

Challenge Staufer letter

Dear Editor: I have never before been moved to write to your magazine, but I felt the need to clear up some misconceptions stated in Milton and Jessie Staufer's letter (February 7 issue).

In regards to the Panamanian people being satisfied with the present situation, may I point out that the Panamanians voted 2 to 1 in favor of the treaties? I would suggest that people who are satisfied "with the way things are" do not vote to change this.

As far as the statements concerning the inability of African countries to cope without white rule, let me point out that this inability stems directly from the nature of the white rule. Can we expect anyone to cope with a destroyed culture, no education, and no political experience or knowledge? To infer that this would also happen in Panama is to condemn present US involvement as domineering and exploitive.

To say that those who support the treaties are radicals, communists, and troublemakers is correct if three things are taken into consideration. First, Jesus was a radical. Second, our Anabaptist forefathers were some of the first proponents of communism (before Marx, Lenin, Stalin, and others got a hold of it). And third, in the eyes of the Pharisees, Jesus Christ was the ultimate troublemaker, and we are called to follow him.

I will save my views on world travelers cruising through the canal for another time, but I would like to say that if the "bungling politicians" of the United States cannot be trusted in this matter, I have little faith in a vote by the people who elected them.

Though I am a Canadian and thus have no official say in what happens, I hope and pray that the Panama Canal treaties are approved, for the sake of the Panamanian people as well as for the people of the United States. *Barry Heinrichs, 3190 ViaLoux Drive, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3R 2G9*

February 20

An evangelism seminar is scheduled April 5-7 at the Mayfair Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Resource persons are Floyd Bartel, Don Yoder, Lynn Liechty, and Dennis M. Oliver. Registration fee is $15 with traveling bursaries available. Write Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

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Christians and world events—a comment

The North American military–1

A sure sign of spring in our western democracy is the passing of the federal budget. As always, the US Pentagon is preparing, and indeed has already begun, its annual public relations exercise—to convince us of a necessary increase in budget so that the always impending communist threat can be dealt with.

This year is no different. Carter, in his speech to Congress, proposed that the Pentagon receive a budget amount of 126 billion dollars, setting a new, all-time high record for US defense spending. Although there is a small ray of hope that the annual increases, for the time being at least, are slowing down somewhat, it is clear that Carter has no intention of winding down the role of the US military in his country or in the world.

What is the Pentagon's magic hold on Carter and Congress? (There is some indication that this allegedly liberal Congress will pass a military budget even higher than Carter's request.) It is my belief that the Pentagon's propaganda machine is alive and well. Every year, at about this time, the Pentagon will insist that if there were an attack in Europe, the Warsaw Pact will have the advantage in the ensuing conflict. They have, we are told, more men, tanks, and planes than "our side" does. Also, we are assured that Soviet technology is coming up with this or that new weapon system, in which we are far behind.

It does seem somewhat strange, however, that soon after the budget has been passed, another section of the propaganda machine will hasten to remind us that all is not lost. The Soviet military machine, we are assured, is like that of a clumsy ox. Their training is inferior, the equipment is not as sophisticated, and the average Soviet soldier has no initiative or drive.

Meanwhile, the US military machine goes on taking into its grasp some 2.4 million citizens. (Women's libbers should be happy that it is now 5 percent female—it seems that women can kill as well as men.) How does the military function in the postdraft era? Most, I believe, would be somewhat shocked by some recent Pentagon studies concerning the personal lives and backgrounds of this "volunteer" army which is protecting the western nations. Let us examine a few.

More than 40 percent of those who have enlisted into the armed forces, since the end of the draft, were discharged for disciplinary, medical, or social reasons. Forty-seven percent of the enlisted personnel regularly use drugs (compared with 2 percent in 1969), and 32 percent are heavy drinkers, ones who habitually get drunk. While the number of high school graduates has generally been high (around 90 percent), the first six months of 1977 saw the list of new recruits consisting of only 69 percent high school graduates. The Marine Corps, which has always been considered as crack troops, has the lowest percentage with high school diplomas.

Obviously, these statistics offer no comfort to those who see the armed forces as one of the most important means of public service that a young person can give to his or her country. Since the abolition of the draft, those who are educationally oriented are not the people who are joining the various armed services. That the Marine Corps has the lowest percentage of high school grads suggests a clear lack of correlation between being educated and being able to obey orders.

The high use of alcohol suggests either that those drawn to a military life are those with drinking problems, or that the nature of the occupation leads to the need to drown out one's sorrows.

What disturbs me most is the fact that the evangelical community, by and large, is the biggest support group of the US military—yet the moral standards of those serving is not on par with an evangelical's avowed stance on personal morality. Vietnam would serve to further illustrate the point; the high use of prostitutes and the thousands of illegitimate children born as a result of that war is not consistent with an evangelical theology. Yet, until at least the latter stages of that war, some evangelicals were perhaps the greatest supporters.

Possibly the staunch nationalists, who are often outstanding Christians, have a "somebody has to do the dirty work" mentality. (We Mennonites have often echoed this in our own way, saying we cannot go to war on the one hand, but are glad that someone is doing it for us, on the other hand.) If we have come to the realization that we can not go to war, maybe the time has come to transfer that vision and say that no one can go to war on our behalf either.

As we fill out our income tax forms this year, so that the military can do the job which we refuse to do, let us remember what effect it has on the lives that are bound up in its powerful grip, and be in prayer as we move toward the General Conference's midtriennium session to deal with this issue.

The next column will take a look at the changing reality (the resurrection?) of Canadian militarism.

Harold Fransen, from Smithville, Ontario, is a senior student at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg.

Meditation

A great promise in the Bible

"An angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has risen, as he said.'" (Matthew 28:2, 5-6a; also Luke 24:23).

One of the joys in the pastorate (at least to me) is to acquire a new book for my personal library. Recently I purchased the book *All of the Promises of the Bible* by Herbert Lockyer. In the introduction he shares the following incident. A schoolteacher—Everett Storm from Kitchener, Ontario—took the time, as he read the Bible for the twenty-seventh time, to list all of the promises found in the Bible. He discovered a grand total of 8,810 promises—7,487 were made by God to man, two by God to the Son, 991 were made by angels, one by a man to an angel, two by an evil spirit to the Lord, and Satan made nine.

Of all the promises given in the Bible, the one in Matthew 28:2, 5-6a is one of the greatest. "He is not here; for he has risen, as he said." This message about Jesus touched people with different needs then, and I believe the same message about Jesus is touching so many people's lives today that we need to shout it forth from our pulpits and in our Sunday school classes, so that the Holy Spirit may accomplish his work in people's hearts and lives.

I would like to explore five groups of people who were helped by the Lord's resurrection at that time. This same message applies today; therefore, people with similar situations and similar needs can be helped by the Lord.

1. The message of the resurrection touched the brokenhearted. It was Mary who waited near the sepulcher, weeping, but the presence of Jesus changed all this to a dynamic joy. Today his presence can change our broken hearts to real, living joy.
2. Then, the message of the resurrection was given to those who had fallen into sin. It was Peter who denied his Lord at Jesus' trial. After the resurrection, Jesus told the women to tell his disciples *and Peter* about it. Later, Peter's encounter with the living Christ gave him forgiveness and the fullness of the Holy Spirit. This is what Easter is all about. Easter is a time for sinners to encounter the Lord.
3. The message of the resurrection was given to the bewildered; but when their eyes were opened by the Lord, they understood. A good prayer for us to pray often is: "Lord, open my eyes that I may behold the wonderful things in your Word." Easter wants to clear up our confused minds.
4. The message of the resurrection is a message to the church today. "Come and see the place where the Lord lay" and "Go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead." The resurrection message puts zeal into the work of the church.
5. The message of the resurrection came to the skeptical. Thomas learned his lesson of faith the week after the resurrection when the Lord had a personal talk with him. How can our doubts be handled? I like the lesson we learn from Thomas—come closer to the Lord and you will see.

Walter Regier

Between

And between two thieves,
The Word.
And between lies man weaves,
Righteousness.
And between supper and mourn
The Word of Righteousness
Was torn,
But not
Broken.

And Life stood tested.
Baptized.
And Light met darkness,
Crushing it.
And between supper and morn,
Life and Light
Bruised death's head,
Until dead.

And between the Word and death
I stood.
And again Light met darkness
In me,
About to be crushed
Until death.
But between two thieves,
Supper and mourn,
The Word became Life,
And I
Was born.

Dorothy Ferguson

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CONTRIBUTORS

Our two Easter feature articles are by two familiar free-lance writers: Charles Ludwig, 7217 East 30th Street, Tucson, Arizona 85710; and Maynard Shelly, 624 Westchester Lane, Newton, Kansas 67114.

The meditation writers are Walter Regier, now retired in Oklahoma, who wrote his article for the Faith Mennonite Church, Geneva, Nebraska 68361, as an Easter meditation a year ago; and free-lance poet Dorothy Ferguson, Box 315, Delburne, Alberta TOM OVO.

CREDITS

Cover artwork, Lavonne Dyck, Route 3, Box 49, Viborg, South Dakota 57070; 194, Charles Ludwig; 198, Rudy A. Regehr; 199, Ken Neufeld, MCC; 201, MCC.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

His kingdom rises from the fall

Like a needle stuck on a phonograph record, the history of civilizations repeats itself.

I remember one of the "big" boys in school, at the beginning of World War II, wearing a T-shirt with the slogan "The sun never sets on the British Empire." It referred to the proud days when the English navy ruled the seas, and countries like Canada, India, Australia, and many more were happy to pledge loyalty to the British flag. The "big three" of the Allies could not be conceived of without Winston Churchill.

How many of us today know the name of the prime minister of England? The dominions of that once great empire have declared their autonomy and designed their own flags. Britain is largely ignored in the international arena. If the sun has not set on the empire, it at least seems far away and dim on the horizon.

The Third Reich of Germany was to become a master race and a model nation. Today it is best known as the manuscript for an excellent history book and the plot for a movie.

Empires rise and fall. Kingdoms on earth build up strength and grow into world powers. It has always been so; the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Romans, the Chinese—they all rose to great accomplishments. And then they declined and fell.

Today we read about them. Each great civilization has made some contribution to the sum total, but none could sustain itself. They are single chapters in the book. Each one has a similar outline—the rise, the power, the decline, and the fall—like actors upon a stage.

This lesson of history should be a sobering one to us. Can the United States defy this course? Where is the United States in the cycle? How about the rest of the West? What about the Soviet Union?

Easter sets a remarkable contrast before us. Peter, in the first resurrection sermon, said, "... this Jesus . . . you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. But God raised him up. . . " Acts 2:23-24. Following that sermon, "about three thousand souls" (2:41) were added to God's kingdom.

God's kingdom, in defiance of all human civilizations, continues again this Easter. The late Kenneth Scott Latourette in *The History of Christianity* shows how church history also has ups and downs. We can see times when the lordship of Christ was more faithfully observed; missions, evangelism, and personal piety prospered. There have also been periods of apathy, perversion, and abuse of the faith.

The kingdom of God on earth has been a lot like the other human kingdoms—with a startling exception.

Every time in history when the church has been declared down and out, it rises from the fall. That is the basic lesson of Easter. Jesus' popularity came to a climax on Palm Sunday. His Jerusalem entry was so popular that his opponents declared,"the world has gone after him" (John 12:19).

Then came the shattering experience of betrayal, confusion, and crucifixion. The King of Kings was laid into a tomb. It appeared that his kingdom had gone the way of the world.

The epitaph on all the tombstones of earthly kingdoms is the same: They rose, they declined, they died.

Easter is evidence of a different epitaph. The tombstone at Golgotha has read for 2,000 years: Jesus came and began a new kingdom among us; it became quite popular. Opposition developed to the point of killing the innocent Son of God. The crucified Christ arose from the grave and his kingdom carries on.

The kingdom of Jesus Christ always rises from the fall. It is a specialty of his kingdom to breathe new life into "dry bones" (Ezekiel 37). He invites all people to pass from death into life forever.

His kingdom is unique. It rises (as we respond in greater obedience), it declines (as we become disobedient), but then it rises again (as renewal and revival break out among us). It has not died in 2,000 years and it never will. Most recently, in the sixties, many prophesied a post-Christian era where God would no longer be significant and the church would vanish into nothingness.

Today, just a decade later, there is an evidence of God's kingdom and a hunger for God's Spirit possibly unprecedented in this century. The name of Jesus is praised in surprising places—where people thought that the kingdom was dead—like the public media.

This Easter, let us rejoice in the certainty: His kingdom rises from the fall. BW

The Mennonite

Central District Edition

CENTRAL DISTRICT REPORTER MARCH 21, 1978

Central District to assemble at Wooster

"How Much Is Enough?" is the theme for the twenty-second annual Central District Conference, to be held March 30-April 2 in Wooster, Ohio.

Most adult sessions will be held in the First Church of the Brethren, Burbank and Reed Roads, Wooster.

Perry Yoder and Kenneth Bauman are the speakers for this year's conference.

Sessions for high school students will be held at Inspiration Hills, a camp about thirteen miles from Wooster. Youth are asked to report first to the church for registration; transportation will be provided to the camp. Those attending the youth conference should bring sleeping bags, towels, and personal items.

There will be no children's sessions.

Adult noon and evening meals, except for the women's banquet and the Sunday noon meal, will be available at the conference site. Housing is available in area homes or in motels.

The conference is not only for delegates, however; nondelegates are urged to come and participate, too.

The charge for advance registration is five dollars, to be sent as indicated on the registration form. A registration fee paid on arrival will be six dollars.

Delegate material was scheduled to be mailed March 10 so delegates may read in advance about conference concerns and discussion matters.

Yoder and Bauman named speakers

Perry Yoder, now dividing his time between teaching Bible courses at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, and serving as cosecretary for peace and social concerns for the General Conference's Commission on Home Ministries, will deliver three lectures at the Central District Conference at Wooster, Ohio.

Thursday evening at 8:30 his opening address, based on 1 Peter 4:10, will be "Stewardship and Gifts." Friday morning at 9:00 he will speak on "Stewardship and Resources," Mark 12:38-44. Saturday morning's talk, also at 9:00, based on 1 Corinthians 5:14-17, is titled "Stewardship and People."

Perry Yoder is a graduate of Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana, and he attended Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana. He earned his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania in 1971.

For a year he studied in Israel, and for a summer he worked there with a French archaeological mission.

For seven years he was a professor in the department of religion at Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio. He and his wife, Elizabeth, served for two years as People's Teachers of the Word under the General Conference's Mennonite Voluntary Service. The Yoders have two children.

Yoder

Bauman

Kenneth Bauman, pastor of First Mennonite Church, Berne, Indiana, will deliver the Sunday morning sermon. He and his wife, Mary, both graduated from Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio, and both studied at New York Biblical Seminary. He earned his BDiv degree from Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago in 1953. His MTh degree was earned while he was on missionary furlough at Princeton Theological Seminary.

For nineteen years Kenneth and Mary were missionaries to India, where he served as a teacher in Yavatmal (Yeotmal) Seminary, now Union Biblical Seminary. When he left India four years ago, he had been president of the seminary for four years.

He has served on the Commission on Education of the General Conference, and now serves on the Commission on Home Ministries. The Baumans have five children.

Central District Conference program

Thursday, March 30

4:00 p.m.	Registration—First Church of the Brethren, Wooster
7:30 p.m.	Opening session
	Welcome, Don Steelberg
	Devotions, James Dunn (conference president)
	Music by massed choir
	Opening of business sessions, James Dunn
	Recognition of congregations and delegates, Ronald Friesen (conference vice-president)
	Program committee proposal and floor time for setting agenda, Wendell Badertscher (chairperson)
	Naming of appointees—resolutions committee, credentials appointees, listening committee
8:30 p.m.	Opening address—Perry Yoder, "Stewardship and Gifts," 1 Peter 4:10
	Introduction of new district leaders, Stanley Bohn (conference minister)
	Recognition of leaders who have moved or passed away, Howard Raid
	Local housing committee announcements
9:30 p.m.	Fellowship hour

Friday, March 31

7:30 a.m.	Breakfast in homes
	Bible study, Ted Vander Ende
8:30 a.m.	Singing
	Devotions, Levi Hochstetler
9:00 a.m.	Appointment of tellers, secretarial assistants, and parliamentarian
	Address—Perry Yoder, "Stewardship and Resources," Mark 12:38-44
	Treasurer's report and auditor's statement, Carl Lehman
	Additional input for small groups
10:15 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m.	Reaction and response in small groups
11:45 a.m.	Lunch in church
1:15 p.m.	Singing
	Devotions, James Mohr
1:30 p.m.	Concerns, reactions, and questions
	Conference minister's report, Stan Bohn
	Reception of new congregations
	Resolutions committee update
3:15 p.m.	Break
3:30 p.m.	Business session continues
	Grace Church fund drive report
	Camp Friedenswald report
	Education committee report
	General Conference Commission on Education report
	Peace and service committee report
	Historical committee report
	Ministerial committee report
	Missions committee report
	General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission report
	Listening committee report
5:00 p.m.	Close of session
	Announcements
5:30 p.m.	Women's dinner meeting
	Youth supper
	Men's dinner meeting—Agri-Urban representatives will give presentations
8:00 p.m.	Evening session—WM in charge; speaker, Martha Nickel

Saturday, April 1

7:30 a.m.	Breakfast in homes
	Bible study, Virgil Gerig
8:30 a.m.	Singing
	Devotions, Darrel Miller
	Credentials committee report
	Election
9:00 a.m.	Address—Perry Yoder, "Stewardship and People," 1 Corinthians 5:14-17
9:45 a.m.	Additional input for small groups
10:15 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m.	Reaction and response in small groups
11:30 a.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Singing
	Devotions, The Assembly, Goshen, Indiana
	Concerns, reactions, questions
1:30 p.m.	Seminars (two fifty-minute sessions)
3:30 p.m.	Break
3:45 p.m.	Business session
	Election results
5:00 p.m.	End of business sessions
5:30 p.m.	Dinner in church
7:30 p.m.	Evening session—youth in charge

Sunday, April 2

7:30 a.m.	Breakfast in homes
	Bible study, Ernest Porzelius
9:30 a.m.	Worship service (location to be announced)
	Scripture, Larry Wilson
	Sharing time
	Installation of officers
	Prayer
	Sermon, Kenneth Bauman
	Offering for Grace Mennonite Church, Chicago
	Offertory
	Special music
	Communion service
	Closing prayer
12:00 noon	Lunch

Members of the Central District program committee are Wendell Badertscher, Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio, chairperson; Jeannie Zehr, Maplewood Mennonite Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana; Bonita Kornhaus, Salem Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio; Howard Raid, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

Call to worship

We have chosen, this morning, to come apart
From the sweat of our work,
From the tension of dealing with people,
From the frustration of uncompleted tasks,
From the clamor of our busy lives,
From the enticement of our possessions,
Yes, and from our sins,
To come into the house of worship and prayer, O Lord God.
Refresh us by the cool breeze of your Spirit,
Enlighten us by the knowledge of your Word,
Encourage us by your promises,
Forgive us by the cross of your Son, Jesus,
Set straight our paths according to your will,
Then send us back into the world again, to be your people of faith. Amen.

First Mennonite Church, Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, bulletin

Correction

The phone number of the Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio, for those wishing further information on conference materials and registration information, is 216-669-2697.

Central District 1978 ballot

Treasurer
Fred Liechty, Berne, Indiana
* Carl M. Lehman, Bluffton, Ohio

Secretary
* Mamie Burke, Chicago, Illinois
Jim Beitler, Jr., Berne, Indiana

Trustee
Paul Hilty, Fortuna, Missouri
Robert Shantz, Comins, Michigan

Ministerial committee
* James Waltner, Normal, Illinois
Mae Hartzler, Topeka, Indiana

Program committee
Kenneth Rupp, Middlebury, Indiana
* Wendell Badertscher, Bluffton, Ohio

Historical committee
Wiley McDowell, Sugarcreek, Ohio
Eldon Schrock, Nappanee, Indiana

Missions committee
* Beth Stuckey, Washington, Illinois
Joel Sommer, Meadows, Illinois
Paul Dahlenburg, Pekin, Illinois
Lotus Troyer, Flanagan, Illinois
Mary Bauman, Berne, Indiana
Kenlyn Sprunger, Berne, Indiana
Betty Hochstetler, Chicago, Illinois
Burton Yost, Bluffton, Ohio
Violet Porzelius, Bluffton, Ohio

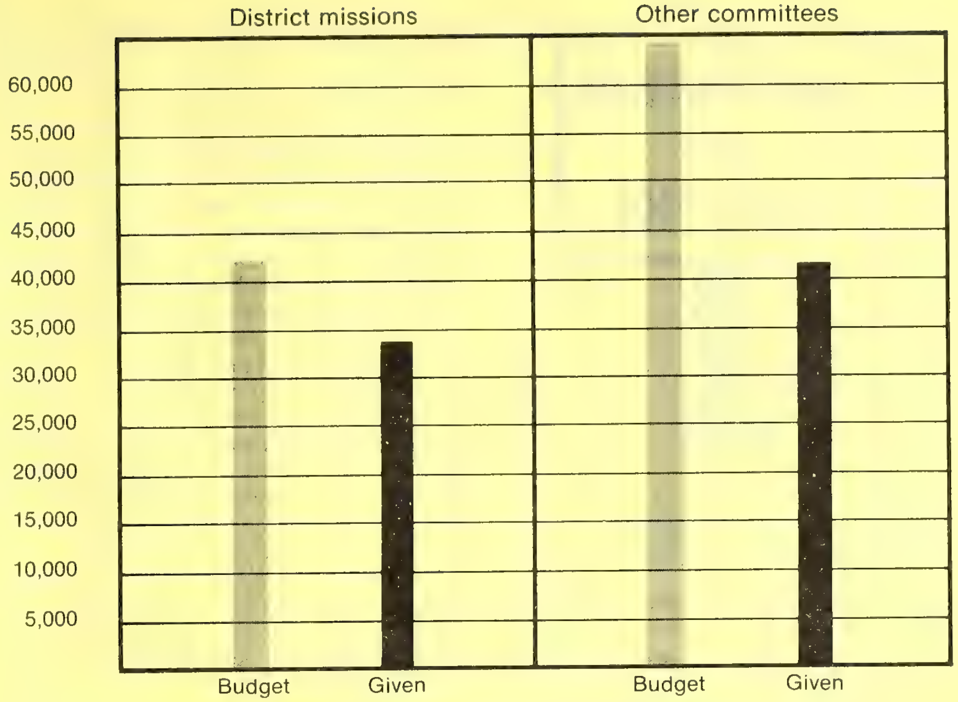
Education and publication committee
Robert Bertsche, Washington, Illinois
* Paul Goossen, Wayland, Iowa
Charlotte Hurst, Elkhart, Indiana
Mary Ann Kooker, Bluffton, Ohio

Camp Friedenswald committee
* Richard Bucher, Topeka, Indiana
* Glenn Snyder, Bluffton, Ohio
* Dale Yoder, Goshen, Indiana
Mary Jane Vercler, Washington, Illinois
Clarence Kooker, Bluffton, Ohio
James Jaberg, Sugarcreek, Ohio

Peace and service committee
David Orr, Markham, Illinois
Eugene Raber, Sugarcreek, Ohio
Doug Reichenbach, Wayland, Iowa
Jurgen Lichti, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Board of trustees, Bluffton College
* Ronald Ropp, Normal, Illinois
Robert Stutzman, Normal, Illinois
Elton Beery, Wadsworth, Ohio
Mary Kay Gerig, Elkhart, Indiana

*Incumbents



1977 giving report: More achieved than apparent

We have stayed out of the red in 1977 in our district finances because we used our reserves. In 1978 we will be watching our giving to see if the newer opportunities we saw, using some accumulated reserves, can be supported.

Our congregations did not "fail" in 1977, as they generally gave what the district asked. In light of the reserves, we asked for less than what was budgeted. It's no doubt good stewardship to use reserve funds rather than hoard them, but it also leaves us uneasy, wondering if we can shift from an easy 1977 year to 1978 when more is required.

In fact, our giving in 1977 was $7,000 higher than in 1976. In addition, a number of churches have also added support for a campus minister at Bluffton College, began giving for the Grace Church (Chicago) building fund, and also gave to the Camp Friedenswald development fund. When needs were made known, congregations responded!

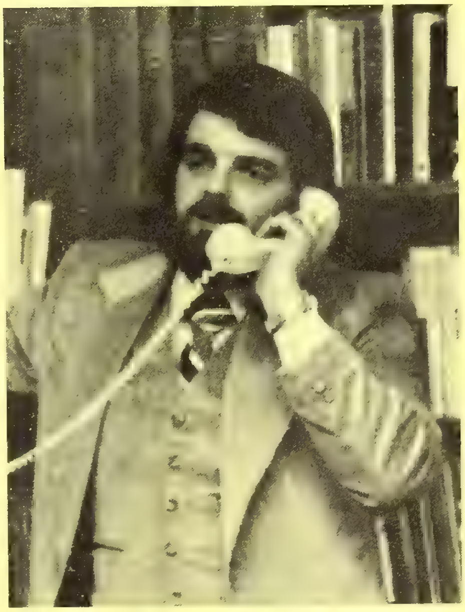
Schrag installed as Ames Fellowship pastor

During the 1977 triennial sessions of the General Conference in Bluffton, Ohio, the Ames Mennonite Fellowship was accepted as a conference member. This group is also affiliated with the Mennonite Church (Old Mennonites).

The fellowship meets at 10:15 Sunday mornings in the parlor of the First Christian Church, at Sixth and Clark streets, Ames, Iowa. The church office location is at Campus Plaza, 118 Hayward, Ames (telephone 515-292-6637). Although the group is small, it supports an active calendar of Bible studies, seminars, special speakers, and social events.

On October 23, 1977, Keith Schrag was installed as the first pastor of the group. Before his Ames pastorate, Schrag had pastored an Old Mennonite Church in Des Moines, and had been an associate pastor with the Lorraine Avenue Church, Wichita, Kansas.

Keith and Rhoda Schrag have three children, Jerry, Jonathan, and Lisa.


Keith Schrag

WOMEN AT WORK

Material aid program needs used clothing

NNMAP (Near Northside Material Aid Program) is one of the projects of the Central District Women in Mission for this year. The address of this agency has been changed. Formerly it was 6725 Hayhurst, Worthington, Ohio. It is now NNMAP, Outreach Committee, Neil Avenue Mennonite Church, 251 West 6th Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43201.

Used bedding and clothing are collected and distributed by the NNMAP. Winter and summer underwear for all ages is needed. Items may be new or used but all must be washable. Women's clothing sizes 16, 18, and 20 are particularly needed. They have no extra storage space so it is requested that summer things be sent in spring and winter things be sent in the fall.

For further information concerning this project, refer to the projects letter sent to your local organization's president.

CDWM provide funds for sewing machine

Leah Sonwani is a worker in India. She is involved in helping church women expand their horizons for spiritual growth and service to others. Leah was active in planning for and carrying out the inter-Mennonite women's conference in India which was held November 1-6, 1977. Martha Nickel and Lois Deckert were our General Conference representatives to this conference.

Following are excerpts from a letter that Leah sent to Olga and Harry Martens sharing some of the joys and challenges of her work.

"It's great encouragement to me to know your concern for me and my work. Thank you so much. The Lord has stored lots of blessings for us, and we have to receive them one by one.

"God is great. I have seen him at work through people. We have many capable and talented women. They are learning a lot. We have to encourage them to practice it. In India, people are trying so hard to get the good living standard that many of them don't have time for church activities. Our leaders need a lot of encouragement. Please pray that women in India will commit themselves for the Lord's work.

"It would be very helpful to me in my work to have a camera and films for taking photos and slides. These pictures could be used in explaining my work. Also a sewing machine would be very helpful for teaching the younger girls and helping others in need."

Central District Women in Mission will be providing funds for the purchase of a sewing machine for Leah Sonwani's work in India. Watch for more reports about her work in India.

Nickel

Martha Nickel to speak at conference

On March 31 at 8:00 p.m. at the First Brethren Church, Burbank and Reed Road, Wooster, Ohio, Martha Nickel will be showing slides and speaking about her recent trip to the All-India Mennonite Women's Conference.

Preceding her talk will be the WM fellowship meal and annual meeting. The meal will be at the Fellowship Center, Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio, at 5:30 p.m. Cost of the meal is $2.75.

For women who will be coming for *this meal only* and not the others during conference, reservations should be made at least one week in advance. Notify the president of your local women's fellowship, or Ruth Ramseyer, 4218 Akron Road, Smithville, Ohio 44677.

Mr. and Mrs. Ed Baumgartner

Ed Baumgartner reports on tape ministry

About three years ago, our pastor Ralph Graber brought back from the Key '73 conference some tapes by Myron Augsburger. I felt that they were good, and should be placed in our church library. About this time we had some church members who, due to illness, were unable to attend services.

I then purchased an inexpensive tape recorder and started recording the Sunday morning messages. We have continued doing this. We make our present pastor's (Lloyd Penner) messages available on the following Sunday for anyone wishing them.

It has been gratifying to build a collection of tapes of different musical groups, guest speakers, Mennonite history (Cornelius Krahn), some missionary testimonies and life stories (for example, Ella Bauman and Erwin and Angela Rempel). These tapes and many others are available from the church library.

I have enjoyed doing this service, but I cannot take any credit for myself, as God had spoken to me one night and told me, "These tapes are not yours, but are mine—all you did was record them. I told them what to say—so if I am happy with them, you should be, too. Even though you are handicapped, my grace is sufficient for thee." He also said, "Do what you can, where you can, as you can; do your best, and I will do the rest."

I have also felt a new need in the tape ministry. I would entitle it "Scriptures for All Occasions." The occasions for use would include illness, depression, loneliness, death, childbirth, etc. These tapes would be made available immediately to people in need. In doing this work, I covet the help of some professional people in establishing master tapes. Another field as a follow-up, and in addition to any tape library, would be condensed books put on tape and made available to shut-ins and others.

I am presenting this as an idea for a conference project, and the tapes could be made available through our educational division. I feel the tape ministry can be used as a controlled radio for our people. *Ed Baumgartner, Versailles, Missouri, member, Bethel Mennonite Church, Fortuna, Missouri*

Ella Bauman: Listener to the voice of God

"God never lets you down. He cares for you." Dr. Ella Bauman, retired medical missionary to India, emphasizes this idea in its infinite variations on a tape recording Ed Baumgartner has prepared.

In September 1976, Ella Bauman revisited the church of her childhood—Bethel Mennonite Church, Fortuna, Missouri—and recorded some of her remembrances for the church tape library.

Her habit of dependence on Christ began early. "You see, I had accepted him at twelve years of age," she said.

"One Sunday, D. D. King, our pastor at Bethel, Missouri, had the text, 'Choose you this day whom you would serve,' and that whole afternoon, evening, and even night, that question came to me, time and again. And I didn't give an answer.

"I went to bed and slept. Then during the night there was a touch on my right shoulder, as though somebody was waking me. I was sleeping with my older sister Bertha.

"I said, 'Bertha, what do you want?'

"And she was fast asleep.

"So that question came again, 'Choose you this day whom you would serve.'

"And I remember thinking, well, that's Christ telling me that.

"I slipped out of bed, and next to my bed, I said, 'Jesus, I accept you as my personal Savior.' And a very, very deep peace and joy came into my life that I've never forgotten.

"But, listen, I was only twelve, and I knew our church would never accept a child of twelve years old for a member of the church. And they would not baptize anybody before they were thirteen, fourteen, or older. So I never told anybody what had happened.

"But I was very desirous to read, and I read the New Testament very often, and for a long time I'd slip away from the rest of the family and study."

When she was a student at Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio, she discovered that God wanted her to be a foreign missionary. But there was a struggle: "Lord, do I have to go alone? Do I have to go as a single woman? . . . I want a family, too. And he just didn't give me any answer at all. So I cried, and I prayed, and then I said, 'Lord, I'm willing to go alone.'"

But she did not have to go alone. She and Harvey Bauman experienced God's leading each to the other in a series of miraculous ways.

Her parents, Dan and Anna Loganbill Garber, supported her decision to become a missionary. "I remember definitely when I told them when I was in Bluffton that I had promised the Lord to be a foreign missionary, and I asked them what they thought about it.

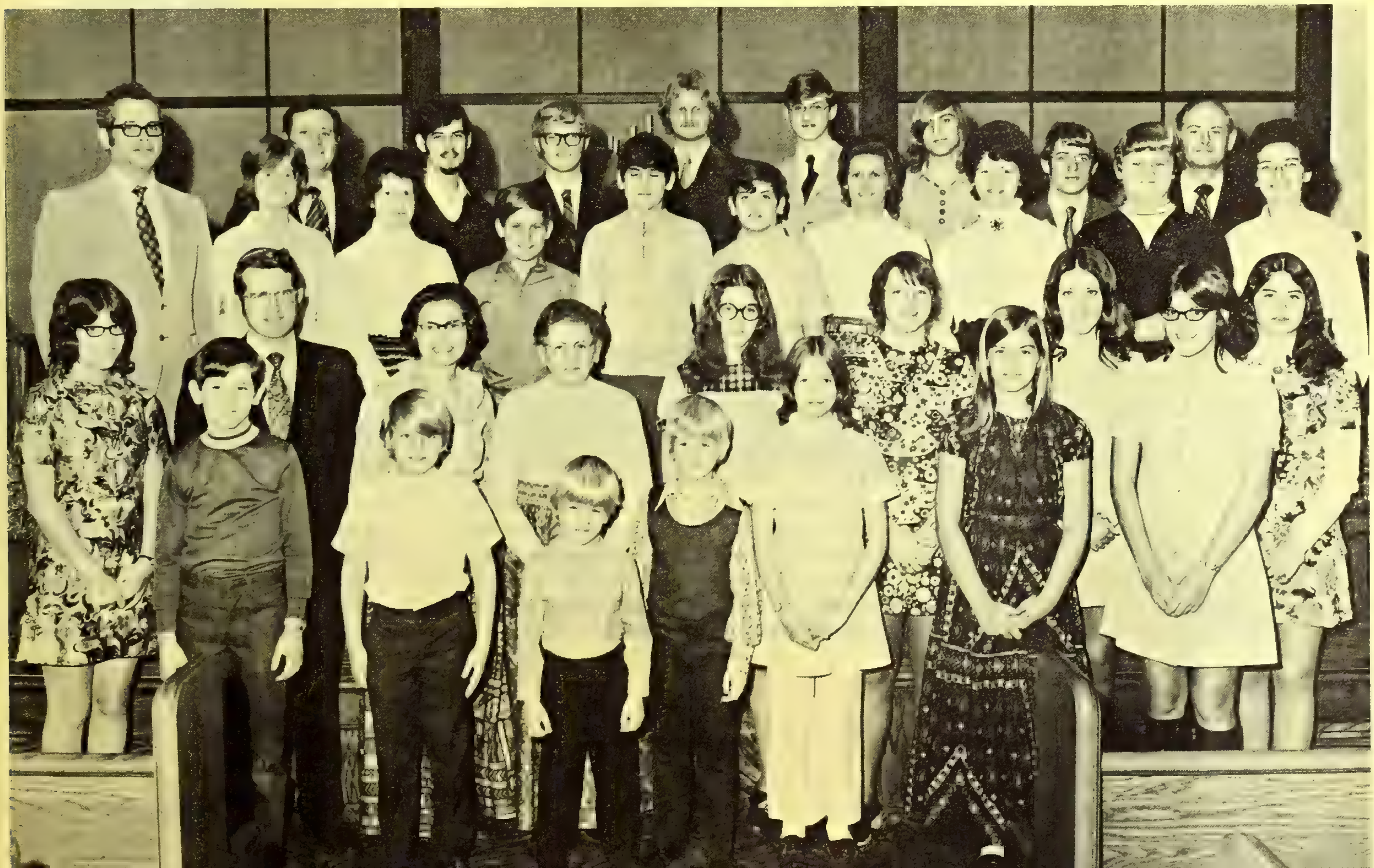
"They wrote back to me, 'Do as you think best.' I knew definitely that they were both thorough Christians, and that they knew, even though they didn't understand, and neither did I, what a foreign missionary would have to deal with, or how to deal with the work at all. But they were very happy when I was getting ready for that work."

Harvey and Ella were married after their medical school courses were completed. They spent over thirty-five years in India. Harvey Bauman passed away on October 4, 1970. Ella lives in Berne, Indiana.

She comments on the work of a doctor: "We tried to do the things we should, so that the Lord could heal them . . . No doctor is a healer. He is the one that knows how to do, what to do, and when to do it, so that the Lord can give a full healing if it is his will."

Selected by Evelyn Krehbiel from taped interview by Ed Baumgartner

"And Grandma, you were the cause of all this," one of Ella Bauman's grandsons remarked upon seeing a photo of her family. "I take the blame gladly, because they are a fine bunch," she comments. This picture of Ella Bauman and her family was taken on Christmas Day of 1972, in West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pennsylvania, Ella Bauman stands in the second row, behind her youngest grandson. Her children and their spouses in this photo are Kenneth and Mary Bauman of Berne, Indiana, where Kenneth pastors First Mennonite Church; Clara Ann Stauffer of Macungie, Pennsylvania; Albert and Katherine Bauman of Columbus, Ohio; Dr. Robert and Harvella Stutzman of Normal, Illinois; Drs. Walter and Betty Shelly, medical missionaries to Zaire, on furlough in Coopersburg, Pennsylvania. The twenty-three other persons are her grandchildren. Now, five years later, there is one great-grandchild.



Attention: high school students

A Mennonite history contest for high school students is being sponsored by the heritage committee of the General Conference.

Who may enter?

All high school students from grades seven through twelve, including those who will graduate from high school by the end of the 1978 school year, are eligible to enter. There will be two categories: grades seven to nine and grades ten to twelve.

What themes may I choose?

You may write on any topic relating to past and present Mennonite experiences. All sources, including publications and interviews with people, should be listed in the footnotes.

What are the specifications for the manuscript?

A manuscript should be about 1,500 words long and submitted in typed, double-spaced form, sixty characters to a line. No handwritten manuscripts will be accepted.

What is the deadline?

Manuscripts must be postmarked no later than June 15.

What are the prizes?

Both categories grades seven to nine and grades ten to twelve have three prizes each. First prize is $50; second prize, $30; and third prize, $20.

Where do I send the manuscript?

Central District contestants should send their manuscripts to Arman Habegger, Route 1, Pandora, Ohio 45817.

Life-styles examined

The infamous "Blizzard of '78" took its toll on the last three winter youth retreats at Camp Friedenswald. The first two, however, were very successful in terms of attendance, input, and overall response by the participants.

Dale Suderman, associate director for the General Conference's Mennonite Voluntary Service, was the resource person for the first retreat January 6-8. His topic was "Alternate Christian Energy." His main points were that (1) we are all stuck in the middle-class American "oil junkie" life-style and are "normal" Americans; (2) Jesus is the starting point for breaking out of that mold and we dare not be too satisfied with what we think is our "ticket to heaven" because Jesus calls us beyond that; (3) Mennonite Voluntary Service is a place to experience alternate life-styles in everyday life.

Sixty-four attended, with groups from Fort Wayne, Indiana; Pandora, Ohio; Chicago; and Washington, Illinois. Special guests were the Dewey Mennonite youth from Dewey, Illinois (OM). Wendell Badertscher served as the music leader.

The second retreat, January 13-15, had an exciting beginning with some typical Friday the 13th frustrations. The bus from Illinois broke down in South Bend, Indiana, around 11:00 Friday evening and it was 6:00 a.m. Saturday before they actually found their feet on the campground. The valiant rescue party (Max Sprunger, Darrell Miller, Jim Amstutz) found the group at Dennys all-night restaurant, tired and bedraggled from lack of sleep and too many hot-fudge sundaes!

Dave Kapuzinski, assistant professor of psychology at Bluffton College, and winner of the 1977-78 Peace Lectureship, spoke to us on "Why Be Tender When You Can Be Tough? Exploring Aggression." The first session examined different kinds of aggression, and how they are expressed. Topics such as "How do you typically react to conflict?" were discussed in small groups.

The second session dealt with family relationships and aggression. Role-playing was used, and an active discussion took place following the scenes. A movie entitled *The Tunnel* poignantly portrayed the aggressive behavior commonplace in inner-city life.

Mary Forney and Beth Gundy served as music leaders for this retreat.

The Sunday morning worship was a more traditional order of service with hymns, responsive readings, sharing, and a message on "The Good News" by Jim Amstutz.

The toboggan run again proved to be the most popular form of recreation with cross-country skiing running a close second. A snow carnival was held Saturday afternoon.

Jim Amstutz, eastern Central District youth coordinator

YOUTH MINISTRY
Serving Together

Calvary Church begins new mission work

Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington, Illinois, recently purchased a former beauty salon in Peoria for $28,000. It will provide facilities for the Harrison Homes mission program.

Stan Maclin, director of the program, and his family have moved into the spacious second-floor apartment. A dozen men have been renovating, painting, carpeting, paneling, and plumbing on the first floor, which is already being used for Good News Club, Sunday school (with children's breakfasts), teacher training, family counseling, and classes for developing homemaking skills. A special "Let's Talk It Out" telephone has been installed so that persons with problems can call in.

The building is adjacent to a low-cost housing project of 1,000 apartments. About 80 percent are occupied by blacks. It is also the highest crime rate area in Peoria, a city of 140,000.

In the process of acquiring this property, a zoning exception was needed from the city. There was strong opposition from the local alderman, but he changed his mind and made the motion for approval after Maclin agreed to join him in protesting a topless bar in the area. Of course, many people were also praying that he would make this change.

Ward W. Shelly, pastor, Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington, Illinois

Seated at desk is Stan Maclin, director of Harrison Homes mission program. Behind him are Ward W. Shelly, vice-chairperson of Harrison Homes advisory board, and Mrs. A. Perkins, chairperson of the advisory board.

College houses stranded travelers

Nearly fifty stranded travelers and some Bluffton residents made Bluffton College their home January 26-30 due to the Midwest's worst blizzard in recent years.

The storm forced all travel to a standstill, and caused widespread power outages in Ohio.

Stranded travelers from the Bluffton L & K Restaurant and Motel, which lost its electricity during the storm, were moved to the college. Some Bluffton residents whose homes lost electricity also spent a few nights at the college.

Bluffton College students donated blankets and opened their rooms to the guests during the long weekend.

The Bluffton volunteer fire department brought milk and bread to the college after supplies ran low during the weekend.

Some residence halls and campus buildings went without heat for twelve hours on Saturday, January 28. The campus food service uses gas ovens and students were able to be served meals.

Since most campus employees were unable to come to work, many students volunteered for campus duties. Students worked in the food service, shoveled snow, and worked on other campus jobs.

College baseball team competes in Florida tourney

The Bluffton College baseball team will compete in the tenth annual Christian College Baseball Tournament in Boca Raton, Florida, in late March, according to baseball coach Dave Moyer.

Moyer said the tournament will include from ten to twelve teams and will be held the same week as spring break. Bluffton will face two teams daily in the five-day tourney.

It is the first year for a Bluffton College baseball team to have a trip to Florida before regular season play.

Bluffton is a member of the Hoosier-Buckeye Collegiate Conference. Last year BC finished second in the NAIA District 22 (Ohio) baseball playoffs. Their 1977 record was twelve-twelve.

District calendar

March 27-April 3—Spring tour, Bluffton College Chorale

March 30-April 2—Central District Conference, Wooster, Ohio; hosts, eastern Ohio district churches

March 31-April 1—Youth meetings at Central District Conference, Wooster, Ohio

April 9—Offering for Chicago Grace Church in Central District churches

April 21—Presidential inauguration of Elmer Neufeld, Bluffton (Ohio) College

May 27-28—May Day and commencement activities, Bluffton (Ohio) College

June 16-18—Tri-State Festival of Missions, Bluffton (Ohio) College

July 25-30—Mennonite World Conference, Wichita, Kansas

August 5—Ohio Mennonite relief sale, Central Christian High School, Kidron, Ohio

August 21-25—Project Teach, Bluffton (Ohio) College

October 5-8—National New Call to Peacemaking conference, Green Lake, Wisconsin

Bluffton College Chorale plans spring tour

The Bluffton College Chorale will be on spring tour this year from Monday, March 27, through Monday, April 3, with concerts in Central District. Dates and locations of concerts: March 27, Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Indiana; March 28, Flanagan (Illinois) High School; March 29, Calvary Church, Washington, Illinois; March 30, Mennonite Church of Normal, Illinois; March 31, Wayland (Iowa) Church; April 1, Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Illinois; April 2, morning concert, First United Methodist Church (Chicago Temple), and evening concert, Lombard (Illinois) Church. The choir will make other spring appearances in several area churches and spend a Sunday in Central District churches in eastern Ohio.

Members of the Bluffton Chorale (boldface type indicates Central District members): Fourth row—Carla Myers, **Mary Forney,** *Sharon Prill, Scott Pitsenbarger,* **Steve Ropp,** *Lawrence Matthews,* **Jeff Boehr,** *Sara Brenner, Diane Line; Third row—Connie Jackson, Deb Lenhart,* **Cindy Ramseyer, Paul Weaver, Bruce Hilty,** *Ron Warren, Doug Follett, Olin Rotenberger, Dan Vermillion, Diane Brickman; Second row—Sandy Stemen, Jeff Foulkes,* **Jon Krehbiel,** *Dave Follett,* **Mark Hilty, Kent Yoder,** *Gerald Spivey,* **Curt Roeschley,** *Paula Smith, Diane Gehman, Vicki Altstaetter; First row—Debbie J. Amstutz, Laura Hager, Deb Cole, Emily Velasquez,* **Jenny Lugibihl, Diane Bauman,** *Virginia Hansen,* **Patricia Bohn, Gaye Sprunger, Jodi Lugibihl.** *(Photo by Leland Gerber)*

Meadows Mennonite Home expands facilities

At least one thousand persons from nearby communities responded to the open house invitation of Meadows Mennonite Home, in Illinois on Sunday, November 13, 1977.

The occasion was the near-completion of a ninety-four-bed addition and other improvements. Health and safety standards and modernization dictated constructing a water tower for storage and support of sprinklers, building a sewage treatment plant, converting the original east wing into multipurpose activity and chapel areas, and developing the twenty-acre plot. Resident capacity, formerly sixty-seven, is now 142 persons, although normal occupancy is expected to be 125 residents.

By Christmas, licensing agencies had approved use of the new facilities, in-home moves were made, and a beginning was also made in shortening the waiting list by admissions. Lotus Troyer, chaplain and social services director at the home, anticipated accepting six new residents a week, to complete placement in about three months. The staff will almost double as the new wing is filled.

Superintendent of the home is David Schrag. John Slotter is assistant administrator.

The Meadows Mennonite Home opened in 1923 as the Mennonite Old People's Home. The original structure was a two-story administration building, an east wing, and a rear annex for kitchen and dining room. The original assessed capacity for care was twenty residents.

By 1928, the home grew to eighteen residents and had a waiting list. Several additions were constructed over the years.

Superintendents have been Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Klassen, G. I. Gundy, and Frank Mitchell.

The home was organized by members of the Central Conference of Mennonites and the Defenseless Conference of Mennonites. Residents are primarily from central Illinois, most of them from Gridley and Chenoa. Half the residents are Mennonite.

A formal dedication is planned for June.

Smuckers begin ministry to aged

Irene and Carl Smucker

Carl and Irene Smucker from Bluffton, Ohio, will begin full-time work with Mennonite Central Committee US Ministries in June as resource persons in aging ministries.

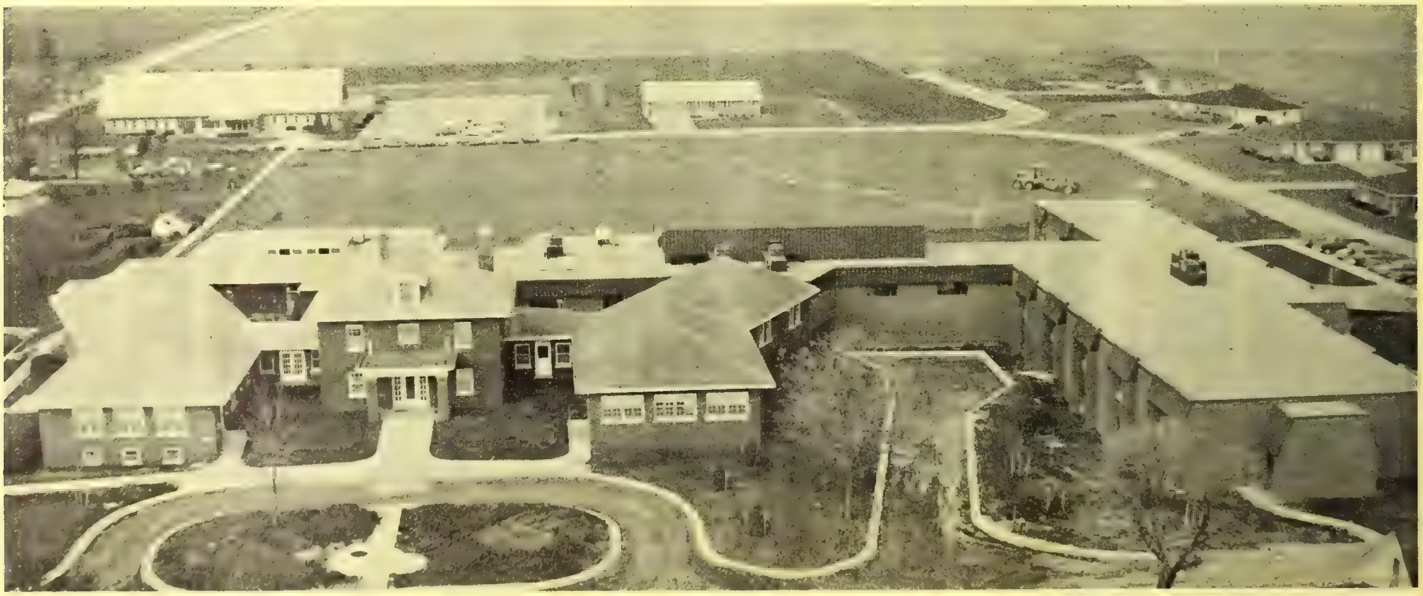
The Smuckers will give focus to a number of priorities of the US Ministries' resource program on aging ministries. They will be available to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregations and regions to assist in identifying the needs of the aging and help local congregations and groups to develop their own programs to meet those needs.

Their work in voluntary service will also involve consciousness raising on issues related to the needs of the aging among congregations and at Mennonite and Brethren in Christ colleges and seminaries. In addition, they will identify resource materials on the subject and write articles.

Carl and Irene Smucker have been involved in this field for many years. Carl is retiring in the spring as chairperson of the sociology-social work department of Bluffton College. During the past few years he has introduced innovative programs relating to the needs of the aging person into the social work curriculum at the college. He has done research in retirement planning, psychological and spiritual aspects of retirement and myths about aging, and has served as a resource to institutions serving the elderly.

Irene Smucker is a retired school teacher with special interest and background in health, nutrition, and exercise for elderly persons.

Groups or congregations interested in scheduling time with the Smuckers should contact MCC US Ministries at 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501. *MCC news service*



Here is an aerial view of the Meadows Mennonite Home complex. To the right is the new addition; on the extreme upper right are independent living complexes. In the upper left and center are the Meadows Church and the pastor's home.

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The Mennonite
OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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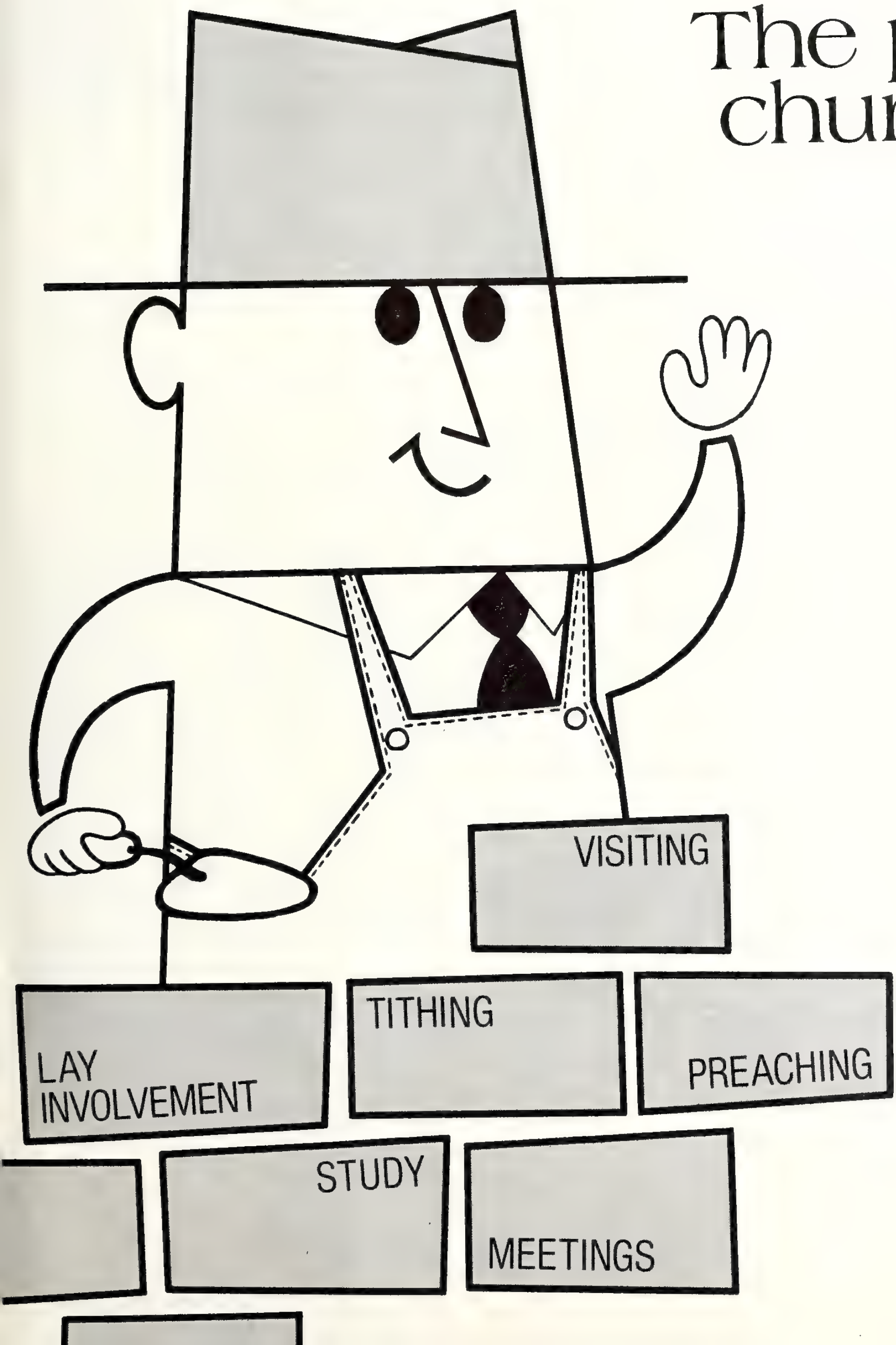


The pastor and church growth

Win Arn

The pulpit committee was in disarray. Nine months of meetings, dozens of candidates later, the pulpit was still empty. Members of the congregation wanted action. The committee had prayed, interviewed candidates, and contacted denominational headquarters, but the church was still without a pastor.

Every church periodically faces the problem and challenge of calling a pastor—a strategic decision for the life and growth of that church. A "right" decision could bring health, vitality, and growth; a "wrong" decision could bring disharmony, stagnation, and decline. Of course, every church wants to make the "right" decision. So does every pastor.

Let's assume that our pulpit committee represents a church committed to carrying out the Great Commission, reaching its community for Jesus Christ, and growing. In seeking a new pastor, a church will look for certain qualifications; and the pastor, committed to the Great Commission, to making disciples, and to church growth, will look for certain qualities in the church.

A survey of pastors and churches reveals all shapes, sizes, personalities, and ministry styles. God does not have a preconceived notion of the "perfect pastor" from which he makes all models and versions. Nor does God seem to have one mold that he labels "perfect church." Pastors and churches come in infinite varieties as broad as human personalities, as diverse as human needs, and as inclusive as the purposes of God.

The intricate mosaic of people and cultures requires churches and pastors to fit together, to complement each other, and to support each other. Frankly, there are some pastors and churches that simply do not "mix," through no real fault of either.

Yet, if we believe that this body—the church—functions as a living, dynamic, organism, where each sinew and cell has its particular place and function, then we must conclude that God has the right person for each church and the right church for each person. The problem is getting the two together.

Divine guidance is needed. The spiritual disciplines of praying, seeking his will, and being led of his Spirit are of prime importance. Are there additional considerations? I think so.

Fitting the homogeneous group

In growing churches, the pastor fits the homogeneous group. The term *homogeneous* is part of the classic church growth vocabulary. It simply describes a group of people where all the members have some characteristics in common and feel they "belong," where they like one another and share similar interests and culture.

Research clearly indicates that churches grow, and grow best, in their own homogeneous units. Churches develop their own individuality and active members generally fit the same patterns. People want their pastor to be like them—not too far above or below, not too far ahead or behind.

When a pastor establishes a church, the homogeneous group will be like the pastor; that's the kind of people who will be attracted. However, when a pastor is called to an established church, there is a homogeneous group which is already formed and is usually fairly rigid in structure.

A homogeneous group has many dimensions. It may be our educational, ethnic, social, economic, or cultural backgrounds, or a combination of these elements which make us what we are. In God's sight there is no more merit in being the pastor of a large church than of a small church, of a rich church than of a poor church, of a sophisticated church than of a common church. Yet, in our sight there are differences, and the important consideration for a successful ministry is that the pastor and the church fit the same basic homogeneous unit.

A church must also be aware of a potential homogeneous problem. For, while a church grows best in its own group, it can also die there by becoming an exclusive club or a small clique, sealing itself off from people in its community. "Why grow? We like it the way it is" represents an attitude which will immediately stop the growth of any church and in time produce decay and death.

Anticipating a long ministry

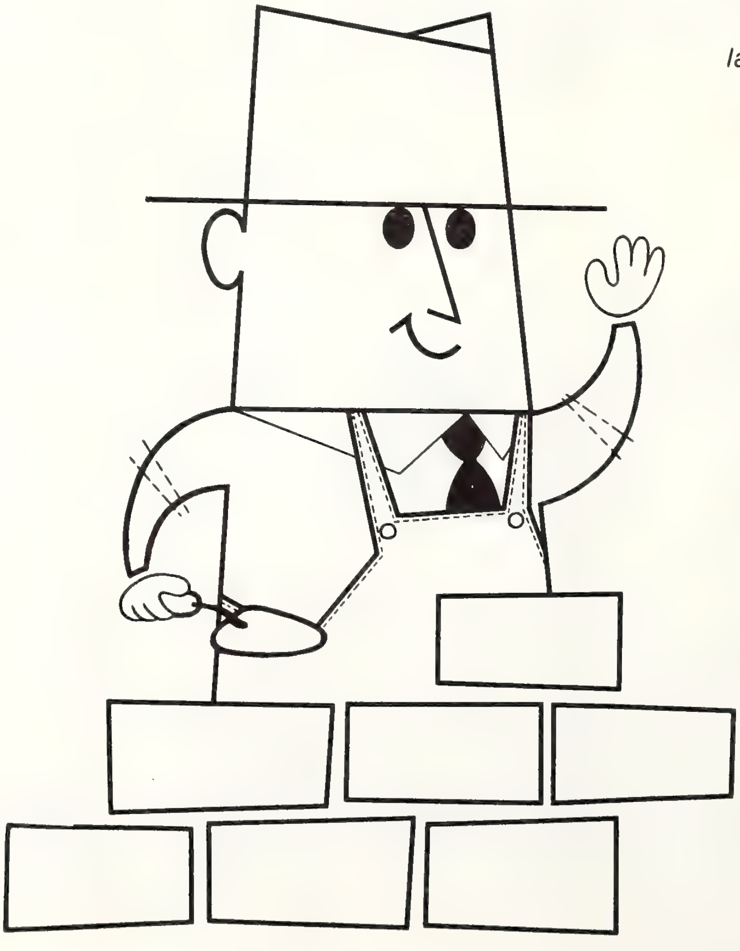
As a church growth consultant, I know of very few growing churches with high rates of pastoral changes. Churches with frequent pastoral changes are often declining ones. I recently conducted a study of fifty-eight churches in the Pacific Southwest. Over three-fourths had had a pastoral change in the last three years. And a high percentage of these churches had reached a plateau or were declining. Throughout, there was a mentality, almost expectancy, that the pastor would be here today and gone tomorrow. The people expect the pastor to have a short ministry, and it happens. With such attitudes, no firm commitments are made, no close relationships established, no long-range plans developed.

How many pastors see their call as a stepping-stone until their "real talents" are discovered by a bigger, better church?

If the church and pastor were to look upon their relationship as an irrevocable commitment, a marriage that vows "till death do us part," the dynamics would be totally different. There would be problems, but they would become stepping-stones rather than stumbling blocks to extended commitments and growth. A long-term commitment in a pastor-church relationship, as in marriage, has a marked effect on a growing, positive ministry.

Involving the laity

Basic assumptions of both pastor and church are of great importance. A church that feels "We pay our staff to do the work for us" is doomed to failure. Likewise the pastor who assumes the authority for all decisions,



How would you label the building blocks of church growth?

planning, and implementation will flounder in frustration. Research is conclusive on this point: If a church wants to fulfill the Great Commission, it will give high priority to lay involvement.

The growth of a church is uniquely dependent on laypersons. The pastor who sees the pastoral role as an enabler—to help the laity discover and utilize their unique gifts—is far ahead of the pastor who tries to "run the whole show."

Donald McGavran, known worldwide for leadership in church growth, says: "You would misuse God's gifts if you used them solely for the service of existing Christians. As we see God's overwhelming concern for the salvation of people, we must assume that his gifts are given to us, in a large part, that the lost may come to know him, whom to know is life eternal."

Church growth studies analyze church leadership in five different classes:

Class 1 Leadership: Members in the church whose energies primarily turn inward toward maintenance of the organizational structure of the church.

Class 2 Leadership: Members in the church whose energies primarily turn outward toward the non-Christian community in an effort to bring them into the body of Christ.

Class 3 Leadership: Members in the church who are partially paid and whose activities are divided between the church and outside activities.

Class 4 Leadership: Individuals in the church who are full-time paid personnel viewed as professional staff.

Class 5 Leadership: Denominational, district, and administrative personnel, usually removed from the immediate scene of the local church.

The key to dynamic, effective church growth is to be found in the recruiting, training, and utilizing of Class 2 workers.

A bar graph, based upon actual numbers of people involved as Class 1 and Class 2 leaders, helps most churches to immediately perceive that the majority of their energies, efforts, and finances are devoured in maintenance of the church in Class 1 efforts.

Utilizing time

Remember, our church looking for a new pastor is concerned with the Great Commission, with winning its community, and with growth. How a pastor uses time has great effect on church growth. Because pastors are not supervised, they must determine the areas of greater and lesser importance, and decide how much time to use on each.

Unfortunately, many churches in choosing a pastor place greatest priority on the person's ability to preach. Certainly congregations are entitled to prepared and well-delivered messages. Yet, sermon delivery represents a small portion of the pastor's total workweek. Indications are that the sermon, by itself, is a relatively minor factor in the growth of the church. How, then, should pastors spend their time to have the greatest effect in church growth?

Broad areas of responsibility that pastors must include in their time schedule are sermon preparation, reading and studying, counseling, visitation of members, administrative duties, attending meetings, visitation of prospective members, and training laity for outreach. Which of these areas should be emphasized if the church is to grow?

Research evidence to date indicates a significant correlation between two of these variables and a growing church: The pastor who spends a high proportion of time on visitation of prospects and training of laity for outreach tends to have a church with significant growth. (See diagram.)

Vision for growth

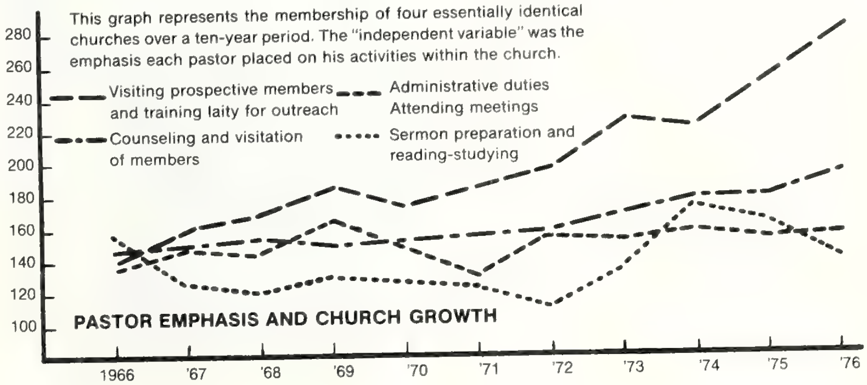
Church growth eyes is a term used by those fluent with church growth vocabulary in referring to individuals and churches who have developed a sensitivity to "seeing the possibilities and applying appropriate strategies to gain maximum results for Christ and his church." A pastor and a church with this type of vision make a winning combination.

Church growth results are achieved because some individuals—pastors or laypersons—see with church growth eyes the possibilities God has for their church, and then determine to achieve these goals. Such people are not satisfied with doing the busy work of the church. For them, God's desire is for non-Christian people in their community to find Jesus Christ, to become disciples and responsible members of the church. That's church growth. Such visions for growth usually involve "leaps of faith."

Some years ago, when making a film entitled *Circus* with a group of young people, we were waiting for the camera technician to return with film. The circus paraphernalia was all around us in the large arena. The finale of the program was a trapeze act on the high bars.

In the boredom of the moment, one of the young people turned to me and, pointing to the bars, said, "Why don't you try it?" I quickly tried to change the topic, but others soon began the chorus, "It's easy. You'll like it. Try it." It was put up or shut up. Climbing up the small rope ladder, I passed the net which looked very wide and secure . . . higher . . . twenty feet . . . thirty . . . forty . . . forty-five . . . fifty feet.

Crawling onto a small platform, I looked down and saw that the safety net had shrunk considerably. The young people urged me on. Swaying in the breeze, I mustered all my courage, took a hardy grip, and finally went swinging out into empty space, seeking the second bar which had been released for me. Out there, alone, I immediately made three discoveries. While I wasn't thinking about church at the time, they relate directly to a leap of faith.



First, one cannot hold onto the old bar with one hand while reaching out to grab the new one. A definite commitment, letting go with both hands, is necessary to fly through the air and reach the goal.

Second, you do not have forever to make up your mind.

Third, it is a frightening experience to let go of one's security.

If a church is to grow, it needs both pastor and individuals who will take leaps of faith, letting go of their securities and reaching for new heights. Bold pastors, visionary churches, committed Christians—these combinations make for successful, growing churches.

Christians in China

David Virtue

There are two Chinas: the mythological and the real. The first is what foreign visitors see. The second is told by those Chinese who have lived in China and have recently come to Hong Kong, and by those people who visit friends and relatives on the mainland.

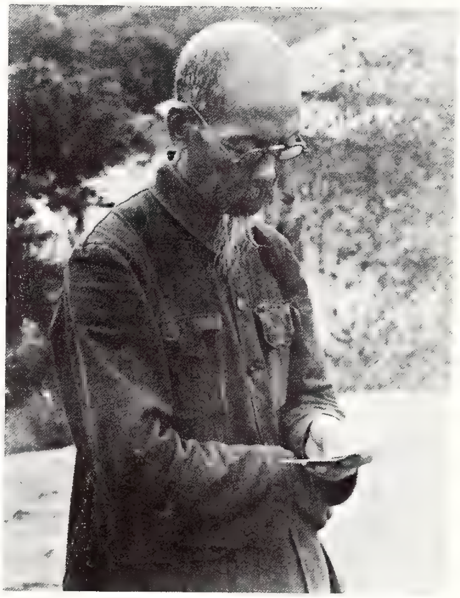
From the latter two groups the real story is told, says British-born David Adeney, sixty-six-year-old statesman and former China missionary who spent fifteen months under the communist regime.

In an interview, Adeney said that there are Christians in China who continue to proclaim the gospel, praise God amid persecution, read smuggled Bibles, and meet in clandestine churches. "The church in China has no buildings, no set time of worship, no paid ministers, and none of our ecclesiastical organizations. Yet it possesses a spiritual vitality often lacking among Christians who have not suffered for their faith."

Conditions vary greatly throughout China, says Adeney, recently returned from Hong Kong where he was teaching at the China Graduate School of Theology. "In some areas there are few Christians and little opportunity for fellowship with other believers. But in some rural regions, religious revival is sweeping the area at an unprecedented rate."

Adeney said he met a couple who had experienced frequent interrogation, were put under constant surveillance, and had their already limited freedoms even more severely curtailed. "These Christians admit that material conditions have improved since the revolution, but the mental sufferings since then have been great."

Adeney, representative-at-large for the worldwide evangelical Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF), says he met Christians from several districts where the church seems much stronger and where small house-meetings are more common. "On special occasions, large numbers of Christians gather secretly to study the Scriptures and worship the risen Lord."



A refugee from the Chinese mainland reads a Christian tract near Taipei, Taiwan.

Adeney says that the spread of Christianity in China can be broken down into four areas. "There are those few Christians, in the north, who are isolated and barely maintain their faith under extreme difficulty. Then there are a lot of Christians in another area who have no organized activities, but demonstrate real love for each other and tithe. "A third group, in a city of several hundred thousand, has thousands of worshiping Christians." Before he left Hong Kong, Adeney talked with a former Red Guard member who had become a Christian during the Cultural Revolution. The guard said his hometown had thousands of Christians, with a group meeting in some home almost every evening. In a fourth area, a province, religious revival has broken out and is widespread. This is presenting a threat to communist authorities.

"Last year more than 4,000 were baptized in open services in remote parts of the country. Young people are getting up in the middle of the night to worship, and new hymns of the faith are growing out of persecution. The elderly have little difficulty when they worship in small family-groups. Young people have more of a problem. Some young Christians have been arrested and shipped to labor camps for short periods."

Young people, said Adeney, are divided into district groups and attend leadership-training sessions. They usually do not take Bibles to such meetings, since an official interruption would endanger their copies of the Scriptures. "Before the meeting, the leader will write out the passage to be studied, and make carbon copies."

Public demonstrations of faith can sometimes be found at funerals. "When a Christian woman died recently, about 1,000 people attended her funeral. Authorities hesitate to interfere with funeral services; so the dead woman's faith in Jesus was proclaimed and the risen Savior praised."

No one knows how many Christians there are in China, but the gospel message is carried by Christian radio broadcasts and is heard by millions. Adeney said that during the last few months letters from Christians to friends in Hong Kong have contained more references to their faith than in the past. One young woman wrote: "My time for studying is very limited. I hope you will pray for me and ask the Lord to give me intelligence and wisdom, also to open my heart to understand his Word."

Adeney said that there is also a good sprinkling of Christians in the academic community.

"The basic attitude of the government has not changed, despite the death of Mao, but people are more relaxed as fighting among the Gang of Four has declined. The country is still polarized, but the confusing climate is making it easier for Christians to meet."

THE MENNONITE seeks to witness, teach, motivate, and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published weekly except biweekly during July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton, Kansas 67114, by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kansas 67114, and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions: in United States and Canada, $9.00, one year, $17.00, two years, $24.00, three years, foreign, $9.50 per year. Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Canada R3P 0M4. Business office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114

Getting ready for World Conference

10

Wichita
1978

Lois Barrett

With expected attendance of up to 15,000 at a single meeting, the tenth assembly of Mennonite World Conference July 25-30 in Wichita, Kansas, will be the largest convention the city has ever hosted. Hundreds of Mennonites and Brethren in Christ in Kansas have already started preparations for the influx of people.

Central Kansas has a relatively high concentration of Mennonites and Brethren in Christ. Seventy-one congregations are participating in hosting the conference, and most of these are within fifty miles of Wichita. These include congregations of the Mennonite Church, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Brethren Church, Church of God in Christ Mennonite, and Amish Mennonite churches, as well as independent Mennonite churches. Many of their ancestors came to Kansas from Russia or the eastern United States in the 1870s and 1880s, when this part of the state was settled by whites. Many of them, like their ancestors, are farmers and raise the hard winter wheat which the Mennonites from Russia introduced to the Great Plains. A larger number are in other occupations, such as construction, medicine, teaching, retail sales, social work, accounting, and factory work.

The seventy-one churches have about 18,000 members, giving central Kansas about 9 percent of the Mennonite population in the United States. Here also are three Mennonite colleges (Bethel, Hesston, and Tabor), central offices for the General Conference Mennonite Church (in Newton), and the offices of Mennonite Brethren Missions and Services (in Hillsboro).

In Wichita itself are five Mennonite churches with almost 1,000 members in the Mennonite, General Conference Mennonite, and Mennonite Brethren conferences. Mennonites began moving to Wichita before the turn of the century, but the oldest existing congregation of Mennonites in the city, the Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, was not organized until 1931.

Mennonites are scattered throughout Wichita, which with 270,000 citizens is the largest city in Kansas. In addition to businesses which serve the farming communities around it, the city's business and industrial community includes four aircraft companies, stockyards and packing plants, the international headquarters of Pizza Hut (the building which housed the first Pizza Hut is now a pewter shop), the Coleman Company (which makes lanterns and camp stoves), and both small shops and gigantic shopping centers with air-conditioned malls.

The military influences the Wichita area economy through McConnell Air Force Base, just southeast of the city, and aircraft companies like Boeing and Cessna, which have large military contracts.

The city boasts one state university and two church-related colleges, three art museums, a historical museum, an all-Indian center, a symphony orchestra, professional musical and theater productions, and a summertime vaudeville-like revue. Wichita's rough-and-tumble history—or at least some of the buildings where that history was made—can be seen in Cowtown, which is run by the city's Historic Wichita Board.

Sightseeing on the city's bus system may be difficult. The buses run infrequently during the day, not at all after 6:30 p.m., and not at all on Sundays.

Temperatures outside during late July will probably be hot (it's often over 100 degrees Fahrenheit in July), but Century II, the convention center where most of the World Conference sessions will be held, will be air-conditioned. Nearby are the main branch of the city library, the Omnisphere Earth-Space Center (a planetarium to most folks), numerous shops and restaurants, and a park on the Arkansas River. When in Kansas, pronounce it *Ar-kan'-sas,* not *Ar'-kan-saw.*

The Mennonite World Conference will stretch the capacity of Century II and, possibly, the capabilities of the Mennonite hosts. To get ready for all the possible needs and emergencies, local Mennonites have been organized since June 1975. More than ninety people are serving on the overall hosting committee and on thirteen subcommittees. They are planning activities for children ages six to fourteen and nursery care for preschool children. Another committee is finding buildings to hold all the activities which won't fit into Century II.

A food services committee is arranging for some meals to be catered in the convention center and is also preparing a list of restaurants in Wichita. Others are arranging tours of Mennonite activities in central Kansas. Still others are working on transportation, ushering, traffic and parking, publicity, medical services, office services, and an information and message center.

Finding housing for an estimated 6,500 people is the task of another committee. About 1,500 are expected to stay in area hotels and motels, about 2,000 in college dormitories, 1,000 at campgrounds outside Wichita, and 2,000 in private homes. Homes of Mennonites as far as fifty miles from Wichita will be used to house guests.

During the week of the conference even more local volunteers will be pressed into service for ushering, child care, dormitory check-in, typing, transportation, performing in a choir and a band, and directing traffic.

About seventy-five young adults will be involved in a work camp to help with construction of exhibits, child care, general errands, and guiding conventiongoers.

"The exciting thing about planning for the conference," said Lola Friesen, Mennonite World Conference staff person in Newton, Kansas, "is finding out the kinds of skills people have."

Some local Mennonites are putting all the registrations and housing requests on computer.

Others are designing a radio system for simultaneous translation of assembly sessions into the seven languages of the conference. The present plan is to station translators in tractor cabs parked inside Century II. Translations will be available on regular transistor radios with ear plugs.

Kansas Mennonites and Brethren in Christ are spending a lot of energy preparing for the conference, but as one local Mennonite commented, "When will World Conference be so close to me again?"

News

Umsiedler becoming religious force among Mennonites

Winnipeg, Manitoba—Providing for the spiritual needs of the *Umsiedler* in Germany is the focus of ministries being done by the Canadian Conference.

People of German nationality (including a significant number of Mennonites) have been migrating to West Germany from the USSR through an agreement negotiated by former chancellor Willi Brandt. The German Government assists these *Umsiedler* (resettlers) with housing, social and medical services, and employment.

Although well provided for materially, the religious needs of the *Umsiedler* are in flux. A number of options are open to the Mennonites among the *Umsiedler*: They can join the existing German churches—Baptist, Lutheran, Mennonite or other; they can form their own congregations; or they can simply melt into a generally nonreligious German society. Some do the latter. Some, especially those of Mennonite Brethren background, have joined existing Mennonite Brethren or Baptist churches in Germany. Some have attempted to worship with German Mennonite congregations. And some have established their own.

For a variety of reasons, the last of these alternatives is the most promising. In the USSR, many Mennonites joined with Baptist groups which were registered with the state and had a legitimate existence. These Mennonites naturally now tend to join the Baptist groups in Germany. Because of their large numbers, *Umsiedler* threaten to overwhelm existing congregations when they try to worship together, and this is the source of some tension. That tension is heightened by the fact that German Mennonites tend to be academic in their theology, and very much a part of German society in their life-styles, whereas the *Umsiedler* tend to be pietistic and unschooled in theology, and very much disturbed by prevailing social practices in the West. So it seems clear that the formation of *Umsiedler* congregations is the appropriate route to take at this time.

To this end, a number of groups including MCC, European Mennonites, and North American conferences are working together. MCC, since it is inter-Mennonite in its organization, feels that it cannot properly take the initiative in specific program development but can help with money for church buildings. The Mennonite Brethren Conference is working with its spiritual brothers and sisters. The General Conference has accepted a share of the obligation, but because there is a much closer tie of language and family between Canadian Mennonites and the *Umsiedler*, it has asked the Conference of Mennonites in Canada to take the initiative on its behalf.

Currently this work is being carried forward by the General Board of the Canadian Conference. Its position is that it would not be appropriate for the Canadian Conference to establish a mission to the *Umsiedler* with the purpose of making over those Mennonites in our image. Rather, the General Board states assistance should be in response to official requests from the *Umsiedler* to help them meet the needs which they identify.

Many urgent needs have already been identified. Because of the long period of religious oppression in the Soviet Union, biblical and theological knowledge is at a minimum; and because there has not been opportunity for open study or debate of religious questions, there is no common understanding and interpretation of Scripture. As a result of this individualism of understanding, and the intense pietistic commitment generated in an environment of oppression, the potential for dissent, strife, and even disunity is high.

Hence, there is immediate need for preaching ministries. There is a need to train congregational workers for all the usual congregational tasks: preaching, teaching, singing, etc. There is a need for theological training and education. There is a need for instructional material, and for publications which can help to develop a common understanding and commitment.

The Canadian Conference is responding to official requests from *Das Gemeinsame Gremium*, a European committee embracing German and Dutch churches and various relief organizations. Jake Tilitzky is presently there, working with congregations. He will stay until March and then the Henry H. Duecks of Chilliwack, British Columbia, will be asked to take up the work until summer. In summer, the Irwin Cornelsens from Vancouver will begin a three-year assignment in Germany.

This is just a beginning, and obviously costs are involved. Since developments have been recent, estimates have not been included in the 1978 budget proposals which were adopted at the Canadian Conference annual sessions in Toronto last July. The General Board is proceeding on the assumption that this is work which the constituency would support. Consequently, expenditures are being made on an "over-budget" basis, and special appeals for funds will be made.

The areas in which the *Umsiedler* are settling are generally in the northern and north central parts of Germany. At current rates of immigration, the number of *Umsiedler* is projected to reach 12,000 in a few years. That is equal to half the total membership of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. *Fred Enns*

Evangelicals to grapple with simple life-style

"The issues of self-sacrifice and a simple life-style should concern every Christian in the western world," contends Ronald Sider, professor at Messiah College and author of *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger.*

The evangelical leader wonders if Christians in the affluent West are prepared to deny themselves in order to relieve human suffering and share the Christian message with others. "That question is now high on the Christian agenda in North America."

Sider will be a coordinator of an international consultation that will explore the need for a simple life-style. To be held in 1980, the consultation will focus attention on existing models of simple life-styles among Christians in different parts of the world. It will be sponsored by the World Evangelical Fellowship and the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. It will spotlight the relationship between evangelism and life-style.

The 1974 Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, which issued an historic covenant on the many facets of evangelism, called on Christians to adopt a simple life-style if they were serious in their profession.

"Perhaps no expression in the covenant caused more anxious thoughts in would-be signatories at Lausanne than this," states Anglican John Stott, who has written a concise commentary on the Lausanne Covenant.

"What does it mean for the affluent to develop a simple style of living?" asks Stott in that commentary. The truth is that concepts like 'poverty,' 'simplicity,' and 'generosity' are all relative and are bound to mean different things to different people."

Copies of the Lausanne Covenant, and commentary on it by John Stott, may be obtained for $1.10 from World Wide Publications, 1201 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55403.

Coffee embargo could put pressure on Amin

In spite of the atrocities which thousands of Ugandans have suffered throughout President Idi Amin's bloody five-year rule, with perhaps as many as 300,000 murdered or disappeared, no effective means of addressing the problem has been forthcoming from the international community.

Congressman Don J. Pease (Democrat-Ohio) and sixty-five cosponsors have advanced a bill in the House of Representatives that may provide the first concrete action to have impact on a key source of support to Amin and his military henchmen. This bill, (H.R. 9526), would prohibit the importation of Ugandan coffee. US coffee companies are now buying one-third of Uganda's total export earnings, thereby helping Amin stay in power. Congressman Pease and an Ugandan spokesperson with whom we have met, indicate that the earnings from US coffee imports are used by Amin as his personal income for purchasing military hardware from the Soviet Union, to buy luxury goods for his "killer squads," and to enrich himself. Last year, the United States purchased 62,000 tons of Ugandan coffee valued at $176 million. Furthermore, 86 percent of Uganda's total export earnings came from coffee exports last year.

The United States purchased more Ugandan coffee than any other country and is therefore in a position to take the first step in bringing economic pressure to bear upon Amin.

But would sanctions hurt oppressed Ugandan coffee farmers and others? Our sources—Ugandans in exile—indicate that coffee farmers in Uganda would not be seriously affected by this legislation. They are not permitted to market their coffee through commercial channels. The Amin government confiscates the coffee when it is harvested and the Ugandan coffee-growers seldom, if ever, get paid for their produce.

Readers should understand that many religious leaders in the black community, both in Africa and the United States, as well as the black leadership in Congress, have been reluctant to publicly criticize Idi Amin. This is primarily because of their deep-felt concern that most white Christians and government leadership have not yet addressed the long-standing abuses and suffering of black Africans living under the repressive regimes of Prime Minister John Vorster of South Africa and Ian Smith of Rhodesia. *Delton Franz*

Thrift shop workers exchange ideas

Akron, Pennsylvania—A conference for thrift shop representatives brought more than 100 women and men to Mennonite Central Committee headquarters March 1-3. The first conference of its kind attracted workers from all sections of Canada and the United States.

The three days gave persons opportunity to meet in small groups and exchange ideas. They discussed methods and techniques of displaying merchandise and forms of advertisement. Many wanted to know what's going on at other shops in order to improve their own centers.

Inspiring messages on thrift shops serving the local communities were presented by Lois Kreider of Newton, Kansas, Et Cetera Shop and Justina Baerg who helped to form the first thrift shop in 1972 in Altona, Manitoba.

"Our time becomes truly valuable if spent in worthwhile pursuits," Baerg admonished. "Every Christian should ask, 'Where does God want me to serve?' It is true that we cannot all serve abroad, but we can serve right here. We can empty our closets, spend time at the shop, make new friends from different churches, meet over a cup of coffee—this is no sacrifice! For some it's just what the doctor ordered—to get out of the house, forget about your own problems, get involved with something meaningful. According to God's Word we should all be doers in our churches. Listening is not enough—we must *do*; hearing is not sufficient—we must *act*."

Some representatives who were wearing fashions from another era confessed to buying most of their clothing and accessories at the shops where they work. A supervisor spoke of feeling OK about being out of step with friends who are concerned with acquiring the latest in clothes and home furnishings.

Thrift shop workers listen as Joyce Bratton explains the day's schedule.

The conference was chaired by John Hostetler, director for material aid, and Joyce Bratton who is on a one-year assignment to promote thrift shops. The group toured the material aid center and Self-Help retail shop at nearby Ephrata. Seeing actual items on display was helpful to those who serve as buyers; some returned later to place orders.

Thrift shops have been successful as a way to convert good-quality used items into cash for MCC. In the twelve months ending November 30, 1977, MCC (Canada) received $193,990 from Canadian shops and MCC received $74,000 from shops in the United States. Since the first thrift shop opened, the idea mushroomed and new shops continue to form. Some shops are managed by a committee; some are headed by salaried or volunteer managers. Some keep in close touch with MCC material aid office; others maintain very loose affiliation. MCC recommends that each shop be sponsored by a local church or churches, thereby maintaining tax exempt status. For those who start thrift shops, MCC is ready to be of help.

Leaders discuss Christian worship

What are valid symbols for worship? How test the preached word? How develop spiritual electricity among worshipers on Sunday when it is absent during the week?

Attempts were made to answer such questions at a workshop on "Sources of Renewal in Christian Worship" conducted by the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, January 30-February 3.

"For the Christian," Walter Klassen said, "God should be the center of worship, both as creator and redeemer. Jesus becomes important in Christian worship because of the resurrection. The early church celebrated the Lord's resurrection weekly. We have not devised good ways of including creation in worship except for several hymns." Klassen teaches at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario.

Harold Bauman, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, Elkhart, identified issues in Mennonite worship. He observed that Mennonite worship patterns differ little from other Protestant practices. Little opportunity is provided for testing what is preached. "To what extent are members' gifts used in the worship service?" he asked.

"Another issue deals with how worship relates to life. Does it speak to social and economic issues? Does it provide opportunity for sharing—testimonies, prayer requests, laying on of hands?

"The quality of worship also becomes an issue. Mennonite worship is not joyful. It lacks the spiritual electricity characteristic of worshipers who sense the presence of the Holy Spirit and respond to him," Bauman said.

At the Tuesday forenoon sessions, Don Hustad, professor of church music, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, helped participants understand music in worship. "Music, the language of the emotions, can say things words cannot," Hustad insisted. He said that the new folk music is an updated version of the gospel song. During periods of renewal the church has always gone outside the church to get its music for new hymns.

On Tuesday evening, Loretta Yoder, professor of religious drama, Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Indiana, and a pastor's wife, presented three monologues and discussed "The Use of Dramatic Form in Worship." "Dramatic enactment is a mysterious force used to teach us, to move us," she declared. "Drama identifies and strengthens our own commitments. In drama, the audience must look at what the actor is doing, not at the person."

Mayor greets chorus

Chalmer Arnett, mayor of Morton, Illinois, welcomes the Kansas Mennonite Men's Chorus (KMMC) prior to their concert to 2,500 people at Illinois State University in Normal, Sunday, March 12. The chorus sang throughout a busy weekend. Five-hundred and forty men boarded twelve buses at Hesston, Kansas, on Friday. They presented a concert at the Illinois Mennonite relief sale Saturday afternoon. Sunday morning they split up for eighteen mini-concerts in area churches. After the university concert, they boarded buses at 6:00 p.m. for the return trip to Hesston, arriving at 7:00 a.m. Monday. The KMMC is composed this year of 643 men, a ten-year record, ranging in age from the early teens across seventy years to the early eighties. With the purpose of "singing so others may eat," the chorus was first organized in 1969. It is directed by Paul Wohlgemuth. The KMMC will present a concert at Cessna Stadium in Wichita for the Mennonite World Conference.

James F. White, professor of Christian worship, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, conducted two sessions on "Constant and Changeable Elements in Worship."

"Indifference and ignorance," White said, "are two foes of worship. A true worship service meets human need and is characterized by simplicity. It involves proper use of time and an understanding of how God works in time." During the second session, he reflected, "The trend is toward more expository preaching and less authoritarian preaching as symbolized by the high pulpit."

Thursday morning, Fred Unruh, pastor of the Grace Mennonite Church, St. Catharines, Ontario, demonstrated how to plan a service and how to involve other persons in the planning so that it becomes more of a congregational activity.

"Changes in the service are possible," he said, "but change should be limited to one part of the service at a time. Do something unusual once a month and get people involved, not forgetting to offer public thanks to those who have contributed to the service."

The Thursday afternoon session was given to "Learning from House Churches" with Keith Kingsley, Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart; Mark Wagner, Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship; and Ron Brunk, Covenant Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kansas, participating. Among these groups worship includes a proper environment with the group sitting in a circle, sharing personal and general concerns, decision-making, praise, teaching rather than preaching, and response to the teaching. Worship is characterized by informality and flexibility.

The Thursday evening session was given to "Learning from the Charismatics." Robert Bizarro, Dean of St. James Episcopal Cathedral, South Bend, Indiana, defined a charismatic Christian as one who is greatly aware of the Holy Spirit and his gifts. This should be the experience of every Christian. The difference lies in the degree of awareness of the power and presence of Christ. "The charismatic experience is really a turning from self to Jesus," Bizarro explained.

Roy K. Yoder, pastor of the Pleasantview Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana, stated, "For us at Pleasantview, Holy Spirit renewal has meant a freedom in worship, a new appreciation for the old hymns, a new sense of God's presence, a renewed desire to know the Word of God, use of scripture songs, sharing during testimony time, an increase in prayer, an occasional word of prophecy and exhortation, and frequent opportunity for God to meet individual needs during the worship service."

Total registration at the workshop reached 136 full- and part-time participants. Most were affiliated with the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. *Levi Hartzler*

Church "drafts" its young men —and women

Goessel, Kansas—Taking seriously the teachings of Jesus on nonresistance and love of enemy in a time of peace can be a difficult problem even for a "peace church."

With no major international conflict raging, and no draft in force, the peace and social concerns committee of the Tabor Mennonite Church asked, What does peace education mean in a time without war? The committee decided to present clearly to the congregation the options of being peacemakers versus being warmakers.

To do this they "manufactured a crisis" for each young person aged eighteen to twenty-five, both men and women. Without warning, each youth received a letter informing him or her that the draft may be reinstated. It asked each one to make a written response to the questions previously asked of conscientious objectors by Selective Service.

The questions began: "Describe the beliefs which are the basis of your claim as a conscientious objector or peacemaker." Four more similar questions followed.

The letter stated further that in two weeks all youth of this age would be called to participate in a demonstration of a "draft lottery." That Sunday about twenty-five youth were called one by one to stand before the congregation according to their "draft number." The youth were informed that the following Sunday's worship service would include calling two of them to appear before a "draft board" to defend their position as conscientious objectors. Both a young man and a young woman were informed during the week by registered letter (the method of Selective Service) that they were to appear.

There was no sermon in church that Sunday, at least not in the conventional sense. But the two youth provided a memorable witness as they fielded the unrehearsed questions of the "draft board." H. B. Schmidt, retired minister and member of the congregation, used his many years of experience with draft counseling as the chairman of the board.

What were the results? For one, the completed questionnaires will be filed away as prior documentation of each person's convictions should the draft be reinstated.

But there was much more to it than that. Youth and parents were stimulated to discuss the issue anew. Many insights from the past were shared. Many youth were pushed to do research and study. Most became better acquainted with the scriptural basis for peacemaking, particularly as taught by Jesus. *James Schrag*

Mini-World Conference in Nebraska

Fifty-three young adults (some of whom are pictured above) from four continents converged in Nebraska early in February for the mid-year conference of the MCC Exchange Visitor Program. For the exchange visitors it was an exciting reunion as they reviewed their first six months in North America and looked ahead to the next half of their year's stay. Hosted by nine churches, the group gave four public programs at Mennonite churches in Henderson, Beatrice, Milford, and Shickley. At one of the churches a pastor commented, "Here we have a forerunner of this summer's conference—our own little world conference." The visitor exchange program could be greatly expanded if there were more North American sponsors available.

Contributions needed for book on simple living

Akron, Pennsylvania—Living better while using less of the world's resources—this will be the subject of another book by Doris Longacre in a joint effort with Mennonite Central Committee. Her first book, the *More-with-Less Cookbook,* has become a favorite resource in many homes and the questions now being asked are, What more needs to be studied on this subject? How does the Christian community make responsible changes in use of limited resources?

Longacre needs the participation of the church in helping to compile the new book. Hundreds responded spontaneously to the call for recipes for the cookbook. The author will follow the same procedure in asking for reader response. Mennonites have a long history of living simply and frugally and not automatically accepting the ways of the surrounding culture. "The process of combining our efforts and working together at personal responsibility can be as important as the finished book," says Longacre.

For persons interested in contributing to the new book, Longacre offers these suggestions: Tell something you have learned about conserving resources; this might be something you picked up from a grandparent or a neighbor with limited income. If you have lived overseas or have kept international guests in your home, share some new ideas you learned and still find useful. Tell something about the persons or setting.

Send practical "how-to" ideas on such subjects as housing, home furnishing, gardening, farming, clothing, recreation, transportation, teaching values to children, celebrations, worship, arts and crafts. As an example, Longacre shares: "In Java, where it is very hot all year, we noticed that the whole country held to a schedule that allowed people to relax awhile and take a bath around 4:00 p.m. After this refreshing pause, one felt ready to enjoy the evening. On hot summer days back in the States we still follow this practice. It helps us stay comfortable in a home without air-conditioning."

The new book will include a food chapter with thirty to fifty recipes of a very specific kind. These recipes should reflect resourcefulness in situations where food is limited. Include something about how the recipe developed or where you learned about it. Recipes may come from other countries but ingredients should be locally available.

Short lines are needed on spiritual insights and about sharing God's kingdom across cultural barriers. These might be prayers, poems, songs, proverbs, or stories.

Submit as many ideas as you wish; each idea should be described in not more than several paragraphs and less than 300 words. Note if sketches or photos are available.

Since the book will identify each donor, include your name and address. Send before June 30 to More-with-Less II, Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

Words & deeds

Several new initiatives could result from a fraternal visit by General Conference Mennonite Church representatives to Mennonite churches in India. The trip, which began February 15 and ended March 25, will familiarize Peter Kehler, the incoming secretary for Asia for the Commission on Overseas Mission, with church leaders in the Bharatiya General Conference Mennonite Church, as well as provide knowledge of national church programs and mission endeavors. The current secretary for Asia, Verney Unruh, says the fraternal visit is important in providing continuity with the Indian church in its relationship to COM. Several COM ministries in India were assessed during the visit.

"The Spiritual Formation of the Missionary" was the theme for the 1978 Mennonite Missionary Study Fellowship at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, March 1-3. David Bosch, visiting professor of missions and dean of the faculty of theology at the University of South Africa in Pretoria, based his five presentations on 2 Corinthians. They will be published in the Missionary Study series, under the auspices of the Institute of Mennonite Studies.

A Mennonite conciliation service will be the topic for the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section Assembly meeting at Park College in suburban Kansas City, Missouri, April 6-8.

Jeschke

Marlin Jeschke, professor of philosophy and religion at Goshen (Indiana) College, has been named the 1978-79 C. Henry Smith Peace Lecturer. The lecture is titled "The Promised Land: Salvation History and Salvation Geography in the Middle East." "This promise of God implies two things," according to Jeschke, "first, provision of a home where God's children can live out the life to which God has called them; and second, a method of appropriation and possession of land other than the pattern of conquest and capitalist ownership characterizing most of human history." He will apply insights from the theology of the land to the current situation in the Middle East. The peace lectureship provides opportunity for faculty members of Mennonite-related colleges to communicate the peace witness to Mennonite churches.

Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) is offering financial incentives to Mennonite students in Canadian colleges to write papers on topics related to MCC's work. Students whose applications are accepted will receive honorariums of between $35 and $250 depending on the length of the paper and the grade received. MCC has a list of topics, relating to a wide range of issues including those of development and of peace and social concerns, from which students may choose. The purpose is to encourage students to do research on topics for which MCC staff do not have time to work. For further information write to MCC (Canada), 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8.

Writing congregational histories was the theme of a seminar sponsored by the Mennonite Historical Society of British Columbia. Local church historians met February 25 at Columbia Bible Institute in Clearbrook. Resource person for the event was Lawrence Klippenstein, archivist for the Canadian Conference. He said that enthusiasm and perseverance could compensate for much technical skill in producing local histories. He dealt with collecting materials, conducting interviews, written sources, researching, checking accuracy, and bias. Discussion ranged from practical matters on how to sell a book to how to handle controversial material.

Thirty-five persons concerned about housing issues met in Arvada, Colorado, on February 24-26 to discuss strategy and issues. Personnel from Mennonite Voluntary Service and related programs from Portland to Philadelphia were represented. "Mennonites have a unique mission in housing because of the practical skills and approach represented in voluntary service, and because of this they are able to cross cultural and economic barriers," said Don Schierling, consultant for the conference. Common problems of fund raising, defining objectives, and relating to existing federal and local programs were discussed. The group visited local Denver projects on Saturday—Brothers Redevelopment, a community home repair and building program, and Yarrow Gardens, an inter-Mennonite housing project in Colorado. A task force was appointed to consider future cooperation and to make recommendations to Mennonite Central Committee (United States Ministries).

Freed

Paul Freed, president of Trans World Radio, visited Mainland China recently, seeing four major cities—Kwang Chow in the south, Hang Chow in central China, Shanghai, and Peking. He reports his overwhelming impressions were of wonder and concern—wonder at the beauty, friendliness, and technological advances; but concern for 900 million people who have been permeated by the Mao-Tse Tung philosophy. "It is a philosophy which omits religion—casting it aside as superstition; and the Bible is unknown even as literature or history," he related. Freed reported living standards are nearly uniform with little or no obvious class stratum. Rents are low but food consumes almost 60 percent of the family income. Traditional music is being replaced by martial music, which blends with slogans to mold the thinking of the masses in sessions of political and physical education. As chief executive of a global network of missionary radio stations, he was excited to find a radio in each of seven homes visited, with six of them being shortwave receivers. The sets are readily available and were able to pick up a clear signal from Trans World's station on the Island of Guam.

The First Mennonite Church in Berne, Indiana, honored one of their members, John Burke, with a special service on Sunday morning, January 1, commemorating him on his 100th birthday. Burke was born in Laufan, Switzerland, December 31, 1877. He was a member of the Mennonite church in Switzerland. Soon after coming to Berne, he transferred his membership to the local church. It was Recognition Day for Burke, who had served the church in many capacities throughout the years. His family of descendants have also contributed to the church, serving as teachers, ministers, and missionaries, in addition to services in the local church. Most of his descendants were present. John P. Burke, pastor of the Grace Brethren Church in Waterloo, Iowa, gave the morning message entitled "The Old Man Who Never Stopped Growing," using the Scripture from Joshua 14:6-15. When he was asked to what he attributed his long life, he replied, "To God's goodness. I have lived a good clean life but otherwise I have not done anything different. I have enjoyed good wholesome food but I don't overeat." Then he commented, "Whenever the Lord wants to take me, I'm ready to go. But so far, I have enjoyed living—every day." Every morning he repeats the Twenty-third Psalm in German. This psalm is his favorite. Then he leaves the rest to God—living each day one at a time.

The Lethbridge (Alberta) Mennonite Church dedicated a church home on January 29. Attending the service on behalf of the Canadian Conference, Ed Enns, executive secretary of the Congregational Resources Board, noted the good spirit of "parental" support given the church-planting effort by the Coaldale Mennonite Church under the leadership of Norman Baergen. The first worship service in Lethbridge was May 2, 1976. Abe and Charlotte Regier are serving as interim pastors. Nick Dyck, presently a student at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, will assume the pastorate in June. The Lethbridge congregation purchased the Central Church of Christ in December 1977. The first service in the building occurred January 1.

Storrie

A peace conference for youth in high schools and colleges convened March 3-5 at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg. Youth from five provinces attended. To open the sessions Friday evening, Duane Friesen, professor from Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, spoke about social and political justice. Interpersonal relationships were the emphasis the next morning during a session led by Kathie Storrie, sociology professor at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon. Menno Wiebe, MCC Native Ministries, spoke on the topic "Making Peace with the Earth."

Record

Ministers

John R. Friesen was installed as pastor of Home Street Church, Winnipeg, February 5. He is a graduate of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg; Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas; and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana. From 1966 to 1976 he served as pastor of the Berlin Mennonite Church, West Germany. He and his wife, Marian, also served as houseparents at Mennoheim, a Christian hostel and church center in Berlin.

Virgil M. Gerig was installed as pastor of Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Indiana, on November 27, 1977. He has served previous pastorates at Oak Grove Church, Smithville, Ohio; Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio; and Salem-Zion, Church, Freeman, South Dakota.

Peter Janzen, George Klassen, Gerald Klassen, and F. David Dyck were ordained to the pastoral team of Coaldale (Alberta) Church on January 29. They will serve five-year terms. Although a paid pastor has served the congregation for the past eleven years, the pastoral team has always consisted of about eight persons who serve in the preaching and teaching ministry.

Audiovisuals

Two color filmstrips depicting the work of Bible translation and distribution have recently been released by the American Bible Society. *Green Jade* (twenty-five minutes) shows Chinese life, culture, and religious tradition, traces the development of Bible Society work in China, and documents the importance of a "common language" translation of the Bible. *Springs of Living Water* (twelve minutes) focuses on the spiritual and physical needs of the five million people of Haiti. Both films are available at no cost on a free-will offering basis from Audiovisual Department, American Bible Society, 1865 Broadway, New York 10023.

Workers

Robert P. Crumpler, Richmond, Virginia, has joined the Health Center's pastoral counseling and consultation services at Mennonite Hospital, Bloomington, Illinois. He will be providing professional counseling and consultation to individuals and families, as well as ministerial training in clinical pastoral education for clergy and ministerial students. Crumpler served as chief resident chaplain and instructor in the department of pastoral care of Union Theological Seminary in Richmond from 1975 to 1977.

Jake Elias of Toronto, Ontario, has been named full-time interim director of field education and assistant professor of pastoral ministry at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, beginning in July for a three-year period. He will be replacing, in part, *Leland Harder,* who is taking a leave to become involved in church planting and development ministries. Elias was graduated from the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, in 1964 with a BA degree, and from Mennonite Biblical Seminary in 1968 with a BD degree. He served the pastorate of the Mountainview Church, Vancouver, British Columbia, 1968-74. He has earned the ThD degree from the Toronto School of Theology, and is currently a visiting professor in New Testament at AMBS.

Calendar

Canadian

May 27—MCC relief sale, New Hamburg, Ontario

July 5-9—Conference of Mennonites in Canada annual sessions, Gretna, Manitoba

Study Conference on the Believers' Church in Canada '78

Winnipeg, Manitoba, May 15-18
Canadian Mennonite Bible College
Registration—$40 Students—$20
Lodging and food—$12 per day
For further information write to:
SCBCC 201-1483 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8
Phone (204) 475-3550

An evangelism seminar is scheduled April 5-7 at the Mayfair Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Resource persons are Floyd Bartel, Don Yoder, Lynn Liechty, and Dennis M. Oliver. Registration fee is $15 with traveling bursaries available. Write Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Letters

The articles on creation

Dear Editor: The three articles on creation by Perry Yoder (January 3, 10, 17 issues) can easily mislead the unwary reader. In his discussion of creation and evolution, the author formulates the hypothetical proposition, "If evolution is false, Genesis 1 is historically accurate." In the preceding argument he has asserted the truth of the antecedent for those who favor creation and whom he wants to expose for their faulty logic. But the logic is formally valid, for when you assert the truth of the antecedent, you must of necessity commit yourself to asserting the consequent.

He then offers another hypothetical proposition, "If it rains, the street will be wet," probably thinking that this proposition is psychologically more evident and hoping thereby to convince the reader that what he said about the earlier proposition is also valid. But in this case he does not affirm the antecedent, but the consequent, and then he correctly maintains that "we cannot conclude from a wet street that it has rained."

To affirm the antecedent gives you a logically valid conclusion; to affirm the consequent does not. It is the fallacy of those who fail to distinguish between necessary and probable inferences, or who do not distinguish between demonstrating a proposition and verifying it.

Taking for granted that the author is writing about organic evolution, we can now draw attention to the limitations of the inductive method as a tool of scientific research. Induction is a method by means of which the material truth of premises is established. Since homogeneity of a class can only be established with some degree of probability, we are not in a position to establish a general proposition by perfect induction. So the evidence for universal propositions which deal with matters of fact can never be more than probable.

What then is the evidence for the theory of organic evolution? It is always of the nature of affirming the consequent of a hypothetical proposition and therefore can never be regarded as proof or conclusive evidence for the theory. The following hypothetical proposition can serve as an illustration: "If the theory of organic evolution is true, we should find fossil remains of extinct animal forms." Using the words of our author, "but we cannot conclude from" the discovery of such remains that the theory of evolution is true.

Thus the reader can see that the argument, which the author falsely wanted to present against the creationist point of view, really applies to the evolutionary theory. Furthermore, it must be said that biological evolution at present does not involve the assumption of a single common ancestry for all existing species, nor does it assume that such a line of ancestry goes all the way back to the simplest precellular protoplasm, nor does it answer the question of the origin of life. Where authors do make the above claims, the reader should know that it is on the basis of pure speculation rather than of scientific evidence.

Biological mechanism takes a reductionist view but emergent evolutionists claim that life, mind, etc., present us with irreducible characteristics and have no trouble refuting the mechanistic theory. The reader might consult C. D. Broad (*The Mind and Its Place in Nature*), who claims that emergent vitalism "does not *necessitate* a complicated deistic supplement, as biological mechanism does; and . . . it is perfectly *consistent with* the view that there is a God who created and controls the material world" (pages 93f).

The author seemingly wants to deny that God made everything out of nothing, saying that three things already existed when God began to create. These are chaos, darkness, and wind, obviously all understood in a material sense, so that matter has eternal existence. Many eminent authorities are against him, like Gerhard von Rad. Nor is it just the emphasis on creation without reference to matter that leads us to conclude that creation out of nothing is implied. Second Maccabees 7:28 says explicitly about the sky and the earth, that "God made them out of nothing."

When the author points out that God is no longer necessary as an answer to fill in the gaps of our knowledge, he gives no indication of having read Bonhoeffer, who speaks exactly to this issue but draws different conclusions. He says we have wrongfully pushed God to the boundaries of knowledge and used the Word to fill in the gaps, whereas he should be at the center of our life and existence, just like the church was placed in the center of the village.

My response is getting too long to deal with the problems of historical research and whether you can have knowledge of history at all if events are unique and unrepeatable. For the idealist there can only be a history of thought and nothing else. For some realists a knowledge of historical events implies historical determinism. Some logical positivists assert that historical knowledge is neither true nor false. For Hegel, history is the world spirit unfolding itself and evolving from the not-so-spiritual world to its eventual self-realization in purity. Existentialists like Kierkegaard passionately opposed him and the modern scientific view of man represented by behaviorism. So one has to be aware of a false scientism everywhere. *David Janzen, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario L0S 1J0* February 21

Add French to Low German

Dear Editor: I want to express my sincere appreciation for the column by Harold Fransen, "Christians and World Events—A Comment." This student has fine journalistic potential. I'm glad that we, *The Mennonite* readers, are among the first to read his provocative articles.

I hope this is a good experience for you, Harold.

Do you really think Quebec could go it alone? Are you saying that much of what has gone on in Quebec *was* and *is* solely "their thing"? I guess, coming from the West, this seems like a rather broad statement.

I appreciate your challenge for us as a people to be reconcilers. This might mean adding some French to our Low German and English. Thank you much for your good work. *Louise Friesen, 910 Trotter Crescent, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7L 3R1*

February 21

Love article inadequate

Dear Editor: I was disappointed in the article "Is It Really Love?" (February 7 issue). I feel that it was a valuable contribution but it missed the most important point. All in all, it was the kind of article *Time* magazine might be able to print; but in a Christian church magazine, I feel it was lacking.

The article deals entirely on the horizontal man-to-man level (in this "liberated" paper, I suppose you will feel "led" to change that phrase), and completely omits the vertical man-to-God dimension.

Love's checklist is incomplete. One item actually asks if you go to church together. But, do you pray together? read the Word together? discuss and understand each other's relationship to God? are other questions that I would hope our Christian young people would also want to answer in the affirmative before marriage could even be considered.

I am afraid that in too many cases these questions are left unanswered, and we are not doing our young people a service by leaving them out of a discussion as important as this one is. *Ted Friesen, Box 105, Marsden, Saskatchewan S0M 1P0*

February 22

Mennonite "nationalism"

Dear Editor: The United States, calling itself Christian, fought World War I with and against other so-called Christian nations for reasons that are becoming unclear with the passage of time. This war resulted in Stalinistic communism, and the settlement of the war caused Hitlerian fascism, which in turn created the reasons for World War II. This was settled by turning over huge areas of free peoples, supplies, and military secrets to the known butcher Stalin, which gave him the strength to participate in a cold war, and it gave to us peacetime conscription and the arms race.

The United States ignored the communist takeover of Cuba (ninety miles offshore), for which the Spanish-American war was fought, and chose to wallow in two Asian land wars halfway around the world, against long-standing military advice.

In the face of all this unimaginable human slaughter, misery, and stupidity, we again show our brilliance by fretting over the Panama Canal, which by the year 2000 will be largely antiquated due to huge new ships and planes, and is no doubt being used as a political smoke screen tactic.

In the shadow of the enormous waste these wars have caused, we suddenly developed shortages which allowed prices to rise, and we were abruptly reminded of thrift. But don't save too much, we still have our waste society to advance, as witnessed by stores being opened longer hours and on Sundays, etc.

If humankind continues this fun and games, given that the above happened in one lifetime, our grandchildren will face extinction, that is, if our neutron toy doesn't blow up in the playpen first.

Is it any wonder I am guilty of being proud about my Mennonite "nationalism," which has for centuries represented an oasis of comparative sanity in this desert of chaos? *Ted Jantzen, 8 Houston Street, Florida, New York 10921* February 22

Beautiful expression

Dear Editor: I have just finished reading the article by Gwyn Whilsmith, "Father Died at Home" (February 7 issue).

The article expresses in a very beautiful way some of the values we are trying to communicate in our Home Care program in the Elkhart County Health Department. We have felt that simple descriptions of the services offered under Home Care by our department are sometimes rather cold and hard to grasp, but the real-life experiences of persons whose families have been touched by Home Care are quite a different matter.

I would like by this letter to request permission to reproduce the article by Whilsmith. It would be used in conjunction with promotional efforts aimed at letting the public in our area know of the availability of Home Care services of a similar type to that which were available to Whilsmith's family. *Stan Reedy, Elkhart County Health Department, 2400 Elkhart Road, Goshen, Indiana 46526*

February 24

Franz responds on Panama

Dear Editor: Letters in the February 7 and 14 issues have expressed strong opposition to my November 22, 1977, article on the Panama Canal treaties. I wish it were possible to sit down over a cup of coffee to both discuss this specific concern as well as to learn to know Anna Hofer and Milton and Jessie Staufer, and the values and experiences that inform our perceptions of the world.

While there are misinterpretations, factual inaccuracies, and incomplete quotes in these letters to which response might be made, I am more concerned with the underlying tone and the world view reflected in the letters than in arguing specific points on the treaties now being debated on the Senate floor. The deep cleavage which the debate has generated across the American community raises some important questions for the churches in our country.

What are the principal ethical criteria by which Christians make their assessments and judgments on critical national and international actions? Do the sources that inform our witness in response to the economic, political, and military actions of our government deal with the biblical questions of justice? Is our measuring rod the Judeo-Christian witness of the Old Testament prophets and of Jesus, or the political bias of Republican or Democratic parties, right- or left-wing ideologies?

We are deeply troubled that the heavily financed extensive mail campaign of groups like the American Conservative Union, with strong vested interests in the military-industrial complex, seem to displace the norms of biblical justice in the analysis of many church members. The Marine Corps general and militaristic congressmen cited as "independent sources" are *not* objective fountainheads of objective information.

After listening to Mennonite missionaries and other mission workers in Latin America, attending State Department and White House briefings, and reading historians on the Panama Treaty of 1903, it is instructive to ponder again the messages of Jeremiah, Isaiah, Amos, and our Lord. What do their teachings regarding the oppressed poor, the rich and powerful suggest as we attempt to make an application to the current Panama Canal concern?

—Is maintaining the upper hand of the United States in military prowess and control of the Canal Zone consistent with the biblical concept of a shared stewardship of the earth, or does it savor of colonial expediency?

—Can Christian citizens of a wealthy superpower of 220 million people support a 1903 treaty arrangement that deprives a tiny nation of 1.5 million Panamanians, the majority of whom live in poverty, of their major economic resource, the Isthmus?

—Can we join voices with those who view military might rather than conciliation and a negotiated settlement as the best means of dealing with the explosive tensions among North Americans and South Americans?

Rabbi Morris Levinson, testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings on the Panama treaties, and speaking on behalf of the Synagogue Council of America, said: "The Jewish tradition has always valued the ideals of equality and fairness. At the heart of its teaching is the golden rule of Rabbi Hillel: 'What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor.' In our land, in the midst of great passion (during the Civil War), these same values were at the heart of Lincoln's axiom, 'Even as I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master.' Equity between nations demands that what one country would not wish for itself, it ought not to inflict upon another country."

The Year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25) marked the gauge by which God's people were to relate to the poor. It provided that after fifty years all properties of the poor which had fallen under the control of the rich were to be restored to the original owners. It is now seventy-five years since the Canal Zone came under the control of the United States. The time for Jubilee is long overdue.

We cannot say that the pending treaties fully embody justice in a biblical sense. Yet we do believe that the proposed treaties are much closer to such a view of justice than is the 1903 treaty still in effect. *Delton Franz, 100 Maryland Avenue N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002*

February 24

Church planting

Koinonia Fellowship

"Eight thousand Mennonite young people have moved to the cities of North America. Many are showing an interest in establishing new Mennonite fellowships. Approximately forty new groups have begun since 1970. These congregations take a variety of forms. Koinonia Fellowship is one example" (Leonard Wiebe, CHM secretary for church planting).

Koinonia Fellowship in Mesa, Arizona, is a conjoint church planting project of the Pacific District Conference (GC) and the Southwest Mennonite Conference (MC).

In February 1975, a decision was made to begin a home Bible study. Two Mennonite families had just moved into the area and were interested in beginning a Mennonite church. They gave leadership to the home Bible studies from which developed the nucleus of Koinonia Fellowship.

February 1976 marked the beginning of a Sunday afternoon meeting for worship and fellowship in addition to the Wednesday Bible study. August 1, 1976, Don Yoder moved to Tempe as pastor of the new congregation, The group began meeting for worship and Sunday school on Sunday mornings in the community room of a savings and loan building in Mesa.

The charter membership celebration was held on September 19, 1976; nineteen persons signed the roll. This date has been set for an anniversary celebration and covenant renewal each year.

All members are asked to prayerfully commit themselves to, and sign, the following membership covenant: "Recognizing that Jesus Christ is the founder and the head of the church and that all who are his are part of the church, his body, I renew my commitment to the following responsibilities for church membership:

1. Having experienced the new birth, I confess Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior. I accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God and the guide for my faith and life. I declare my loyalty to the faith and practice of the Mennonite church.

2. I accept the responsibility to give myself to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing him, to seek by prayer and the study of the Bible to grow in the grace and knowledge of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

3. I commit myself to love the brotherhood, to participate in the ministry and service of the fellowship as regularly as possible, to support the church by giving my time, talents, money, and prayers.

4. I am ready to receive counsel from the church and to give counsel to the church and to share in giving witness to the gospel of Christ. I commit myself to serve in any capacity to which the church may call me and for which I am qualified."

We recently leased a more adequate meeting facility for Sundays. On Wednesday evening, the Bible study and children's club programs are held cooperatively with the Evangelical Free Church in their facilities.

Several principles have helped us in our church planting. The first comes from a book written by a fellow pastor in nearby Scottsdale, *Brethren, Hang Loose* (Robert C. Girard, 1972, Zondervan). A new congregation must not become top heavy with organization. We need to guard against the success orientation of our world, which pushes for expression in bigger buildings, bigger membership roles, and bigger budgets. People are more important than programs and wholeness is more important than big numbers.

A second principle is a commitment to the power and leading of the Holy Spirit. Depend on the Holy Spirit instead of the flesh. The "flesh" is represented by all the human, earthly things that we expect to produce growth, maturity, spirituality, and life in the church, instead of looking to the Holy Spirit for these things.

A third principle is to understand the importance and necessity of prayer. "Prayer is the key that unlocks all the storehouses of God's infinite grace and power" (*The Power of Prayer,* R. A. Torrey, 1974, Zondervan, page 6). Koinonia Fellowship is attempting to build into its ministry significant opportunities for prayer.

A fourth principle is to expect God to act. It is clear in the Scriptures that God is at work in the world today to bring about the new birth (John 3:5), to give the abundant life (John 7:37-39), to lead into an understanding of the truth (John 16:13), to give the ability to witness for Jesus (Acts 1:8), to make the love of God practical (Romans 5:3-5), to increase the effectiveness of prayer (Romans 8:26), to recruit workers (Acts 13:2), meet financial needs (Acts 4:31-35), and draw people into the church (Acts 2:47).

Koinonia Fellowship receives assistance from the General Conference's Commission on Home Ministries through the Pacific District Conference. *Don Yoder*

Beside my Bible

Mary F. Heisey

Beside my Bible this week are two hardcovers and a paperback.

All That We Are We Give, *by James G. T. Fairfield (Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and Kitchener, Ontario, 1977, 175 pages).*

Loyalties to books can change during the reading of them. Wade through Part 1 and you'll wind up cheering as Part 2 focuses on how to discover and develop talents and interests within the fellowship of faith so that God's life-style for mission may pervade the believer wherever one serves. Part 3 offers practical help for aching pocketbooks.

Excellent quotations, biblical references, and an annotated bibliography deepen the wisdom of this fresh-as-spring guide that makes giving easier.

Like A Watered Garden, *by Maureen Hay Read (Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and Kitchener, Ontario, 1977, 160 pages).*

You may resemble a watered garden—from crying—after reading this journal. A disturbing true story, it will break your heart and try to mend it. But even faith, hope, and love—that valiant trio—don't save this family tale from its cliche-ridden woe.

Redeeming features: the prologue, recounting a love story written by God, some prayers, and children's comments like "he walked back in my crunches."

Good News Is for Sharing, *by Leighton Ford (David C. Cook Publishing Company, Elgin, Illinois, and Weston, Ontario, 1977, 203 pages).*

This book on how to witness effectively to others is one to grow on. By an associate evangelist with the Billy Graham Team, it is tightly written, anecdotal, and autobiographical. Mini-margins limit note-making, so use the blank pages at book's end.

Want to fulfill your obligation to share the gospel? Study this book and communicate your faith.

Meditation

After Easter

"Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. While he blessed them, he parted from them" (Luke 24:50-51).

How he had been a blessing to his disciples!

They had walked with him.

Some had questioned him.

Others had learned from him.

They had seen his approach when he spoke to the masses.

They had perceived his great understanding and felt his power as a peace-bringer.

They had shared with him in food, the beauty of the earth, the radiance of the sky, and the joy of fishing from the water.

And they knew the power of his healing love from the heart of God as he stretched forth his arms to quiet the ill, feed the hungry, and relieve the depressed.

They had, likewise, felt the inspiration of his mind and the warmth of his spirit wafting across their hearts to warm and uplift.

In short, they knew him as a revealer of God to mankind.

And he departed from them.

It must have seemed too much—a void, a gulf that gaped between them and God.

Perhaps they wondered how to transcend the void.

They may have wondered how their many questions in mind would be answered.

They must have felt the loss of creative resources that he had uncovered within them and subsequently wondered how they were to tap those inner God-powers on their own.

It may be that it was then they knew: A departure is never easy—either for the one who moves on to greater service or for those who remain behind.

He had given them his best, for had he not said something about doing the will of the Father?

In their relationships had he not put the will of God first?

They were quiet—very quiet.

Out of the silence, a poetic voice from their past spoke:

> I will lift my eyes to the hills.

(Had he not loved the mountains and gone up into high places?)

But they could not pause there—

> From where does my help come?

Then the consequent promise:

> My help comes from the Lord,
> who made heaven and earth.

Perhaps he had known these words.

Probably these also had been his guide as he met the temptations, pressures, and concerns of his own life and the lives of others.

Clearly, across the years continued the voice:

> He will not let your foot be moved,
> he who keeps you will not slumber.
> Behold, he who keeps Israel
> will neither slumber nor sleep. . . .

On the voice went until the words:

> The Lord will keep your going out
> and your coming in
> from this time forth and for evermore.

It was time—time then.

And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple blessing God.

Thank you, God. Thank you.

Harriet Bunting Shirley

How many shots?

"Man shot six times" was the news item on the radio. "Hospital reports him to be in stable condition." I started wondering how many shots (verbal shots) I could take and still remain in stable condition. *Ward W. Shelly*

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CONTRIBUTORS

Win Arn is the executive director of the Institute for American Church Growth, 150 South Los Robles, Pasadena, California 91101. His article is reprinted by permission from "Church Growth: America."

David Virtue, 2250 Granville Street, Vancouver, British Columbia V6H 3G2, is religion editor for The Province.

Lois Barrett, 1505 Fairview, Wichita, Kansas 67203, writes on behalf of the World Conference hosting committee.

Fred Enns is the chairperson of the Congregational Resources Board of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Don Yoder, 1920 East Colgate Drive, Tempe, Arizona 85283, is the pastor of the Koinonia Fellowship.

Mary F. Heisey, 56 East Street, York, Pennsylvania 17403, writes her second book review column.

This week's meditation writers are Harriet Bunting Shirley, 1938 South Dollison, Springfield, Missouri 65804 and Ward W. Shelly, 109 East Adams Street, Washington, Illinois 61571.

Brenda Schroeder is a freshman student at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4 and has been working with The Mennonite as part of a practical theology course.

CREDITS
Cover, 210, John Hiebert; 212, RNS; 215, Steve Goossen, MCC; 216, Jack Mace; 217, Lazarus Humijaua, MCC.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special edition editor: Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805.

What is a Mennonite?

Brenda Schroeder

"You haven't got a Mennonite name."

* * * * *

"You don't like zwieback? You're not a good Mennonite."

* * * * *

It seems to me that Mennonites attribute certain definite characteristics to themselves. We have certain names, such as Friesen, Wiebe, or Rempel. Names like Jones, Smith, or MacDonald are definitely not Mennonite. There are Mennonite foods, like zwieback or borscht. Pizza and egg rolls are not Mennonite. To be a good Mennonite we must also be able to speak German. To forsake German for English, or Cree, or Mandarin, or Spanish will only hasten the corruption of a people. Most Mennonites have roots from Central Europe or Russia and now reside in North American centers like Winnipeg or Newton. Those who don't live in these centers most likely have relatives who do. I have the feeling that Mennonites think they are an ethnic group into which they are born.

To understand what Mennonites are, we must go back into history. During the Protestant Reformation of the 1500s, there developed a group of people called Anabaptists. Some of the main Anabaptist leaders were George Blaurock, Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz, and Menno Simons. Menno Simons was a leader of the Swiss Brethren. Those who followed his teachings later became known as Mennonites.

There were several Anabaptist beliefs which distinguished it from Protestant and Catholic religions at that time. Anabaptists were named that because they believed in adult baptism or believers' baptism on confession of faith. They did not believe infant baptism to be scriptural. So when the first fellowships began, they rebaptized the believers. They believed that baptism and membership in the fellowship had to be voluntary and not instituted by the state. They did not believe in swearing of the oath. Nonresistance was a basic part of their belief. They felt that to bear arms was to go against the gospels.

As a result of their strong and active beliefs, Anabaptists were seen as a threat to the state church and were persecuted. Persecuted Mennonites banded together as a people and began immigrating in search for a land where they could enjoy toleration and freedom. During the seventeenth century, one group came to North America and settled in Pennsylvania. Other groups immigrated first to Prussia then to Russia, and in the late 1800s and early 1900s they finally arrived in North America. The reason for immigration was persecution, because they did not compromise their religious beliefs.

The immigrations contributed to the Mennonites becoming a separate people. In his essay in *Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision,* E. K. Francis says, "Finally the preservation of the Mennonite ethnic community took precedence over that of the faith, which had become an almost peripheral concern" (page 250). In other words we began seeing ourselves as an ethnic people rather than a religious people.

Is this why people who have grown up in a "Mennonite" community can still say they are Mennonites whether or not they believe in the faith? Is this why so many Mennonite church members do not know the Anabaptist history, or do not know why we believe differently than other Protestant churches, and yet blindly accept the faith? I believe that many young people leave the church because they only see the externals and, not knowing the history, they don't understand the faith. Paul Erb in *What It Means to Be a Mennonite* points out that it means to have a definite personal Christian experience rather than accepting the faith of our parents. We all need to become first-generation Mennonites.

The Mennonite church is a mission-oriented church. The proof of this is seen in the growth of the African Mennonites, who are now almost the largest group of Mennonites in the world. If we are to be a truly effective mission church wherever we are, we will need to put aside all ethnicity so that others can be included.

I believe that the history of the Mennonite faith is important in understanding the faith. But it is also time that we allow our faith to include the Yees and the Smiths. It is time that we realize that the Mennonite language can also be French, or English, or Cree, or Spanish. It's time that we realize that Mennonite food can also be pizza, or egg rolls, or curry, or bannock. Mennonites are not just those who are descendants of the Swiss Brethren Anabaptists. They can also come from other cultures such as Chinese, African, or Indian.

It is time that we return to being a people of faith in Christ rather than being an ethnic people.

LIBRARY

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:14 APRIL 4, 1978

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Born January 15, 1929
1951—graduated from Crozer Theological Seminary
1955—PhD in theology from Boston University
    —chosen leader of Montgomery bus boycott
    —house bombed
    —King urges followers to be nonviolent
1956—December 21: Montgomery buses legally integrated
1957—Spingarn Medal awarded to King by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
1958—King becomes president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference
1960—Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee formed
1961—leads protest in Albany, Georgia
1963—Birmingham campaign to desegregate public facilities
    —letter from Birmingham jail
    —march on Washington: "I Have a Dream"
1964—awarded the Nobel Peace Prize
    —Civil Rights Act
1965—march from Selma to State Capitol
    —Voting Rights Act
1966—demonstrations in Chicago and Cicero, Illinois
1967—King opposes Vietnam War
    —announces plans for Poor People's March on Washington, D.C.
1968—April 4: **Martin Luther King, Jr., assassinated at Memphis, Tennessee,** where he was supporting a sanitation workers' strike
    —World Council of Churches' Uppsala assembly adopts MLK resolution
1973—Central Committee of WCC adopts statement on "Violence, Nonviolence, and the Struggle for Social Justice" as follow-up of the MLK resolution
1978—April 4: **tenth anniversary of King's assassination**

Peace on

Martin Luther King, Jr.

This sermon was delivered by Martin Luther King, Jr., as his Christmas sermon in Ebenezer Baptist Church at Atlanta, Georgia, and was broadcast by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation as the final Massey Lecture, on Christmas Eve 1967.

We have neither peace within nor peace without. Everywhere paralyzing fears harrow people by day and haunt them by night. And yet the Christmas hope for peace and goodwill toward all can no longer be dismissed as a kind of pious dream of some utopian.

If we don't have goodwill toward all in this world, we will destroy ourselves by the misuse of our own instruments and our own power. Wisdom born of experience should tell us that war is obsolete. The destructive power of modern weapons of warfare eliminates even the possibility that war may any longer serve as a negative good. If we assume that life is worth living, then we must find an alternative to war.

Let us think anew on the meaning of that Christmas hope: "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men." And as we explore these conditions, I would like to suggest that modern man really go all out to study the meaning of nonviolence, its philosophy, and its strategy.

We have experimented with the meaning of nonviolence in our struggle for racial justice in the United States, but now the time has come for us to experiment with nonviolence in all areas of human conflict, and that means nonviolence on an international scale.

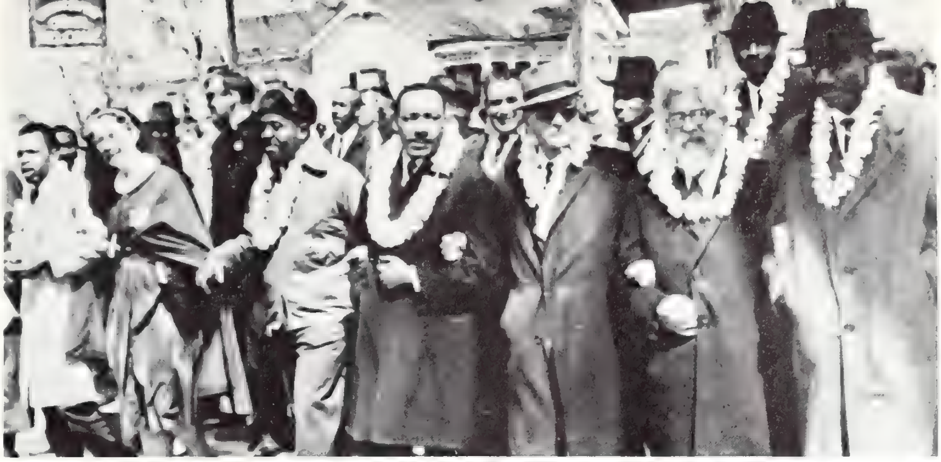
If we are to have peace on earth, our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class, and our nation; and we must develop a world perspective. No individual can live alone; no nation can live alone. And as long as we try, the more we are going to have war in this world.

As nations and individuals, we are interdependent. Our visit to India some years ago was a marvelous experience; but there were those depressing moments. We saw evidences of millions of people going to bed hungry at night. How can one avoid being depressed when one sees with one's own eyes thousands of people sleeping on the sidewalks at night? More than a million people sleep on the sidewalks of Bombay every night. They have no houses to go into, no beds to sleep in. As I beheld these conditions, something within me cried out: "Can we in America stand idly by and not be concerned?" An answer came: "Oh no!"

We spend millions of dollars every day to store surplus food; and I said to myself: "I know where we can store that food free of charge—in the wrinkled stomachs of the millions of God's children in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and even in our own nation, who go to bed hungry at night."

All life is interrelated. We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. Did you ever stop to think that you can't leave for your job in the morning without being dependent on most of the world? You get up in the morning and go to the bathroom and reach over for the sponge, and that's handed to you by a Pacific Islander. You reach for a bar of soap, and that's given to you by a Frenchman. Your coffee comes from a South American. And maybe you want tea. That's poured into your cup by a Chinese.

The march from Selma to Montgomery in behalf of voting rights for blacks sets out on March 21, 1965. The late Martin Luther King, Jr., is at center. Others with him in the front row are, from left: John Lewis, then president of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee; Episcopal deaconess Phyllis Edwards; Ralph David Abernathy, King's chief aide; King; Ralph J. Bunche, UN undersecretary for special political affairs; Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel; and Frederick D. Reese, head of the Dallas County voters league. The flower leis had been sent by civil rights sympathizers in Hawaii.



earth

Your toast is given via an English-speaking farmer, not to mention the baker. And before you finish eating breakfast in the morning, you've depended on more than half of the world. We aren't going to have peace on earth until we recognize this basic fact of the interrelated structure of all reality.

Second, if we are to have peace in the world, men and nations must embrace the nonviolent affirmation that ends and means must cohere. One of the great philosophical debates in history has been over the whole question of means and ends. And there have always been those who argued that the end justifies the means, that the means really aren't important.

If you're seeking to develop a just society, they say, the important thing is to get there, and the means are really unimportant. Any means will do, so long as they get you there—they may be violent, they may be untruthful means; they may even be unjust means to a just end. But we will never have peace in the world until men everywhere recognize that the means represent the ideal in the making, and the end in process, and ultimately you can't reach good ends through evil means.

It's one of the strangest things that all the great military geniuses of the world have talked about peace. The conquerors of old came killing in pursuit of peace, Alexander, Julius Caesar, and Napoleon. Hitler contended that everything he did in Germany was for peace. And the leaders of the world today talk eloquently about peace. What is the problem? They are talking about peace as a distant goal, as an end we seek. One day we must come to see that peace is not merely a distant goal, but that it is a means by which we arrive at that goal. We must pursue peaceful ends through peaceful means.

If we are to have peace and goodwill on earth, we must give nonviolent affirmation to the sacredness of all human life. Every person is somebody because they are a child of God. And so when we say "Thou shalt not kill," we're really saying that human life is too sacred to be taken on the battlefields of the world. Man is more than a tiny vagary of whirling electrons or a wisp of smoke from a limitless smoldering. Man is a child of God, made in his image. Until men see this everywhere, until nations see this everywhere, we will be fighting wars.

The Vietnamese are our brothers, the Russians are our brothers, the Chinese are our brothers; and one day we've got to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

But in Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither male nor female, neither communist nor capitalist. In Christ, somehow, there is neither bound nor free. We are all one in Christ Jesus. And when we truly believe in the sacredness of human personality, we won't exploit people, we won't trample over people with the iron feet of oppression, we won't kill anybody.

There are three words for love in the Greek New Testament. One is the word *eros*. Eros is a sort of aesthetic, romantic love. Plato used to talk about it a great deal in his dialogues, the yearning of the soul for the realm of the divine. And there is and can always be something beautiful about eros, even in its expressions of romance.

Then the Greek language talks about *philos*, which is another word for love, a kind of intimate love between personal friends. This is the kind of love you have for those people that you get along with well.

I have a dream . . .

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today . . . I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low. The rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning, "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring."

. . . When we allow freedom to ring—when we let it ring from every city and every hamlet, from every state and every city—we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last, free at last. Great God a-mighty, we are free at last."—From the address by Martin Luther King, Jr., August 28, 1963, at the march on Washington where one-quarter million Negroes and whites joined in demanding civil rights at the largest political demonstration in this nation's history.

Then the Greek language has another word for love, *agape*. Agape is more than romantic love, more than friendship. Agape is understanding, creative, redemptive goodwill toward all men. Agape is an overflowing love which seeks nothing in return. Theologians would say that it is the love of God operating in the human heart.

When you rise to love on this level, you love all men not because you like them, not because their ways appeal to you, but you love them because God loves them. This is what Jesus meant when he said, "Love your enemies." And I'm happy that he didn't say, "Like your enemies," because there are people that I find difficult to like. Liking is an affectionate emotion, and I can't like anybody who would bomb my home. I can't like anybody who would exploit me. I can't like anybody who would trample over me with injustices.

But Jesus reminds us that love is greater than liking. Love is understanding, creative, redemptive goodwill toward all men.

I've seen too much hate to want to hate myself. I've seen hate on the faces of too many sheriffs, too many white citizens' councillors, and too many Klansmen of the South. Every time I see it, I say to myself, hate is too great a burden to bear.

Somehow we must be able to stand up before our most bitter opponents and say: We shall match your capacity to inflict suffering by our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force. Do to us what you will and we will still love you.

We cannot in all good conscience obey your unjust laws and abide by the unjust system, because noncooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is cooperation with good, and so throw us in jail and we will still love you. Bomb our homes and threaten our children, and, as difficult as it is, we will still love you. Send your hooded perpetrators of violence into our communities at the midnight hour and drag us out on some wayside road and leave us half-dead as you beat us, and we will still love you. Send your propaganda agents around the country, and make it appear that we are not fit, culturally and otherwise, for integration, and we'll still love you.

But be assured that we'll wear you down by our capacity to suffer, and one day we will win our freedom. We will not only win freedom for ourselves; we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process, and our victory will be a double victory.

If there is to be peace on earth and goodwill toward men, we must believe in the ultimate morality of the universe. Christ came to show us the way. Men love darkness rather than the light, and they crucified him. Then Easter came, an eternal reminder of the fact that the truth-crushed earth will rise again. Easter justifies Carlyle in saying, "No lie can live forever." And so this is our faith: Let us know that in the process we have cosmic companionship.

In 1963 we stood in Washington, D.C., and talked about many things. I tried to talk about a dream that I had had. Not long after talking about that dream, I started seeing it turn into a nightmare. Four beautiful, unoffending, innocent Negro girls were murdered in a church in Birmingham, Alabama.

I saw that dream turn into a nightmare as I watched my black brothers and sisters in the midst of anger and understandable outrage, in the midst of their hurt, in the midst of their disappointment, turn to misguided riots to try to solve that problem.

I saw that dream turn into a nightmare as I watched the war in Vietnam escalating, and as I saw so-called military advisers, 16,000 strong, turn into fighting soldiers.

I still have a dream, because you can't give up in life. If you lose hope, somehow you lose that vitality that keeps life moving, the courage to be.

I have a dream that one day men will rise up and come to see that they are made to live together as brothers. I still have a dream that one day every person in the world will be judged on the basis of the content of his character rather than the color of his skin, and every man will respect the dignity and worth of human personality.

I still have a dream that empty stomachs will be filled and brotherhood will be more than a few words at the end of a prayer. I still have a dream that one day justice will roll down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream. I still have a dream that one day war will come to an end, that men will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, that nations will no longer rise up against nations, neither will they study war any more.

I still have a dream that one day the lamb and the lion will lie down together and every man will sit under his own vine and fig tree and none shall be afraid. I still have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill will be made low, the rough places will be made smooth and the crooked places be straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

I still have a dream that with this faith we will be able to adjourn the councils of despair and bring new light into the dark chambers of pessimism. With this faith we will be able to speed up the day when there will be peace on earth and goodwill towards men. It will be a glorious day, the morning stars will sing together, and the sons of God will shout for joy.

THE MENNONITE seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published weekly except biweekly during July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton, Kansas 67114 by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kansas 67114 and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions: in United States and Canada $9.00 one year, $17.00 two years, $24.00 three years, foreign $9.50 per year. Editorial office 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard Winnipeg, Canada R3P 0M4. Business office 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114

The Martin Luther King legacy

William Keeney

REV. MARTIN LUTHER
KING, JR.
1929 — 1968
"FREE AT LAST, FREE AT LAST.
THANK GOD ALMIGHTY
I'M FREE AT LAST"

Gravestone of Martin Luther King, Jr., in Atlanta.

Most of us who were at least in our late teens on April 4, 1968, remember where we were and what we were doing when the news came that Martin Luther King, Jr., was shot. It ranks with other shocking events—such as the assassination of President John F. Kennedy or, for older persons, Pearl Harbor—as among the more tragic acts in public life for that generation.

The impact on Mennonites

Martin Luther King, Jr., received a special fascination from Mennonites. We were impressed with his actions in the Montgomery bus boycott from December 1955 to December 1956. Bethel College had him on its Memorial Hall Lecture Series already on January 21, 1959, just a little more than two years after the Montgomery boycott ended. The Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section assigned Vincent Harding to work closely with King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in the early 1960s.

A number of Mennonites participated in actions such as the march on Washington in 1963, the march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965, the marches in Chicago and Cicero, Illinois, in 1966, and other similar events. An official representative, Esko Loewen, attended King's funeral in 1968.

But Mennonites had mixed feelings about King. We liked his emphasis on Christian love and nonviolence. We felt affirmed in our peace position when he was successful, and when he received the Nobel Peace Prize. As a minority group not sure of our acceptance by the general public, we felt reassured when King was recognized. His position was similar enough that we could identify with it.

Many Mennonites had developed a deep concern about the injustice and violence suffered by blacks in our society. Work in Gulfport, Mississippi; in Mulberry, Florida; and in the inner cities of Chicago, Philadelphia, and other places made us aware of the problems and the hurts. We rejoiced when King challenged our countries to live up to the high ideals of equal opportunity for all people.

King also gave Mennonites pause. His active nonviolence made us somewhat uncomfortable. We were not sure that Christians ought to boycott, march, protest. Such actions did not seem to fit the nonresistant way.

The style of King was different from what Mennonites used. His preaching was animated and vigorous. The antiphonal use of questions or affirmations from the audience responding to the message were not the Mennonite practice. Singing and clapping with exuberance left Mennonites uneasy. The use of television to display dramatic gestures in public did not sit well with Mennonites who preferred not to draw attention to themselves.

The charges that King was communist, and his endorsement of Gandhi's nonviolence, made some Mennonites doubt if his real conviction and motives were Christian.

Still, as a whole, Mennonites admired and respected Martin Luther King, Jr., and what he worked to achieve.

King's impact on the USA

As we look back from 1978, it seems without a doubt that King had a critical effect on the United States and, less directly so, on Canada.

He achieved his most success in speeding up the change in attitudes towards blacks. His movement did more in less than fifteen years (1956-1968) to bring blacks into the mainstream of society than anything else had been able to do since the end of the Civil War.

He made the change with a firm commit-

Mennonites rejoiced when King challenged our countries to live up to the high ideals of equal opportunity for all people.

ment to let love and nonviolence be his guiding principles, not hate and violence. He held to his principles despite the cost, which reminded Mennonites of our own history. He was jailed over 120 times; his house was bombed; he was stabbed; he was slandered; he was hit and beaten; and finally he was assassinated.

King entered the civil rights movement somewhat reluctantly. As he worked, he saw that Christian love and nonviolence could not be limited to the issue of civil rights. He applied it to the Vietnam War. He moved out to the questions of economic justice. His vision was growing as he practiced nonviolence and became aware that the causes of suffering and injustice and evil were broader than he had first seen.

King's success led to both positive and negative results. Among the more positive, besides the gain in the civil rights movement, was the adoption of his method in the protests against the Vietnam War. The use of demonstrations and civil disobedience led to an earlier American withdrawal than probably would have happened otherwise.

Unfortunately, the successes also gave rise to other leaders who were not of the same quality and conviction as he was. They did not have Christian love at the heart of their program. Some used his methods only for tactical reasons as long as they appeared effective. Others believed that use of violence would bring better and quicker results.

The new leaders played into the hands of those who opposed King. The opposition did not know how to handle nonviolent love. They tried to discredit King by calling him a communist, a liar, an egotist. They used undercover agents to try to provoke King and the movement to violence. They knew how to win when they could counter violence with violence, and had the superior power in that realm.

With the rise of other leaders who turned to violence for power, especially after the death of King, the civil rights movement was slowed. While it may appear that the slowdown proves that it was King and the times which made the difference, a closer look would reveal that it was the shift away from nonviolence to the use or threat of violence which caused the decline. The progress for blacks in the ten years since King's death is disappointing, not so much in regard to civil rights perhaps as in economic opportunities, where King was becoming more active when he was assassinated.

King's larger impact

Martin Luther King, Jr., has left a global legacy. His use of nonviolence encouraged other people and groups who were oppressed to try his methods.

The World Council of Churches in its assembly at Uppsala, Sweden, in 1968 adopted a Martin Luther King, Jr., resolution. It called for a study of "Violence, Nonviolence, and the Struggle for Social Justice." As a result, a series of meetings was held and many church leaders took a serious look at the meaning and use of nonviolence for the first time.

The historic peace churches had tried in many ways, after the World Council was formed in 1948 at Amsterdam, to get the question of peace and war before the World Council of Churches. The study opened up more new conversation and led more people related to the World Council to take another look at the peace position than most any other activity to date. While the statement raised questions for pacifists as well as for those who will use violence, and did not lead to as much action as hoped, it did get the issue before many leaders in different churches.

Since Martin Luther King's work, people generally are less prone to dismiss nonviolence as too idealistic and impractical to be taken seriously. While not all people are ready to commit themselves to nonviolence, they can not as easily ignore it. Many more people are ready to say that they will at least look at nonviolence as one of the choices before turning to violence.

Mennonites and others, on the other hand, have asked whether their view of nonresistance is too passive, too timid. Perhaps they should be more active in seeking justice and righting social wrongs by using nonviolent direct action.

Martin Luther King's greatest contribution may well be that he sparked many others to respond to social injustice with an active Christian love. The anniversary of his assassination should call us to work more earnestly in perfecting the use of nonviolence. If that is done, the seed falling to the ground and springing to new and more abundant life may be God's transformation of King's tragic death into another sign of God's grace and hope.

News

Alberta adds new church and expands Valaqua

"The Anabaptists emphasized *being* and *living* the Christian faith. Their early following was fantastic but today, 450 years later, the strands have become somewhat frayed and sometimes it feels like we're just hanging on. In our heritage, the family is the primary unit and essentially so, but we must learn to reach beyond also. The church and conference must be a spiritual family that supports and motivates the biological family. That is the nature of our being here these days," stated J. D. Harder, chairperson of the Mennonite Conference of Alberta, during annual sessions in Didsbury, March 10-11.

Bernie Wiebe, editor of *The Mennonite,* addressed the conference four times on the overall theme "Think on the Christian Family." Time was also allocated for discussion of themes like discipline, building relationships, and love.

A conference emphasis on church planting during the past several years has seen fruition. The Lethbridge Mennonite Church, with twenty-seven charter members, was accepted as a conference church. Lethbridge dedicated a $70,000 building in January, already more than half paid. They have appointed Nick Dyck, senior student at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, to begin full-time pastoral duties this summer.

Calgary Mennonite Fellowship, with thirty charter members, also officially organized last January. They reported active boys' and girls' outreach programs, plans to build within another year, and plans for a full-time pastor.

Camp Valaqua is being expanded into a year-round facility. Even though several delegates questioned some of the spending plans and camp policies, budget was approved for major improvements and additional equipment. The delegates also approved the idea of negotiating with the Northwest (OM) Mennonite Conference about possibilities for future cooperation at Valaqua. The camp committee was instructed to come to the 1979 conference with a proposal for a full-time youth worker/camp director couple to be located year-round at the camp.

A proposal from the Canadian Native Ministries board, to appoint a native ministries worker for Alberta and British Columbia and relate such ministries more closely to provincial bodies, was accepted.

When Swift Current Bible Institute, the Bible school jointly sponsored by Saskatchewan and Alberta, requested permission to spend $20,000 to $50,000 to purchase land for expansion, vigorous discussion followed and the motion failed. Delegates stated that they were not voting against the Bible school, but they do not like the fragmented campus at Swift Current. A follow-up resolution was passed toward the end of the sessions, calling for a serious investigation of possibilities for one western provinces Bible school in some central location. (One delegate told this reporter, somewhat jokingly, "Of course, the center of the western provinces is Alberta.")

Judy Harder, conference youth worker, was enthusiastically affirmed for her diligent work among Alberta young people.

Alberta Women in Mission served notice that they will continue to take a more aggressive role in promoting kingdom work.

The education committee told the conference that they want to continue strengthening Sunday schools and want to promote the new Marriage Encounter movement.

Gary Harder, specially appointed to the program committee for the 1979 fiftieth anniversary conference celebration, told delegates to plan for an extra day because the program committee hopes to do considerable reminiscing and perform a major musical production in honor of the special year. A special history book is also being prepared.

The 1977 financial statement indicated another good year, according to treasurer Dan Klassen, "and due to strong response we have again come up with a surplus in the general fund." A 1978 budget of $114,800 was adopted, slightly up from 1977. Klassen suggested that churches could plan in terms of $76 per member.

Newly elected to the conference executive, as secretary, was Dick Reimer, Calgary. He joins continuing chairperson J. D. Harder and vice-chairperson F. David Dyck. *Bernie Wiebe*

Africans resist being pawns

Foreign powers, including the Soviet Union and the United States, are trying to influence the course of events in Africa, but African leaders are determined that Africa's problems will have African solutions, a veteran American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) analyst-observer said March 15.

Bill Sutherland, AFSC's southern Africa representative, said that Frontline States and liberation leaders are doing their best to put the southern Africa struggle for majority rule in an African context with African aspirations.

"They are very aware of various attempts to split them or to put their efforts into a superpower struggle," said Sutherland, an American black who has been active in Africa for twenty-five years.

"Africans aren't going to be dictated to by any external power," he said. "They're not going to be the pawns of anybody—by any stretch of the imagination. This has been shown by the independent foreign policies of Mozambique and Tanzania. The whole question of fear of the Soviets is a real red herring. The Carter administration itself has been trying to play down fear of the Soviets as a basis for foreign policy in Africa."

The AFSC representative returned recently from Africa where he met with President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Foreign Minister Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, Robert Mugabe of the Zimbabwe patriotic Front, and others. Sutherland said the unity of the Frontline States (Angola, Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania, and Bostswana) in working to end white minority rule in Rhodesia, the Republic of South Africa, and Namibia, is impressive.

He quoted the mood of Africans as being that "We are willing to be hurt a little more if it's going to help bring a basic change." Sutherland said Americans should support African freedom aspirations nonviolently by urging US firms to withdraw from the white-led states and by exposing many wrongdoings such as the use of about 11,000 white mercenaries—many from the USA—for the government's fighting in Rhodesia.

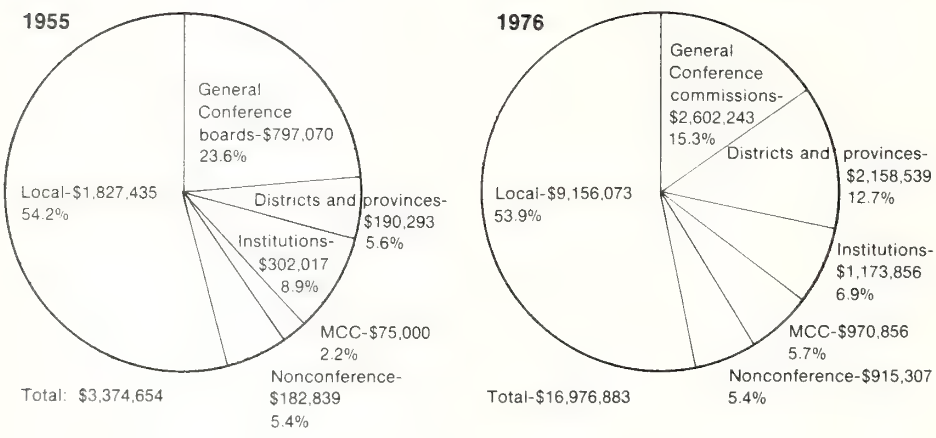
Sutherland said there is direct correlation between some US banks' policies of lending some $2 billion to South Africa while refusing to give loans in certain parts of American cities. The banks that support the South African economy are often the ones that discriminate against blacks in America, he said.

Sutherland stated the Anglo-American plan for Rhodesia, "would provide a good basis for peace—if Britain and the United States don't reverse themselves and go back on their own initiatives."

Surprising trends in conference giving

In 1955 dollars, per capita giving by General Conference Mennonites to all causes doubled from 1955 to 1976. Although there is more money now than twenty years ago, there have been significant shifts in where the money is donated. Consequently, some arms of the General Conference have a smaller purse relative to their standing in 1955. The General Conference commissions received $23.60 out of every $100 in 1955; by 1976 that figure was $15.30, based on statistics from the General Conference Handbooks of Information for those years.

How the dollars were spent



Source-General Conference Handbook of Information

In 1955, giving to all causes averaged $72 for each of the 46,769 members of the General Conference. By 1976, per capita giving by 59,018 members was $144 (in 1955 dollars). If inflation of 100 percent (since 1955) is ignored, per member giving for all causes in 1976 was $288.

In inflated dollars, total giving as reported by congregations increased from $3,374,654 in 1955 to $16,976,883 in 1976. Local expenses continue to take the major portion of these donations, but throughout the two decades the amount spent locally remained close to 54 percent. In 1976, local expenses totaled $9,156,073. One other category also remained constant. Giving to non-General Conference groups stayed at slightly over 5 percent—$915,000 in 1976.

However, spectacular gains in income were recorded by district and provincial conferences, whose percentage share more than doubled during the period. At 12.7 percent of the total pie in 1976, they received $2,158,539 as compared to $190,293 (5.6 percent) in 1955. Another upward shift occurred in giving to Mennonite Central Committee, whose percentage increased from 2.2 percent ($75,000 estimated) to 5.7 percent ($970,865).

Their percentage share is up. Who has lived with a smaller share of the dollar? General Conference institutions—schools, colleges, hospitals—slipped from 8.9 percent of the total in 1955 to 6.9 percent twenty years later. But the General Conference commissions—education, home ministries, and overseas mission—have dropped the most.

General Conference programming nosedived from 23.6 percent of the total in 1955 to 15.3 percent in 1976. During the mid-fifties, per-member giving to General Conference was about $17. By 1976, in inflated dollars, this amount was $44—but in 1955 dollars this was only $22 per member. To maintain the same percentage strength as in 1955, giving to the General Conference commissions should have been $68 per member in 1976.

"Shifting patterns of giving are more than of academic interest," says Heinz Janzen, general secretary of the conference. "They signal a profound shift in the mood of the conference.

"What this means, positively, is that congregations continue to take their mission at home seriously, and have, in fact, increased their ministries through district and provincial organizations. Also, in response to world hunger and development, General Conference Mennonites are increasing gifts to MCC. The percentage would be higher if giving to CROP (Christian Rural Overseas Program) and relief sales were also recorded."

On the negative side, Heinz thought that decreased giving to the commissions may have been due to publicity about supposedly large cash balances in the conference. These have now decreased to less than two months operating balance, says Ted Stuckey, conference treasurer.

Heinz also reflected that congregations ask for more and more people and printed resources from the General Conference commissions. Overseas churches are requesting more missionaries. The number of voluntary service workers has doubled in recent years. "Congregational giving," Janzen commented, "is the key to the kind of response that the commissions and their staffs can make to these and other needs."
Vic Reimer

Offender ministries network organized

A network to link localized Mennonite groups working with offenders has been formed. Its purpose is to disseminate information and ideas. Thirteen regional and provincial contact persons met in Toronto, Ontario, March 10-11 with members of Mennonite Central Committee's Offender Ministries Council to launch the network.

It is seen as an outgrowth of the MCC program, begun in 1976, to work at raising the interest of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in offender ministries. Edgar Epp serves as consultant to the program in both Canada and the United States. Persons forming the network hope their efforts will parallel the mental health beginnings of the 1950s. At that time the church felt the crucial need for more humane treatment of mental health patients and established Mennonite Mental Health Services. Now the church could provide alternatives that might bring about a revolution in the treatment and rehabilitation of prisoners and victims of the judicial system.

Contact persons participating in the workshop gave short presentations of personal experiences in prison ministries. These included visitation, support and worship services, person-to-person programs, employment, reconciliation efforts involving victims and offenders, as well as neighborhood dispute settlements, juvenile justice programs, criminal justice history, halfway houses, and education programs including Christian education.

Ceremonies mark wheat shipment to Vietnam

Houston, Texas—A willing youngster signs a scroll that will accompany a Church World Service wheat shipment to Vietnam. Mennonites in the central states donated 10,000 bushels to the shipment through Mennonite Central Committee. A dedication service was held in Houston March 4. At the service, William Sloane Coffin, pastor of New York's Riverside Church, said the wheat was being sent to Vietnam because "they are hungry and we are not." The antiwar activist added that "we've stopped the war but we can't seem to start peace. The Indian Government is sending 300,000 metric tons of wheat to Vietnam—and the US Government isn't sending peanuts." The Houston shipment weighed 10,000 metric tons. At a communion service in the Riverside Church March 5, bread baked by Mrs. David Friesen of Inman, Kansas, was used to stress the religious significance of using food supplies for the world's hungry.

Wilderness first —then liberation

Bluffton, Ohio—Speaking at Bluffton College, March 14, Beth Glick-Rieman said, "There is no way to get to the promised lands of liberation of our day, from the safe Egypts, apart from years in the wilderness."

Glick-Rieman is person awareness coordinator for the Church of the Brethren, and spoke to Bluffton students about the biblical and theological bases for feminism. She defined feminism as a movement whose central thrust is equality and mutuality of the sexes. Glick-Rieman asserted that Jesus called for a radical transformation of society into consideration of mutuality. "All persons are of infinite worth. Together women and men accept not only the privileges, but the responsibilities of life. Children are valued as Jesus valued them when he set them in the midst, and said, 'Become like them.'"

Liberation theology refutes the world view of hierarchy, she emphasized. In that view a chain of command goes down in steps from God to Jesus, men, women, children, animals, and to plant life. The chain of command view reinforces the ideas that "might is right, and big is good, and violence is recreation." In contrast, "Feminism moves in the hope that cycles of oppression and injustice can be broken. The concept of power is not power over, but empowerment from within."

Many who were blind can now see

Jagdeeshpur, India—For several hundred persons it was a miracle. They had come to Sewa Bhawan Hospital blind from cataracts, or with severely impaired sight. They left, only days later, able to see again. Over 500 persons—aged three to ninety—were either treated or operated on during an eleven-day eye camp in December 1977.

During the preparatory planning for the event, missionary Anne Penner was skeptical that the goal of 200 patients would be reached. "Where will that many come from in a few days?" she asked. "We are not in the city; we are in an entirely rural area."

Medical superintendent E. F. K. Arthur and nursing superintendent Amrit Sonwani were optimistic. Handbills were prepared, and posters and banners made for display. They visited several nearby villages and received the support of their leaders. Government health authorities were contacted. During the camp, five government doctors and seven public health nurses came to assist with surgery, as well as the pre- and post-operative care. I. M. Shukla, director of the ophthalmology department at Raipur Medical College, came and removed 196 cataracts in two full days and one evening of operating time.

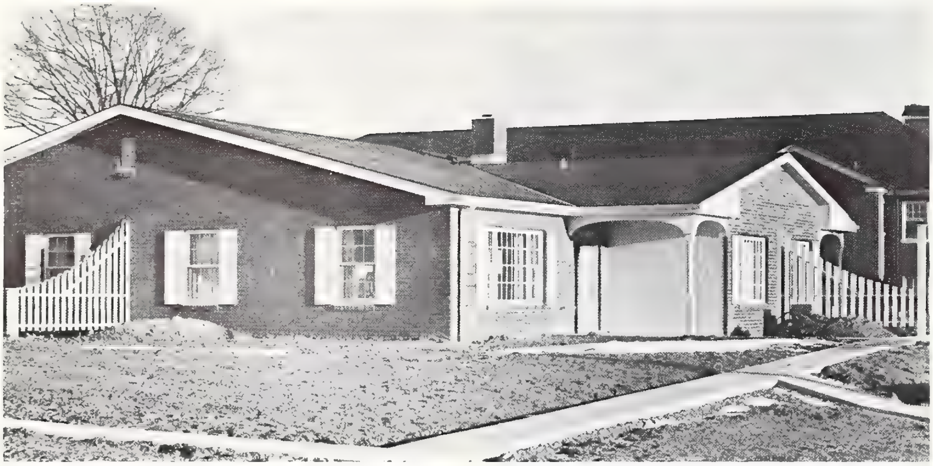
A total of 510 patients were registered. Anne compared the commotion and noise from the patients and their relatives to a "huge village bazaar." They came from 124 different villages, the farthest one 112 kilometers (about seventy miles) distant. One woman, Sonmat Bai, blind for three years, sold firewood and a cooking utensil so she and her husband could travel by bus to Saraipali. They walked the remaining thirty kilometers to Jagdeeshpur, and had to beg for food en route. Another person, a friend of the hospital, brought fifty patients from his and neighboring villages.

The camp was free to patients—examinations, operations, treatment, nursing care, and in some cases, transportation. Food was also provided for those who wanted it. Some preferred to make their own arrangements. Most ate the rice, wheat gruel, and lentils prepared by three Jagdeeshpur men who had experience in cooking at weddings and other large groups.

How was this ministry financed? In June 1977 Sewa Bhawan received a $4,000 grant from CBM (Christofel Blinden Mission), a German organization committed to helping the curable blind. Expenses for the camp were approximately $3,000. Cataracts can be removed in Asia and eyes saved for as little as five to ten dollars per person.

Less than half of the patients actually needed operations. A good number needed medicine for their eyes, and others needed glasses. These needs were also met.

Anne Penner writes, "It was interesting to see one sighted person lead a whole string of blind ones by having each person take the hand of the one in front and give the other to the person behind. The whole staff cooperated very well. We were all too tired to even plan for our annual staff Christmas dinner, let alone cook it, so we decided instead to send that amount of cash to the Andhra Pradesh cyclone refugees. We all rejoice that within a radius of forty miles there are many people who were blind, but can now see. Above all we are grateful to God by whose help and guidance this camp occurred."



Pennsylvania home builds apartments

Frederick, Pennsylvania—The Frederick Mennonite Home, founded in 1896, is in the midst of its fifth major expansion. Additions were made in 1928, 1957, and in 1971 a fifty-bed skilled nursing facility was constructed. Currently, cottage-type apartments are being built, and the first of six is already occupied. Each cottage consists of four apartments, each of which is self-contained. The purpose of these apartments is to provide residents with independent living units within an environment where medical services are readily available, as well as the other facilities of the complex, and to give companionship with persons of like age. Frederick Mennonite Home is operated by the Eastern District Conference. M. Lawrence Smith is the administrator.

Health education via telephone

Bloomington, Illinois—Senator Charles Percy made the first call from Washington, D.C., to initiate Mennonite Hospital's new Tel-Med Program on Wednesday, March 15.

The Tel-Med program, designed to provide health information to the Bloomington community, is a telephone playback system consisting of 181 three- to five-minute audiotapes on a wide variety of health-related topics. It is designed to increase the public's awareness of good health habits, and to enable the public to recognize and understand a particular illness or injury. It is not intended for the treatment or diagnosis of illnesses.

A directory available from the hospital lists all the subjects by title and number. These are grouped into general categories such as cancer, birth control, dental health, diabetes, digestive system, heart, respiratory ailments, and skin disorders. A person wishing to use the system calls Tel-Med (309-828-5011) between 1:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and requests by number the tape needed. Volunteers from the hospital auxiliary staff the system.

All the scripts are recorded on individual cassettes. A record will be kept of the number of tapes requested as well as those most often used. The hospital hopes to add to the number and variety of tapes during the next six months. The existing tapes already provide a wide variety. One tape, "Cancer of the Skin," states that skin cancer is the most common form of cancer, and the least likely to cause death. It describes conditions which contribute to skin cancer, what can be done to prevent or arrest skin cancers, and what to do if a caller suspects he or she has skin cancer.

Graduate seminar planned for August

Plans are under way for a Mennonite graduate seminar sponsored jointly by Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite student services committees.

It is planned for August 15-20 at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario, and will focus on the theme "Prophetic Vision Applied to One's Academic Discipline." Coordinators for the seminar are Robert Charles of Elkhart, Indiana, and John Rempel of Waterloo. The seminar will attempt to reestablish the ministries of prophecy in their special relationship to humanistic, scientific, and technical knowledge.

A $1,500 grant is earmarked to help underwrite registration and travel costs of graduate students interested in attending. Inquiries may be directed to Eleanor Loewen, Director of Student Services, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

Words & deeds

The world's leading Christian artists will meet July 30-August 5 at Estes Park, Colorado, for the fourth annual Christian Artists' Music Seminar. Many artists will be present and participate in nightly concerts. Daily seminars will be led by clinicians such as Ralph Carmichael, Keith Miller, and many others. Conferees will choose from over 100 different subjects. There will be competitions for vocal and instrumental soloists. For information write to Christian Artists Corporation, Box 1984, Thousand Oaks, California 91360, or telephone (805) 497-9444.

A peace lectureship series in honor of William and Kathryn Keeney, Senior, has been established at Bluffton (Ohio) College by the Keeney family. The annual series will provide public lectures and programs on peace issues. Plans are being made for the first series to be given during the 1978-79 school year.

Marriage Encounter scholarships are available for pastors and spouses. Application for these scholarships must be addressed to Jacob T. Friesen, Ministerial Leadership Services, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Funds for these scholarships are drawn from the marriage enrichment budget of MLS, and the special Women in Mission pastor's spouse personal growth fund inititated by WM this year. These scholarships are intended to encourage pastors and spouses to give leadership in attending Marriage Encounter through their example.

Malcolm Muggeridge says euthanasia will be the next step after abortion. According to Muggeridge in *The Human Life Review* (Fall 1977), "I have no doubt this will be the next great controversy that will arise. Because it's so costly in money and personnel to keep people alive about whom medical opinion is that their lives are worthless, the temptation to get rid of the burden by killing them off will be even greater. Disposing of them will be dressed up in humanitarian terms as an act of humanity and compassion. Almost all the evil things that have been done in the last decades have been done in the name of justice, equality, and compassion."

A call to prayer for Canadian unity was approved by Mennonite Central Commitee (Canada) during its annual meeting. It calls upon constituent churches to declare the Sunday closest to July 1 a day of national repentance, thanksgiving, and prayer. It urges repentance for the injury done to the weak in society, expresses thanksgiving for the good qualities in the nation, and asks for prayer for all levels of government that "they might govern well under God, seeking the welfare of all Canadians, so that all might live in unity to the praise of God's glory. . . "

Toronto, Canada—Kitty Griffiths has become spiritual confidant, Bible teacher, and evangelist to children around the world who hear her broadcast on 150 radio stations. Launched in 1974, the fifteen-minute broadcast, "A Visit with Mrs. G," is offered free to radio stations, and brings mail from all corners of the earth. Griffiths is a dynamic storyteller. The program is a labor of love for the busy minister's wife who receives no remuneration and spends hours in research, production, and follow-up. The Bible stories now appear in books and on cassette tapes. For information write: A Visit with Mrs. G, Box 179, Station J, Toronto M4J 4Y1.

Peace churches in Florida met mid-February as part of a regional New Call to Peacemaking conference. Charles Boyer, coordinator of the On Earth Peace program of the Church of the Brethren, maintained that "peace with God, inner peace, interpersonal peace, and political peace are all interrelated and cannot be completely separated."

Sweazey

McKay

Winnipeg, Manitoba—Sixty women and men participated in two weeks of courses for ministers and lay workers February 6-17 at Canadian Mennonite Bible College. During the first week, George Sweazey conducted a seminar on preaching. Sweazey, a minister, is author of the books *Effective Evangelism* and *Preaching the Good News.* Participants commented that the course had sharpened skills in sermon preparation and delivery. Stan McKay led a course emphasizing relationships to native people. McKay, president of the United Church (Manitoba Conference), was born and raised on the Fischer River Indian Reserve, and is pastor of the Steven Memorial United Church at his home reserve. During the week of February 13-17, five courses were offered. "Contemporary Alternative Church Models" stimulated discussion which occasionally extended over the chapel period. One pastor expressed appreciation for a new awareness of church models, and the critique of present models. George Neufeld taught a course in counseling. Other courses were "Biblical Studies of Preaching and Teaching," "Music and Worship," and "Church Membership Preparation."

The resourcefulness of Mennonite Disaster Service continues to be challenged since the February flooding in northeast and southwest sections of the United States. Up to eighty volunteers per week shovel out, mop up, repair, and rebuild damaged buildings. The New England states were hit by a blizzard and waves four feet over high tide early in February. Workers from six Mennonite churches in New England are being assisted by volunteers from Pennsylvania and New York. Project directors are John and Eunice Fehr of Morden, Manitoba. Volunteers will be needed for the next two or three months. Later in February, heavy rains in southern California and Arizona caused flooding bringing damage and loss to 4,100 families. Direction is being given by Ed and Eva Eby, Carl Pankratz, and Merle Graber. Since the first units were formed in 1950, the MDS network has expanded to fifty-eight units which relate to more than 2,600 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ and Amish congregations.

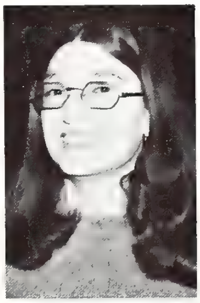
North Newton, Kansas—Enrollment at Bethel College for the spring term totals 592, a drop of only 1.8 percent from the fall term. Compared to national retention norms, this is considered extremely high. The school has recently instituted a dual-degree program in home economics in cooperation with Kansas State University. As a result Bethel students now have the option of taking specialized courses at KSU in their junior year, returning to Bethel for their senior year, and graduating with degrees from both institutions. "There is a great demand for graduates with this type of training to serve abroad with church-sponsored development programs and with the Peace Corps," said Evelyn Senecal, associate dean of home economics at KSU. During meetings February 23-25 the Bethel College board of directors approved a budget of $3,067,000 and a commitment was made to a balanced budget. This will require gift income of nearly $550,000. The board also approved a program to cultivate high school students, grades nine through eleven, for Bethel in anticipation of the declining high school pool of students. Another major area of discussion was faculty salaries. Efforts to bring salaries up to a competitive level with sister institutions and with church salaries will be initiated.

Record

Workers

Ralph Ewert left the United States March 14 for Zaire. He will replace Elvina Martens at the hospital in Kalonda for six months while Rudy and Elvina Martens are on North American assignment. From 1961 to 1972 Ralph and Fern Ewert served in Zaire with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference. Ralph has taken a leave of absence from the medical staff of the student health services at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln to do the short-term assignment in Zaire. His wife and four daughters did not accompany him. He will return in August.

Cleo and Faye Koop, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Nebraska, served as project construction leaders during the winter months with the Johnstown, Pennsylvania, flood recovery efforts under Mennonite Disaster Service.


S. Mierau

T. Mierau

D. Newcomer

P. Newcomer

A third Mennonite Voluntary Service unit will open in Seattle, Washington, during the summer. Named Dayspring Community, the purpose of the group is to relate to peace and justice issues in the northwest United States. The initial members of the community are *David and Peggy (Kilborn) Newcomer,* Seattle, Washington, and *Tim and Sylvia (Gunn) Mierau,* Elkhart, Indiana. Both couples have committed themselves to four-year terms. Currently the Mieraus are students at Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana. Tim is a 1973 graduate in social work from Wichita (Kansas) State University. He has worked as assistant manager, auto mechanic, and salesperson with a co-op in Wichita, and as a psychiatric aide at Prairie View Mental Health Center in Newton, Kansas. Sylvia also graduated in social work from Wichita State University. She has worked as a sales person and a teacher aide, and has been a program developer in a community child-care organization in Wichita. Both Tim and Sylvia were MVS workers in Seattle Mental Health Institute in 1974-76. Sylvia's parents are Joel and Jessie Gunn of Garden City, Kansas. Tim's parents are Ed and Margaret Mierau of Henderson, Nebraska. Tim and Sylvia are members of South Seattle Church.

David and Peggy Newcomer spent three years as volunteers with Mennonite Central Committee in Egypt. David graduated from Portland (Oregon) State University with a major in humanities in 1969, and in 1973 received the MDiv degree from Chicago Theological Seminary. He has worked in construction, with the US Forest Service, and in a campus ministry in Buffalo, New York. Peggy, an English major, received the BA degree from Seattle Pacific College in 1968, and the MA degree in 1970 from the University of Chicago. She has worked as a tutor, a placement director for an international high school exchange program, and in a correspondence school. Both Peggy and David are members of South Seattle Church. David's parents are Clarence and Marie Newcomer, Portland, Oregon. Peggy's parents are Donald and Doris Kilborn, Seattle.

Vic and Beverly Plessinger, Oak Grove Church, Smithville, Ohio, served under Mennonite Disaster Service for three months this winter as codirectors of the Harlan, Kentucky, Appalachian flood recovery project.

Principal required

Applications are invited for the position of principal at Elim Bible Institute, Altona, Manitoba. Duties to commence in summer 1978. Address inquiries to:

Jacob F. Pauls
870 Carter Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 2E2
Telephone (204) 475-6301

Calendar

May 1-4—Ministers' get-acquainted seminar, Newton, Kansas

June 14-16—National conference on "Women and the Ministries of Christ," Pasadena, California; sponsored by Fuller Theological Seminary and the Evangelical Women's Caucus; speakers, Letha Scanzoni, Nancy Hardesty, Paul Jewett, Don Williams

July 25-30—Mennonite World Conference, Wichita, Kansas

October 5-9—National New Call to Peacemaking conference, Green Lake, Wisconsin

Canadian

May 6—Manitoba Women in Mission conference, Winkler; speaker, Lois Deckert

June 3—MCC relief sale, Swift Current, Saskatchewan

June 17—MCC relief sale, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

July 5-9—Conference of Mennonites in Canada annual sessions, Gretna, Manitoba

Central

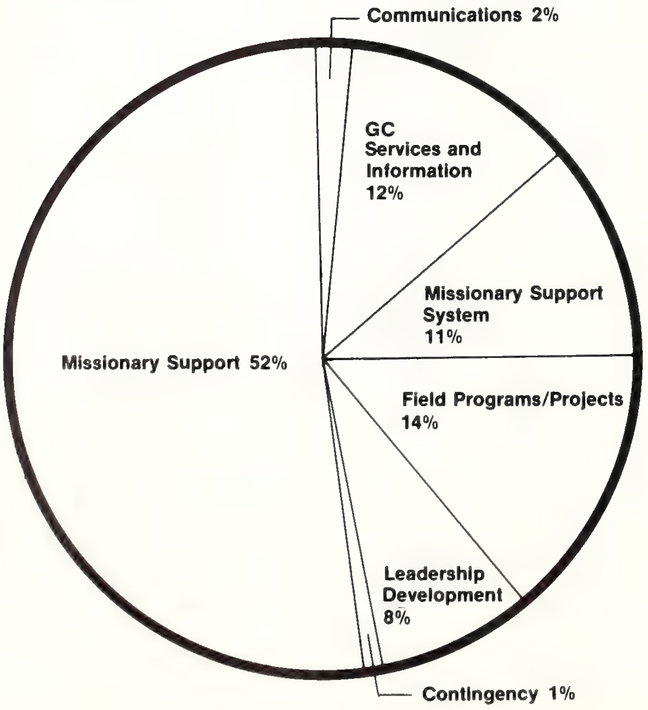
June 16-18—Tri-State Festival of Missions, Bluffton (Ohio) College

Western

April 8—Mid-Kansas relief sale, Hutchinson

YOUR MISSION DOLLAR AT WORK

Needed this year . . . $2,084,949



MISSIONARY SUPPORT	$1,094,129
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	156,881
FIELD PROGRAMS/PROJECTS	279,133
COMMUNICATIONS	47,200
GC SERVICES/INFORMATION	250,389
MISSIONARY SUPPORT SYSTEM	234,629
CONTINGENCY	22,588

Letters

Censorship of human rights

Dear Editor: Where can we have a full discussion of our leading writers' continuing selective silence concerning gross Marxist (and certain other) violations of human rights? Shouldn't we speak frankly, as Jesus did, to urge our church leaders to be sensitive to overlooked groups of people?

By all means let's encourage the MCC Peace Section, which, for example, in the *Washington Memo* (WM) is alerting us to torture in Argentina, some facts about the Panama Canal, and so on.

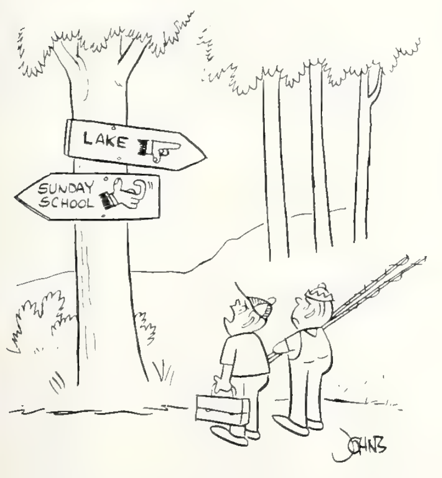
I was glad to read the recent appeal against brutality in Uganda. This was simultaneously balanced with a statement on South Africa. The killings in South Africa are far fewer than in Uganda, but we need to be sensitized to all governmental and other violence.

Our public criticisms, however, of small fascist or near-fascist countries have rarely been "balanced" with commensurate reports on, say, China or Cambodia. (Have I missed any here in Japan?)

Several editorial explanations of this one-sidedness have been given repeatedly. In *Window to Mission* of July-August 1977, I commented on some of these points. Editorial rebuttals were printed alongside, and since then no answering arguments have been accepted. Some of the major arguments for balance have never appeared even once, as far as I can tell, in Mennonite papers.

I do not propose to present those arguments here, but am asking peacemakers to avoid using editorial power to screen out divergent views on big questions such as which people are powerless and need our help. This is especially so when it is clear that some of our past official evaluations and predictions relatively favorable to the Marxists have proved wrong. None of us likes to admit error.

We must all resist the temptation to "cover up" *any* nation's sins. I have neither the time nor the tact to write the lengthy statement that is needed both to express possible Mennonite concerns on human rights and to guide our actions. I hope that someone else will write at least a little more, that it will receive adequate exposure, and that the past ideological one-sidedness will be eliminated. *Ronald L. Rich, House 348, ICU, 10-3 Osawa, 3-chome, Mitaka, Tokyo 181, Japan* February 23



"I WISH THEY WOULDN'T PUT IT LIKE THAT"

Salvation article helped

Dear Editor: We were amazed at how adequately Katie Tonn in her meditation "Salvation Means Creativity" (February 21 issue) summed up what we've been trying to think through for a long time.

Feeling the push by "peers, evangelists, Independents, Baptists" in our community and elsewhere to be saved, only caused feelings of anger and hostility—feelings that our Christian commitment wasn't stacking up to others' approval. Yet we knew that these feelings were wrong.

"Are you saved?"

"No," we want to say, "no, we're not saved from the cruelty of the world, the day-to-day trials we face as Christians, the wickedness of sin and its effect on people. Saved? Saved from what? From hell? Who's saved from hell? Being a Christian is a day-to-day commitment which needs to be continually renewed."

Does being saved at one point in your life really do it? Is that when you're not eligible for free pamphlets anymore? Does it brand you as a permanent Christian, able now to ease up on your commitment? Granted, each religion or belief deserves to have the right to believe their way, without the "you're wrong" attitude. I feel somewhat sorry that our God is misinterpreted and made flighty, changeable, and impulsive by the "savers."

Why do we have to feel like we're on trial, or why do we feel like we need to offer an explanation or excuse when popped with, "Are you saved?"?

"Well, no, no, we're not saved from what the world is, or the trials we are forced to confront. Yes, yes, Christ is our Savior. We make it a day-to-day commitment to live for him—to be his disciples—hoping people will see that we live for Christ."

We have our doubts that one of these rash, abrupt, and a lot of times, scare-tactic pamphlets, will "save" anyone. Our attitude, behavior, love, and reenactment of Christian life will do much more!

Yes, Katie Tonn, the next time someone pops the question, thanks to your input and wisdom and our beliefs, we will start by saying, "Saved? Saved from what?" *Janet and Jean Neufeld, Box 406, Moundridge, Kansas 67107* February 24

The need for God

Dear Editor: As I read the articles "Is It Really Love?" (February 7 issue) and "Marriage Encounter Weekend" (February 14 issue), I found myself comparing them. Both articles spoke about self-love and loving others, and both gave suggestions on how to grow in these areas. However, only the Marriage Encounter article included God as an important part in this growth.

I have discovered that reading and studying about love and self-acceptance can give me good guidelines for growth, but only God can give me the strength and insight I need to follow these guidelines.

I appreciate your articles that do express this need for God. *Janice Friesen, Box 415, Henderson, Nebraska 68371* March 3

About letters: To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations. Editor

Work Camp 1978

Needed: Young people, ages sixteen to eighteen, for work camps at Oklahoma (Southern Cheyenne); Wheatridge, Colorado; Kansas City, Kansas; Beatrice, Nebraska; Normal, Illinois; Minneapolis, Minnesota (drama); Winnipeg, Manitoba (radio and TV); St. Catharines, Ontario (drama); Sudbury, Ontario; Fort Wayne, Indiana; Hamilton, Ontario; and Pine Lake, Mississippi.

Leaders are also needed. Contact:
Work Camps 1978
Box 347
Newton, Kansas 67114

Visiting patients in a hospital

La Vernae J. Dick

"Did you know that Sam had surgery today?" John asked Clyde.

"No, didn't even know he was sick," Clyde answered. "Hope it wasn't too serious."

"Well, serious enough to be operated on," John said. "Say, how about us visiting him?"

"Sounds like a good idea; when shall we go?"

So Clyde and John made plans to visit Sam. What should they remember when they make that hospital visit, so Sam will remember it with gratitude? Here are eleven simple rules:

1. Make your hospital visit brief. Hospitalized people are ill. A brief visit of five to ten minutes is usually long enough. Keep your eye on your watch and leave when the five to ten minutes are up, even if the patient requests that you stay. You can excuse yourself by promising to come back another time, or for a longer visit when the patient is home and well again.

2. Plan your visit when patients are not likely to have other visitors. I know of hospital patients who had as many as thirty visitors on a Sunday afternoon. That might even be too many visitors for a person who is well! Patients who have too many visitors may require a longer hospitalization than necessary, because they are not getting sufficient rest. Both patients and hospital staff are very reluctant to say anything about too many visitors. Visitors themselves should control this matter.

3. Be warm, friendly, and talk about pleasant subjects. Most hospital patients have some fears that their condition is more serious than they have been told. When visitors talk about "Aunt Martha who went to the hospital for similar surgery and then died from complications," those fears are intensified.

On the other hand, an unusually jovial attitude may also convey to patients that there is something more seriously wrong than they have been told. The best advice is to be your natural, caring self, and the kind of visitor you would like to have if you were the patient.

4. Generally, the only visitors that patients in an intensive care unit may have are immediate family members and the pastor. Usually these patients are heavily sedated and visitors are allowed to see them only five minutes per hour. Family members, who spend long hours outside the unit, may appreciate short visits from friends. Such visits can be reassuring and comforting by helping to make the time pass more quickly. They may be longer than five or ten minutes, but be certain that you do not keep these persons from visiting the patient when they have the opportunity.

5. Observe all hospital rules and regulations. Visiting hours are set so that the patients get sufficient rest and the staff can carry out hospital procedures. Remember that patients are also restricted in what they can do, eat, and drink. Do not turn a patient's bed up or down without consulting hospital staff. A heart patient might die from having a bed turned down. Call the nursing attendant if the patient needs assistance.

6. Don't neglect those patients who are repeatedly hospitalized or who are in for long terms. Just as too many visitors is not good for hospital patients, patients who have no visitors are handicapped in their recovery. It is easy to forget persons who are chronically ill. Be a person who keeps on caring.

7. Patients in a comatose stage may hear what is being said even though they cannot respond. Therefore do not divulge any information that you would not want the patient to know. It is all right to take the hands of such patients, soothe their brow, and talk to them briefly. The human touch and voice convey real caring concern, even to patients who are critically ill.

8. Do not suggest to patients that their care is inadequate or that they would get better faster under other physicians. They have chosen their physicians because they trust them, and their particular hospitals because they consider them adequate for their needs. If you have questions about the care that patients are getting, speak to their family, the nursing staff, or the physician.

9. Don't ask a lot of personal questions about the patients. They will tell you what they want you to know. Let the patients guide the conversation. If a patient wants to talk about the weather, it may well be a sign for you not to ask about the illness.

10. If you know that the patient you are going to visit is disoriented or "out of the head," introduce yourself immediately by name: "Hi, Aunt Mary. I'm John Schmidt, your nephew."

Older patients in particular may become confused in a hospital where they have none of their familiar possessions. It helps such persons to adjust to the hospital environment if you can give them gentle reminders about who you are and where they are.

11. While giving your main attention to the person you came to visit, do be courteous to other patients in the same room and to the hospital staff. One does not generally need to say more than a friendly greeting to such people. All people like to be acknowledged.

The next time you go to visit in a hospital, remember these suggestions and make your visit a pleasant and memorable one for the patient, the hospital staff, and for yourself. It will be a blessing to you and to the patient. God cares about those who are ill, and he urges us to show his caring to those persons.

Meditation

Dear God

I got my electricity bill today. It was twice as high as last month and we didn't keep very warm. We're not poor, but we've been trying to conserve. A brochure enclosed with the bill said "Button Up Your House." We've insulated, weather-stripped, caulked, and put on more clothes. Does the electric company really care if we try to "button up . . ."?

I pick up a magazine and read all the tributes and eulogies to Elvis Presley. His wealth is incomprehensible. I wonder if he did anything to conserve resources. I feel bitter when I try to live less comfortably and then see that others, especially the rich, don't have to.

It must be terrible to be poor and know you won't stay warm, no matter what. All persons are created equal? I need lots of help with that one, God. Please help me to sort out, forgive, and understand. Amen

Leann Toews

Mennonite theology and spankings

Our minister's wife is an innovative person, especially in matters concerning children and young mothers. Several years ago she started a community program called "Mothers Enrichment" for mothers with children of preschool age.

We had invited Phil Osborne, a professor of psychology and early childhood development at Hesston (Kansas) College, to lead our group in STEP (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting). The course mainly emphasized self-confidence for parents and some practical examples of handling problems on eating and discipline.

Our group consisted of community women who were mostly Mennonite, but who had vastly different ideas about raising children.

Real polarization was apparent on the morning when our group discussed spanking. During our session, one mother repeatedly referred to the times she had "whopped" her kids. It sounded like this was an everyday occurrence in their home, and that bothered me.

It is not often that I can refrain from responding to an issue which I strongly favor or oppose; however, I remained silent during the first part of our discussion. Finally I nervously sputtered, "Jerry and I don't spank Katrina." It was quiet. No one answered verbally, but they answered obviously with eyes and body positions. Then a mother responded, "But she's not two years old yet." I then went into a short sermonette on my philosophy of spanking.

My philosophy of spanking began to be formulated several years before we had Katrina. I was taking a seminar on "Helping Children Develop More Positive Self-Images." While teaching high school, I had come to feel that my students needed help in that area. John Valusek, a child psychologist from Wichita, Kansas, spoke on the proper ways we should teach our children self-respect. At the end of his speech, he asked for questions from the group. The first question was "What do you think about spanking?" From then on it became a fiery discussion.

Valusek stated that spanking was never effective and gave an example that I shall not forget. It was so simple. We tell a three-year-old boy not to hit baby brother. If he does, mother comes and spanks him because he spanked the baby. What an incongruous message this must be for a child. As I drove home from my seminar, I was excited about telling Jerry all the new insights I had gained. I was elated because the whole idea of not spanking was so much in keeping with my views on nonviolence.

Or does disciplining our children have anything to do with our theology? Home seems like the place to start. Peace education has got to be a family thing; and there is probably no better place to begin than in the way we relate to our children.

Katrina is now past three and we're expecting our second baby. Occasionally people (for the word got around that the Toews weren't spanking) will ask, "I'm curious, have you spanked Katrina yet?" If I reply no, they seem to say with a look on their face and sometimes verbally, "Oh, you will yet."

That I don't know. It has been comfortable, with my feelings about spanking, not to have used that method as a disciplinary measure. I have had thoughts of spanking, I admit, but I have stopped and have always come up with what seems like a more desirable solution.

I don't want to sound like we are saintly, faultless parents. We are not. We've had the usual frustrations, misgivings, apprehensions, and joys of other parents. It still remains that as Mennonites, who prefer peaceful ways of settling problems, my husband and I hope to depart from having to use spanking as a solution to handling our children's misbehaviors.

Leann Toews

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CONTRIBUTORS

William Keeney is director of continuing education and experiential learning at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas 67117.

La Vernae J. Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338, continues her series.

Leann Toews, Route 2, Newton, Kansas 67114, is a free-lance writer.

CREDITS

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The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

More than a gripe

My sixteen-year-old daughter said to me recently, "You are lucky you have lived a good part of your life already."

At sixteen she is worried about the future. I share her concern.

What can anyone do about the manufacture of nuclear weapons? What is the answer to burgeoning defense budgets? Worldwide in 1977 the nations of the earth spent $324 billion on the military—24 billion more than on education, and almost twice the expenditures on health. Only 17 billion was spent on foreign aid.

Somehow life goes on. We don't think a nuclear war is going to happen. We are reassured by the fact that there hasn't been a nuclear weapon used in war since the atomic bombs against Japan. Yet, since 1945 there have been many nuclear accidents. The use of nuclear weapons by the USA was imminent during various confrontations. In the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the US Mediterranean fleet was one step away from a total nuclear strike.

We live in an era which has coined the phrase "mutually assured destruction." The US military is caretaker to 30,000 nuclear warheads. The housekeeping chore on these would tax the skill of even the best organization. They are the equivalent of 615,000 Hiroshima bombs, enough to kill everyone on earth twelve times. Other nations have wrapped themselves in the nuclear security blanket—Britain, France, India, China, Russia—all enjoy collecting these monstrosities. Some of these warheads cruise the world in submarines, some are in aircraft, many pimple the earth in silos waiting for the electrical squeeze to trigger their lethal purpose. All are deadly acne.

Our sensitivity to what has happened, and is happening, is hardly alive. We have become as dumb as lambs. Nuclear weapons are the de facto good shepherds for the waning years of the twentieth century. Nations covet them. Most citizens believe in their efficacy. By 1985, forty countries will be able to make nuclear bombs; by the year 2,000—100 countries. The raw material for these weapons will come from the waste of nuclear reactors around the world.

Are we defenseless against the good shepherd of the twentieth century? Informed persons think nuclear terrorism is possible by 1980. Some think that unless the arms race is stopped, our world will be destroyed. There have been 125 limited wars since 1945.

Yes, I am lucky that I have lived a good part of my life already.

I don't think God wants us to move in the direction of mutually assured destruction. His call, in fact, is in the opposite direction.

It pains me that the major centers of Christianity are also the regions which form such a criminal threat to human existence.

So what does the Christian do? Can we take on the military in a showdown of power?

Yes, we can.

It is hard for me to believe that, but I have a vision. On April 29-30 the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons facility, northwest of Denver, Colorado, will be the site of a national demonstration to call for the closing of the plant as a nuclear weapons manufacturing center.

I intend to be there. Being a demonstrator will be new for me. Before this time my bellyaches have centered about the kind of music my children like, unmade beds, TV programs, wages, and inefficient bureaucrats.

But this is more than a gripe. It is a fundamental concern that the evil powers need to be confronted in a massive, nonviolent way. The message? Global nuclear disarmament. Resources for human need, not weapons. A nuclear-free future.

Is that God's message? Is it being prophetic?

Organizers are hoping for 3,000 persons, one for each employee at the plant. That is too few to make a powerful impact of moral force and righteousness. Every person concerned about nuclear weapons, and militarism, should be there. Men, women, children. Americans and Canadians. Are there 30,000? 300,000?

Our leaders should be there—pastors, administrators, scholars—leading the demonstration.

No, not a demonstration, but an act of worship. The march should be an action of devotion—not to the nuclear shepherd, but to the Good Shepherd.

One of the striking memories of my years in India was a gathering of more than a million Hindu pilgrims at Hardwar in an act of worship.

That memory is my vision. The moral force of tens of thousands of people would be tremendous.

There are fifty-three Sundays in 1978. Use one to say to the world that God intends for us to live in constructive ways.

Rocky Flats April 29-30 is an act of worship. VR

When you
are different

Eighty-four
and working

Christians in
the Soviet Union

Initiative and
finish-iative

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:15 APRIL 11, 1978

When you are different

Most mentally retarded people have many abilities which are frequently left untapped. They have much to contribute to enrich our Sunday schools, our church services, and our communities.

Aldred Neufeldt

Imagine yourself

Imagine yourself with a wart on the tip of your nose. It's huge—about the size of a quarter. You don't have to strain your eyes much to see the thing perched there slightly to one side. You'd think the thing covered your whole face, the way people look at you.

More often than you care to remember you've tried to have it removed. When you were smaller you tried to pretend it wasn't there. You wished wishes and tied knots in strings, and yet every morning when you washed your face, there it was for all the world to see.

The doctors told your mom, "Oh, it'll go away with time." But it never did. An aunt suggested going to visit an old woman in the district who knew about such things. She told you to rub some smelly ointment on it "first thing when you get up in the morning, and just before you go to bed." That didn't help either. It only made the other kids start calling you names like "Stinky."

On getting older, more drastic measures were tried, to the point where you sought expert help; but even surgery didn't help. Every time the thing got cut off, it grew right back again. They dubbed your problem "the W syndrome," which seemed to make everyone else feel a whole lot better, but only made you feel worse. The doctors, your parents, and a lot of other people would nod wisely and say, in a most serious voice, "Oh yes, you've got W syndrome," as if that meant something.

But it didn't change a thing. The wart stayed right there as big as ever. People started calling you a "wartate," a sort of everyday term to describe the problem, and that made you feel really bad, because people seemed to forget that you were a real person, with a real name, and feelings—who could do something more than carry a wart around on your nose.

What really hurt was the way people tried to show how accepting they are. For a while you couldn't find a job, no matter how well you did in the qualifying tests. Always the same story. "We meet a lot of people in this job and we just think you wouldn't be comfortable doing it. It's not that we don't think warts are nice, but. . . ."

Finally you got a job stuck in the back of a shop, pushing a broom together with another person who had a misshapen face. "They like to be with their own kind," you overheard someone say. No one asked you

The single biggest barrier for mentally handicapped people is the attitude of us "normals." "What might be" could be quite different than "what is."

what you'd like. No one ever seems to ask. You—the wartate—aren't supposed to think. Maybe you aren't even a person.

Mental retardation labels

Being mentally retarded is much like having a wart on your nose. By definition, if you are mentally retarded, it shows—at least by the time you are school age. Mental retardation means that one isn't very good at book learning. It also means that one finds social graces harder to learn than most other folks. In our society, where it's important to do well in school and it's good to be graceful, one's inability to do so sticks out—well, like a wart on your nose.

Now, most everyone would agree that getting *A's* in school and being able to make small talk isn't all there is to life. Yet the fact of the matter is that simply labeling someone mentally retarded leads most people to act as if the person can do nothing others can do. The label itself is so powerful that most people end up making decisions they wouldn't normally make. A child who may have been simply a little slow, all of a sudden on being called (by a school psychologist or a teacher) "mentally retarded," becomes one who is awkward, hard to deal with, a source of embarrassment, "a dummy"—all because of having difficulty in school. The child hasn't changed, others have.

In some instances the "differentness" may be noticed shortly after a child's birth. Like the allegory of the wartate, many doctors do tell parents "it will go away with time." There are parents who continuously look for some "cure" that will magically remove the problems, some imagined and some real. Both responses only serve to delay much needed help. Carefully introduced stimulation programs early in life, for example, can lead to tremendous improvements in school and later in life.

One can understand the parent and the doctor. At least their motives are laudable (though professional ignorance is inexcusable). Harder to understand are people who call out names like "retardate" and "dummy." Using such words is mean and uncharitable in the extreme. In my experience, it's not children ("normals"?) who are the worst offenders. It's a problem of adults who keep emphasizing that being smart is important.

Most mentally retarded people, children or adult, have many abilities which are frequently left untapped. One teenage girl told me: "I may be retarded, but I'm not stupid," and she wasn't.

It probably would be safe to say that the use of short forms (labels) by itself is the single most dangerous thing we can do. From the labels flow all manner of deviancy-making activities. Expressions such as "mongoloid," "the retarded," and so on, are used as if they mean something real, that the term encapsulates all there is to know about the person, in the same way a label such as "the aged" gives people visions of a bunch of wasted, sickly bodies. Humanity and love are removed from such labels.

Professionals fall as much prey to this fallacy as laypersons. Many professionals illustrate severe retardation in the condition known as Down's syndrome or mongolism. While it is true that some children with Down's syndrome are severely retarded, others are not. Some in fact, given a chance, have learning abilities approaching those of an average person. *But,* if all Down's syndrome children are treated by those around them as severely retarded, then they will likely act as if they are severely retarded.

Being defined as "different" also leads to many other unfortunate consequences. How often have you heard others or yourself say about people with differences, "They like to be with their own kind"? This usually means, "Let's not give 'them' a choice; I'm afraid to share of myself with 'them'." Neighborhoods fight zoning battles to keep out group homes and keep "them" away. The fear is that property values might go down, or that something worse will happen. Yet, in all of North America there hasn't been a single documented example, to my knowledge, of property values decreasing as a result of placing a program for people with handicaps in a neighborhood.

In short, the single biggest barrier to success of mentally handicapped people is the attitude of us "normals."

The church's role

The corporate church body has not responded much better than larger society in coping with differentness. In some instances, individual families with mentally retarded youngsters have found warmth and support from their church constituency. Some heartwarming stories have appeared in our church papers describing what the presence of a mentally retarded youngster means to a congregation. However, many families feel themselves and their children rejected.

What makes matters worse is that even the services that are operated by church-related groups tend to be less than what is optimum. Indeed, few church-operated programs for mentally retarded children or adults can be found that are as good as some of the best ones found in secularly operated programs—a stinging indictment of how we have allowed a "do good" attitude to lead us into mediocrity. There may be plenty of love around in our church-related programs (although even this is questioned in some instances), but mentally retarded people aren't getting an opportunity to better themselves to the extent they might be.

"What might be" could be quite different than "what is." The brother-sisterhood has had a genius over the decades of coming up with insightful and superior ways of helping our neighbors. Surely we can do the same for those who need special support. And we can do this in such a way that the special support service won't stop those we serve from growing to what John R. Mumaw describes as "full personhood."

If your church or a group of churches is interested in doing something about the problem, here are some suggested steps:

—Form a small task group to find out what is possible and what is desirable. Don't leave it just to the people who "always do this sort of thing." Make sure that the task group has a cross section of your congregation.

—Write to one or two knowledgeable sources to find out where the best services for mentally handicapped people are being provided so that you can see how well mentally handicapped people can function in our regular society.

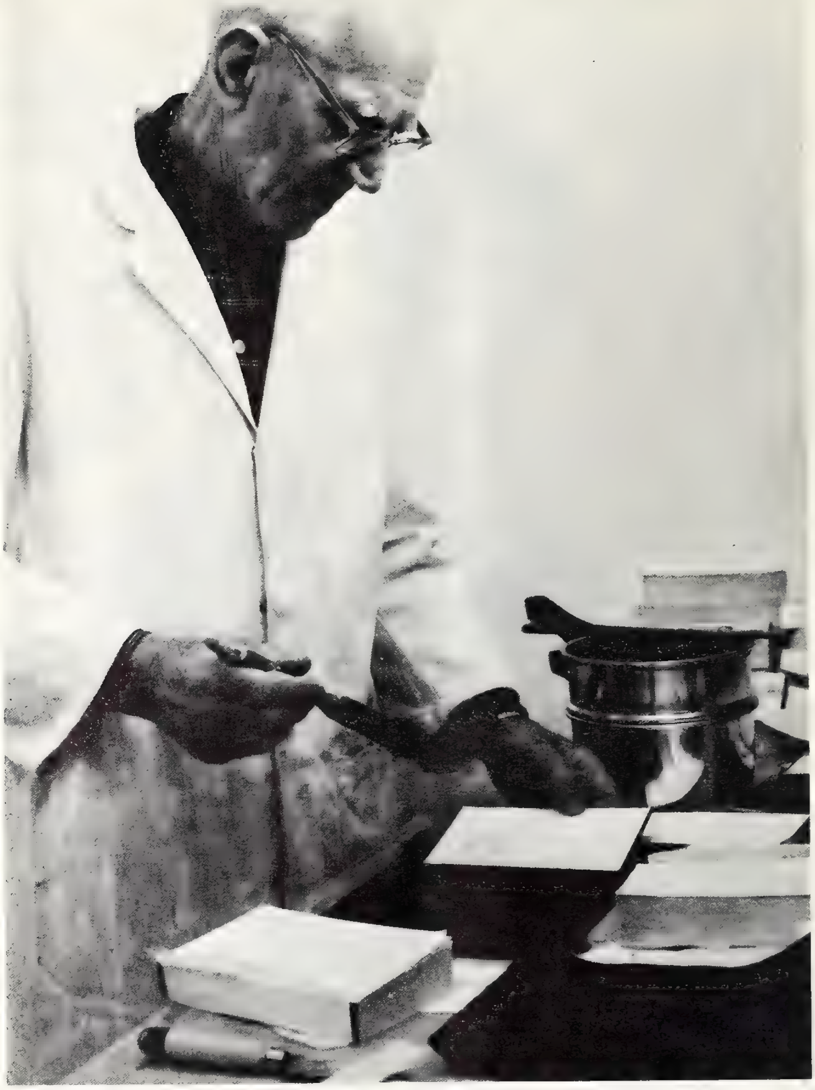
—Make arrangements to visit some of the programs that are within reach and pay particular attention to the kinds of programs organized during the daytime, and how these differ from what happens during leisure time and overnight.

—Bring back your ideas to your own church and discuss these—perhaps at a Sunday evening service, during Sunday school, or at other times. Explore ways in which your church can be instrumental in helping mentally retarded persons and their families lead richer, more fulfilling lives.

There are many possibilities. Mentally retarded people are among the most underused group of people that we have. They have much to contribute to enrich our Sunday schools, our church services, and our communities. *A Meetinghouse article*

Eighty-four and working

Brenda Schroeder



Hugo Bartel puts another book back together.

Through the maze of students and faculty, an old man walks down the hall on his way to a chapel service at Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC). He is not a student, nor a professor. He is Hugo Bartel, the college bookbinder. The presence of this eighty-four-year-old man at CMBC is unique, and causes one to wonder who he is and why he is here.

Born September 17, 1893, in Moundridge, Kansas, Mr. Bartel was one of nine children. In 1906 the Bartel family settled on a homestead near Drake, Saskatchewan. Marie Funk, who had been a nurse in the Deaconess Hospital in Newton, Kansas, became Mrs. Bartel in June 1922. Together they established the "Smiling Spruce Farm" three miles west of Drake. The artistic landscaping was a pride of the Bartels, and it was of special interest to many travelers.

An important experience to the Bartels was the sharing of their home with his parents. They took care of them during the last years of their lives. Mr. Bartel said, "We enjoyed taking care of my parents, even though tensions sometimes rose. It seemed like a natural responsibility of life."

December 1, 1958, Marie Bartel died of heart problems. After her death, Mr. Bartel moved to Winnipeg, Manitoba, and again entered an extended-family situation. He moved in with his daughter, Mildred, and her husband, Dave Schroeder, and still lives with them. Mr. Bartel says that he has never considered moving into a home for the aged, as long as there is the option of living with his family. He is thankful for being able to live in a family situation. A part of summer is usually spent with his other children.

The Schroeder family appreciates "grandpa's" presence in their home. Dave Schroeder says about his father-in-law, "He helps around the house fixing things, and in earlier years he was often the babysitter to our children. He had the patience to be with

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Bluffton '77

Mr. Bartel's "family" (from left): David and Mildred Schroeder, Hugo Bartel, and Alan Schroeder.

them for hours, to read or play with them. When family decisions and concerns are dealt with, his participation is regarded like one of the family." With the help of his children's care and understanding, Hugo Bartel remains an active person.

When Mr. Bartel moved to Winnipeg, he retired from the farm—the only kind of life he had known. Anxious to keep busy, any kind of work was acceptable to him. After much prayer and seeking for God's will, the job of college bookbinder was offered to him. He was taught the trade by pastor Henry Wall in 1959 and he has kept it up ever since. From the beginning this has been a part-time voluntary service.

The main part of his bookbinding task is to bind periodicals and repair books for the college library. College students frequently bring their books to him for binding or repairing. Many other people, from far and wide, have also sent books to him. Over the years he has developed his own equipment and style of binding books. The results of his work have been admired and appreciated by many.

Mr. Bartel is a great asset to CMBC. Being a voluntary service worker and always accessible is an advantage to the college. He also receives many blessings from his work and says, "Being in contact with students helps to keep me young."

Mr. Bartel enjoys being with people, especially young people. He is often seen in the halls talking to students. Those visiting him in his office are often entertained by a variety of puzzles that he has made. Mr. Bartel also enjoys the fellowship of chapel services and he misses few of them.

Hugo Bartel does not only enjoy young people. He also feels a need to communicate with the people of his own generation. Every Tuesday afternoon for the past eight years Mr. Bartel has been a part of a senior citizens' group that meets in a church for activities and fellowship. He usually walks the two blocks from his home to the church. One of the activities that he particularly enjoys is carpet bowling. Once a year the group takes an all-day trip to different places, and these trips are thoroughly enjoyed.

In his spare time, Mr. Bartel makes puzzles. He uses scraps of cardboard or of wood. Many of his puzzles have been sold at senior citizen bazaars; others are handed out in the halls of CMBC.

Collecting sayings is another hobby. He has collected over 250. In return for his volunteer work, the college provides free typing services and use of the Xerox machine for printing these sayings. He happily hands out copies to those who request them.

Most people, sometime during their lives, have tried keeping a diary. Mr. Bartel has kept a diary since 1910. In it are recorded deaths, marriages, births, weather, seeding and harvesting times, as well as social and other events. Even though in later years he has not recorded day-to-day events, he still records important happenings. Many historical events are permanently inscribed in his diary.

Hugo Bartel has carried through life a faith in God. This faith has been his strength for many years. He says, "We must be prepared for everything in life, and as long as we trust in the Lord, everything will work out."

One of his sayings seems like a motto for his life: Being alone takes more getting used to than aging. In both cases though, there's only one way to do it, "One Day at a Time":

One step and then another and the longest
walk is ended.
One stitch and then another and the longest
rent is mended.
One brick upon another and the tallest wall
is made.
One flake and then another and the deepest
snow is laid.
Then do not look downhearted on the work
you have to do, and say that such a task
you never can get through; but just
endeavor day by day another point to
gain, and soon the mountain that you
feared will prove to be a plain."

(Source and author unknown)

News

"Contented murmur" flows in Central District

Wooster, Ohio—A fisherman's favorite angling spot has a lot in common with the March 30-April 2 annual meeting of the Central District. There was familiarity and pleasantness. There was also expectation and renewal.

This year's conference, based on the theme "How Much Is Enough?", was primarily educative and inspirational. The spacious facilities of the First Brethren Church, rented for the twenty-second annual meeting of the district, lent themselves well to seminars, displays, as well as large group meetings. Audiovisuals were used effectively in presenting reports and doing business. Business was routine and minimal. There were no significant policy decisions, and no ear-ringing periods of discernment.

Yet, a visible amount of energy was present. A charismatic experience renewed participants Saturday afternoon. There were strong affirmations of various ministries. Many youth were about. Three talks on stewardship by Perry Yoder of Newton, Kansas, created wide interest and thoughtful responses. Few persons opted to go fishing somewhere else.

Yoder spoke about stewardship of gifts, resources, and people. Everyone has a spiritual gift, he said, and although not all gifts are the same, their purpose is to build the body of Christ through service to others. However, the reality, he noted, is that "the church often attempts to buy spiritual gifts, or to determine spiritual gifts by secular roles and stereotypes." Here he referred to the roles of women. He asked if the structures of the church actually hinder spiritual maturation because the church bases its organization on the principles of order and control, rather than determining the spiritual gifts in the body, and then functioning accordingly.

Fifty percent of the teachings of Jesus deal with material things, Perry stated. Although Christ regarded wealth as a danger, the economics of the world determine ethics in the church. Mennonites have opted for wealth economics rather than livelihood economics. The former is one in which there is never enough. Consumption is for status. In contrast to this, the Bible teaches an economics which is based on maintenance.

Stewardship of people, Yoder reflected, is usually governed by a deeply ingrained attitude of reciprocity—the notion that things have to be fair, equal, just. But Jesus Christ moved beyond this concept. People should be treated with reconciling love. A Christian's actions are not dictated by who the person is, or what the person has done, but by who the Christian is.

The major focus of discerning spiritual gifts occurred during a seminar on ministerial leadership. Further, the relationship of pastors to their congregations produced the only major resolution of the conference. The resolution calls for churches and pastors to discern the gifts of the pastor before taking a vote on the pastor's tenure, or the submission of a resignation. Delegates, true to their resolve, attempted to assess the ministry of the conference pastor, Stan Bohn. Some time was used to discern Bohn's gifts—his strengths and weaknesses—before a vote was taken on his tenure. He was unanimously reappointed for three years.

A seminar session was also used to discuss how congregations can motivate or hinder ministerial leadership gifts. What is the role of the congregation in calling ministers? In addition to the individual's sense of call, participants observed that nurturing congregations, pastoral models, the "tap on the shoulder," and opportunities for experience were essential to the congregational influence in calling out leadership.

It was reported that patterns of ministerial leadership have changed markedly within the Central District. Currently there are twelve fellowships with tentmaker pastors—those who are bi-vocational, supporting their families through one vocation while serving as an unpaid pastor. A number of team ministries have also evolved, including husband and wife, as well as teams where there is a ministry by function. These changing patterns of leadership call into question traditional concepts of ordination.

Four new fellowships were admitted into Central District membership. They are Plow Creek Fellowship in Tiskilwa, Illinois, an intentional community; Detroit (Michigan) Mennonite Fellowship; Milwaukee (Wisconsin) Mennonite Fellowship; and Ames (Iowa) Mennonite Fellowship. All, except the Detroit group, have dual affiliations with General Conference and Mennonite Church structures.

Tom Fleming, an elder in training with the Plow Creek Fellowship, commended the conference for the way in which delegates moved towards a consensus in calling Stan Bohn for another three years. In response to this, though, conference president James Dunn observed that it was also important that delegates feel free to offer critical evaluations of Bohn. Although there was some uneasiness about the integrity of the process used, it was seen as a step in the right direction.

An unexpected and yet natural spiritual highpoint came a little later. Betty Hochstetler, who with her husband, Lee, pastors the Grace Mennonite Church in Chicago, shared movingly of the support they had received from the Central District in the aftermath of the firebombing and burning of the church last spring. In a distinctly charismatic style, James Dunn called for persons in the nearby pews to encircle Betty and Lee, prayers were said, affirmation was expressed, and God was praised.

Approximately $40,000 has been pledged or raised by Central District churches for the rebuilding of the Grace Church, reported Tim Kissel, who is leading the fund drive.

The conference accepted a budget of $116,181 for 1978, an increase of about $10,000 over 1977, and a per-member share

Vigorous reactions to the messages on stewardship characterized most discussion groups.

of $21. During 1977, reserve funds of almost $27,000 were used to balance the budget, so the 1978 budget will require a significant increase in giving by district churches. Deficit financing was used last year in order to reduce the surplus accumulated over several years.

Another strong affirmation was expressed for youth workers Jim Amstutz and Curtis Birky, who work in both the Mennonite Church and General Conference churches in the Central District in a cooperative ministry financed by both groups. Since full-time youth workers have been employed, there has been a surge in youth interest among churches. Their work is mainly in leadership support to local groups and the organizing of events.

About forty youth met during the conference sessions. They presented a spirited program Saturday evening which was thoroughly enjoyed by delegates.

Camp Friedenswald director Max Sprunger reported that major renovations are being done on the kitchen facilities. Paula and Tim Lehman are the new program directors for the camp.

The 1979 conference will be in Maplewood Mennonite Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Loyal Troyer, who functioned as official "conference listener," said the conference was a "deeply moving spiritual experience." Fishing had been good. *Vic Reimer*

Will this pond remain viable?

Akron, Pennsylvania—Included in Mennonite Central Committee's food-for-work program in Bangladesh is the cleaning of ponds contaminated with microorganisms and parasites from human and animal wastes. The ponds are used for laundering and bathing. Several of these ponds have become major projects. At Mirpur (above) conversion latrines were installed that kill the microorganisms and parasites, and convert human waste to fertilizer. Drainage ditches were dug to prevent sewage from washing into the pond. In 1975 the cleaned-up two-acre pond was stocked with fish. In protein-starved Bangladesh, fish would add abundant protein to diets as well as provide income. The Mirpur pond has become very productive, yielding a daily average of sixty pounds of two species widely accepted in the Bengali diet. Fishermen pay for each line they use. Another two similar ponds are being readied. The fishery units require basic maintenance in the form of fencing, regular flushing, and cleaning. Will they work after MCC withdraws from management? At the Mirpur pond administration is in the hands of a local board. But the chairperson believes the fishery will continue to need funding, and technical assistance. Currently the drainage ditch is filled with sediment, and the pond's banks are contaminated. Fewer fish are of usable size. Who is responsible? The board has not met for months.

Mideast violence sidesteps central issue

More than 200,000 persons fled from their homes in southern Lebanon as Israeli forces invaded. More than a fourth of the 200,000 are Palestinians. The majority of those displaced have moved into Beirut and Sidon.

Mennonite Central Committee's initial response has been the distribution of baby food, canned food, blankets, and mattresses. Five tons each of beans and canned beef, together with 7,000 blankets, are being shipped immediately for release through the Middle East Council of Churches.

The fighting, mainly within a fifteen-mile strip north of the Israeli border, is not so much a retaliation for the tragic Palestinian commando raid near Haifa, as it is a comprehensive invasion to end raids into Israel. Israel has interest in southern Lebanon as part of the historic "land of Israel," and also wishes to tap the water resources of the Litani River.

Escalating violence between Palestinian and Israeli forces sidesteps the central issue that begs for resolution. Palestinians seek a national homeland even as the people of Israel have achieved theirs. Basic issues related to this—the United Nations resolution calling for Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in 1967, an Israeli response to Sadat's initiative, the need for security for Israel and neighboring Arab states, or the status of Israeli settlements in occupied territories—are not being negotiated.

The disruption of war in southern Lebanon comes at a time when Lebanon's national fabric is torn by civil war. These hostilities follow political and religious lines, and have some historical antecedents. But the conflict is sharpened by economic disparities and alleged inequalities of representation in the political system. The Moslem sector of the population is growing faster than the Christian, but possesses relatively less of the economic and political power in Lebanon. The Palestinian population, mostly Moslem, has increased from 100,000 in 1949 to 400,000 in 1978, and adds to the number of people with limited direct representation in government.

Some of the Christian groups, especially the Maronite Catholics, are opposed to sociopolitical reforms. Maronite Catholics have their origin in the fourth century and are an Eastern Catholic tradition related to Rome. They have a staunch attachment to Mount Lebanon dating from the ninth century when they found refuge in the mountains from Christian and Moslem groups. They collaborated with the Crusaders against Moslems from the tenth to the twelfth century.

This explains the extended civil strife between politicized Maronites—through the Phalange Party—and Lebanese nationalist and Palestinian forces. It also explains the alliance of Maronite and other Christian forces in the south with the Israeli military. Israel has been supplying the Phalangist forces with arms and munitions.

It is dangerous to generalize about the political status of Christians in Lebanon because many Maronites are not involved in the political and military activities of the party. Greek Orthodox and Armenian Christians have remained more independent from the political process. *Urbane Peachey, MCC Middle East secretary*

Missionary itineration valued by congregations

A survey of missionary itineration among General Conference congregations has verified its effectiveness.

During 1977, 220 General Conference churches and fellowships across Canada and the United States were visited by missionaries, commission members, and Commission on Overseas Mission staff. They gave more than 1,300 presentations.

Reactions to the presentations were generally positive, reports Tina Block Ediger, who did the research. Tina is director of mission services for COM. On the whole, speakers were inspiring, informative, and enthusiastic, but sometimes long-winded, and too conventional in approach.

The method of itineration has changed in the last ten years. Formerly, itineration schedules were made for a given area and missionaries were on the road two to three weeks, including weekday meetings. However, the 1977 study indicates forcefully that the prime time for itineration is Sunday morning. The least desirable time is a weeknight, although Sunday evenings continue to be useful.

What is it that people really want to know about missions? Respondents said they wanted to know of the real needs, and of the struggles of the missionaries and the national church. The person in the pew wants to know about the political, social, economic, and religious context in which the missionary works, and how the gospel is adapted to the situation. Congregations do appreciate the missionary who can speak of national coworkers as brothers and sisters in Christ. However, one pastor expressed the fear that congregations so far removed from the action overseas do not really understand the struggles of the national church, its leaders, and the missionaries.

Pastors and congregations are pleased when missionaries end their services on time. The missionary, however, feels that North Americans have become clock-watchers. One Indian brother remarked that Americans and Canadians "all have watches but no time."

COM was encouraged to not only continue with missionary itineration across Canada and the United States, but to do more "border crossing" with missionaries during their North American assignment. Canadians should itinerate in the United States more frequently than in the past, and likewise for American visits to Canada.

Missionary itineration is COM's major promotion. Missionaries are sent wherever invited even though some congregations cannot afford to pay for their travel costs. COM believes in a shared ministry in which larger churches help subsidize costs of missionary itineration to small churches. This policy was scrutinized at the February commission meetings but nothing changed, although an effort will be made to inform congregations of the actual costs for a missionary visit. Payment of travel costs, however, is not a prerequisite to having a missionary visit a church.

One pastor related that the majority of people in his congregation was unconcerned about overseas missions. His hope is to nurture the dedicated minority, and to increase their numbers.

"Our people need to be assured," said Tina, "that God is at work, and that the gifts, prayers, and personnel from congregations are supporting a good mission program."

To lose life is better than destruction

The survivors of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 say that to lose life is better than destruction.

"This is a different quality," says Barbara Reynolds, "than the effect of the holocaust on the Jewish people in Germany. They have been afflicted with a paranoia." Reynolds, a Quaker peace activist, founded the World Friendship Center of Hiroshima in 1963, and is the coordinator of the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Memorial Collection of the Wilmington (Ohio) College Peace Resource Center. She spoke to a Newton, Kansas, audience March 20.

The *hibakusha* (survivors of the bombs) are devoting their energies to peace education in Japan, and internationally. "They attach no blame; they have no bitterness from their experience," Reynolds declared. Rather, they say that debate on whether the bombs should have been dropped is pointless. Instead, the *hibakusha* urge people to understand the effects of the bomb in the world today.

One of these effects is insecurity caused by the arms race. "Another," noted Barbara, "is that Americans have been dehumanized by the bomb, an effect worse than the physical destruction of Japan." *Hibakusha* assert that human moral values have been destroyed through the invention and use of nuclear bombs.

The survivors oppose the building of more and better bombs by the nuclear powers. They also stand against the pressure which the United States is exerting on Japan to again become a military power. Reynolds also said that the Japanese attitude toward Christ is colored by the bomb. They express deep reservations about Christianity.

Keith Schrag (left) makes a point about youth ministry while Lonnie Yoder and Eleanor Loewen listen.

Young adults and parents ponder church connection

Ames, Iowa—How are Mennonite young adults relating to the congregation and how might relationships with young adults be improved?

Iowa youth ministers, young adults, and the parents of young adults addressed these questions during an all-day workshop March 18, but answers came slowly.

Planned by Keith Schrag, pastor of the Ames Mennonite Fellowship, and student services directors, the workshop focused on the developmental tasks of young adults and on young adult ministry models.

Eleanor Loewen, director of student services for the General Conference, said that the church should first become more aware of three major developmental stages of young adults: one of idealism and adventure (sixteen- to twenty-two-year-olds), of searching and choosing (twenty-three- to twenty-eight-year-olds), and of redirection and coming to grips with the realities ahead (twenty-nine- to thirty-four-year-olds).

Participants agreed with Schrag that congregations need "to affirm people who are going through a struggling phase." But Joan Miller of the Wellman Mennonite Church pointed to a delicate practical problem: "To what degree should the church pursue 'drop-outs' while they are searching?"

Young adult participants lamented the lack of adequate role models in the church, and emphasized the need for ongoing communication, including the mailing of church bulletins and newsletters. Young adults who remain in their home communities frequently find themselves on the fringes of congregational life. One church has structured a youth ministries council as a means of integrating young persons more effectively into congregational life. *Stuart Showalter*

Words & deeds

On April 29-30, the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons facility, sixteen miles northwest of Denver, will be the site of a national demonstration to call for the closing of the plant as a nuclear weapons manufacturing facility. The nationally supported nonviolent demonstration is sponsored by former Pentagon official Daniel Ellsberg, the Rocky Flats Action Group, the American Friends Service Committee, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and the Mobilization for Survival. The plant is the nuclear crossroads of the United States since it manufactures the nuclear explosive components for all US nuclear bombs. On Saturday morning there will be a public rally at the Federal Center in Denver. That afternoon there will be a caravan to Rocky Flats, a demonstration, and a symbolic blockade of the railroad into the plant. On Sunday there will be an evaluation of the action, and workshops on nuclear power, disarmament, and alternative energy sources are scheduled. For further information write to Rocky Flats National Action, 1428 Lafayette Street, Denver, Colorado 80218, telephone (303) 832-1676; or Box 271, Nyack, New York 10960, telephone (212) L08-8200.

Directors and workers in Mennonite camps will meet April 28-30 at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario, for the biennial convention of Mennonite Camping Association. The theme for the meeting is "The Religious Experience in Camp." Inquiries may be directed to Kathy Harshbarger, MCA Convention, Box 1245, Elkhart, Indiana 46515.

Nairobi, Kenya—Churches around the world will be observing the second Sunday in May as a day of prayer for world evangelization. The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization seeks, through this prayer day, to stress the centrality of prayer in the Christian mission.

Indonesian Mennonites are assuming responsibility for Mennonite Central Committee programming in Indonesia. Administration will be the responsibility of local churches and agencies, but they will also relate directly to the Akron office. The position of MCC representative in Indonesia is finished. It is expected that the change will encourage the Indonesian churches to be active in setting priorities and planning program. One of the problems with the "country representative" concept was that the churches did not view the person as a coworker, but as a center of foreign power to be feared or manipulated. MCC has had service and mission programs in Indonesia for thirty years. Most projects have been in cooperation with two autonomous synods which have substantial differences. The removal of the country representative will necessitate that the two groups work together more directly, a transition which is not expected to be necessarily a smooth one.

Salem, Oregon—A unique opportunity to witness for Christ at the Oregon State Fair is being organized. To be held ten days in August and September, the fair attracts 500,000 visitors. A joint committee of Mennonites and Brethren in Christ is planning an MCC booth. Self-Help articles and the *More-With-Less Cookbook* will be for sale. Audiovisuals and Christian literature will tell about the work of Oregon churches in MCC work around the world. Volunteers will be on hand to answer questions and chat with visitors.

North Newton, Kansas—Mennonite Library and Archives has acquired 388 primary sources pertaining to the Radical Reformation in microfiche form. The collection includes material on religious nonconformity in Europe up to the year 1600, much of which is located in the library of the United Mennonite Congregation at Amsterdam, and books by and about David Joris. A microfiche is a photographic reproduction on film, looks like a four-by-six-inch plastic card, but stores up to 112 pages of material. A reader-printer is used to magnify the card so it can be read.

Mennonite stewardship of accumulated possessions is improving says John Rudy, director of the Mennonite Foundation. Gift assets managed by the foundation for eventual distribution totaled $17.1 million at the end of 1977, up 30 percent from $13.2 million in 1976. In addition to cash, contributions for farmland, rental properties, building lots, and stocks were received last year. Approximately $600,000 was disbursed by the foundation during 1977. Mennonite Foundation staff prepared a growing number of estate analyses, and participated in numerous stewardship and estate planning conferences during the year.

Broadcasters to the USSR were counseled to use good Russian, more questions, and humor, if they want to communicate with the contemporary nonreligious radio audience in Russia. This advice came from recent Russian immigrants now living in the Chicago area. Thirty-six representatives from organizations that beam religious programming into the Soviet Union met in Chicago during December 1977. A new Soviet Christian said the stereotype of believers in Russia is that they are stupid. To counteract this the church must produce quality radio programs. A representative of Radio Liberty met with the group and reported that prominent religious Soviet intelligentsia said, "The standard of Christian radio broadcasting to the USSR is abysmal. Music and sermons should be limited in favor of theology and serious discussion." The Chicago seminar participants agreed that gospel broadcasters should coordinate efforts. They also expressed a need for short evangelical spots of the highest quality on a secular station, such as Radio Liberty. Kenneth Weaver, executive director of Mennonite Broadcasts, and Ivan Magal, founder of "Voice of a Friend" were at the seminar.

A petition for maintaining moral values in legal reforms was presented to the Canadian House of Commons February 7 by Benno Friesen, member of Parliament from Surrey-White Rock, British Columbia. Signatures (18,275) were gathered from the Vancouver area by the United Citizens for Integrity, an interdenominational group initiated by evangelicals to express concern on moral issues. Included in the five-point petition were prohibition of hard-core pornography, of advocacy of illegal drugs and homosexual behavior, of promotion of genocide in all media, and of the protection of minors from the above.

A hospital appreciation service was organized by United Mennonite Church in Mission, British Columbia, to recognize the community service done by the medical and hospital staff. Pastor Henry Born noted that love is the key to therapeutic well-being, and said that the hospital practiced love in its care of patients.

CROP (Christian Rural Overseas Program), the community hunger appeal of Church World Service, raised nearly $4.8 million in cash and commodity gifts to aid the world's hungry during 1977. Additional gifts valued at more than $4.7 million were received through the CWS Clothing Appeal. Although 75 percent of the funds generated in CROP hunger walks, fasts, and other events are ultimately channeled through CWS, nearly $800,000 in 1977 was designated by donors for other hunger and development agencies. Included in these were Catholic Relief Services, Mennonite Central Committee, and Lutheran World Relief. Currently a pilot project is under way, involving target audiences in four states, which will seek to design models for raising awareness about the nature of poverty and ways in which persons, institutions, and governments influence development.

Record

Audiovisuals

A cassette tape in two twenty-minute segments on the More-With-Less theme has been recorded by Doris Janzen Longacre, author of *More-With-Less Cookbook*. The first side of the cassette is a general presentation of the philosophy of the cookbook, and the second side gives tips on planning a More-With-Less workshop. The cassette is available on free loan from the home office of Mennonite Central Committee at 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501; from the MCC (Canada) office at 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8; and from MCC regional offices at 1014 G Street, Reedley, California 93654 and Box 235, North Newton, Kansas 67117.

The Last Slide Show looks back on our world and us as human beings from the imaginary far-off vantage point of a future world. The twenty-two-minute presentation portrays the development of weapons from the stone sling to the hydrogen bomb. The filmstrip has special relevance this year as world attention is focused on the arms race through the United Nations' special session on disarmament. The presentation is available for free showing as a filmstrip or slide set from Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

Workers

Paul G. Jantzen, science teacher at Hillsboro (Kansas) High School, will take a one-year leave from that position to teach courses in biology at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, during the 1978-79 year, while *Dwight R. Platt* is on sabbatical leave of absence. A Bethel graduate, Jantzen earned a Master of Science degree from Emporia (Kansas) State University and has since studied summers at the University of Kansas and Kansas State University, particularly in the field of environmental studies.

Ministers

Melvin Koehn was installed as pastor of Mount Olivet Church, Huron, South Dakota, on January 15. He has served pastorates at Zion Church, Bridgewater, South Dakota, and West New Hopedale Church, Ringwood, Oklahoma.

Raymond and Francis Yoder are providing leadership for a fellowship forming in the Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Michigan, area.

Published

Welcome Inn—VS Inner City Ministry is an eighty-four-page book that tells the story of Welcome Inn, Hamilton, Ontario. Included are articles by Menno and Margarete Ediger, pioneer directors, and others describing the theological rationale for a community ministry. The book also contains pictures of Mennonite Voluntary Service workers who have been involved in the project since its beginning in 1966. It is available for $4.00 from the Welcome Inn, 132 Wood Street East, Hamilton, Ontario L8L 3Y9.

Calendar

May 4-7—Eastern District Conference annual sessions, Deep Run Church, Bedminster, Pennsylvania

July 25-30—Mennonite World Conference, Wichita, Kansas

Canadian

May 6—Manitoba Women in Mission Conference, Winkler; speaker, Lois Deckert

July 5-9—Conference of Mennonites in Canada annual sessions, Gretna, Manitoba

Pacific

April 21-23—California-Arizona New Call to Peacemaking conference, Pacific College, Fresno, California

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Review

Christians in the Soviet Union

Louise, *by Louise Klassen Matson and Margaret J. Anderson (Harold Shaw Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois, 1977, 134 pages);* A Song in Siberia: The True Story of a Church That Could Not be Silenced, *by Anita and Peter Deyneka, Junior (David C. Cook, Elgin, Illinois, 1977, 233 pages) are reviewed by Lawrence Klippenstein, archivist, 584 Berkley Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3R 1J9.*

Siberia. Those who know anything about that vast region of the Soviet Union may simultaneously sense fascination and pathos. The two books, *Louise* and *A Song in Siberia,* both set in this Russian frontier, depict both.

In moving detail, *Louise* relates how her family moved from the Ukraine, South Russia, eastward to Siberia so that they might escape the disturbing developments of post-1917 Russia. There they joined many friends and relatives who had established a large new settlement at Slavgorod near Barnaul on the Ob River.

The changes in family life brought about by the father's death, and the advent of Soviet government in this region, left an indelible impression on the Klassen family. Under increasing pressures, directed especially against property owners classed by the government as *kulaks,* the Klassens finally agreed that they would attempt a flight across the Amur River to China. This plan was executed in December 1928, and becomes a major theme of Louise's story. Suspense, fear, and exultation alternated to form the emotional fabric of a long and wearisome trek which ultimately took the Klassens to the United States and a new home.

Much has been written on this topic, but an English-language account, narrated in novel style as *Louise* is, will invite many readers. Margaret Anderson has thus made a valuable contribution to a generation which cannot know what an undertaking like this really meant for those involved.

Barnaul itself becomes the scene of action for the Deynekas' story. It is a serious effort to record the recent history of a Christian congregation existing in Siberia today.

The Barnaul Baptist congregation traces its roots to the late 1930s and the early years of World War II when German Russian and other believers, transported from South Russia, were resettled in that city of 150,000, allegedly to prevent collaboration with the Nazis.

A major crisis came with the issuance in 1960 of the new AUCECB statutes which regularized the worship life of believers while at the same time placing definite limitations on groups like the Barnaul congregation. Children were not to attend services, baptism of young people was to be drastically reduced, and evangelistic activity curtailed. Protests against these moves brought official closure of the church a year later.

Thus began the struggle of 1½ decades to maintain the solidarity of congregational life and witness in the face of Soviet legal pressures. The story of repeated threats, harassment, arrests, and other efforts to subordinate the group to existing legislation is an almost unbelievable record of persistence and courage.

The Barnaul church was reopened in 1962. Petitions and representations to high authorities in Moscow called for greater freedom. Again and again leaders went to prison for their behavior. When they were released, they returned to a warm welcome at home. There was no thought of giving up.

Then came a bold appeal for permission to emigrate, and by 1976 almost all the German Russians had left for the West. Believers remaining in Barnaul continue to meet in a registered and an unregistered congregation.

The Deynekas' work can help readers understand the experience of present-day Christian congregations in the Soviet Union. There is a dearth of objective, documented writing on the subject.

It is observed here that 99 percent of Soviet Christians are not in prison, that Russian Christians love their country and most leave only as a last resort, that registered churches also suffer from time to time (not the unregistered only), and that the church is not "underground." It is also noted that more Bibles have been printed during the period of Soviet rule than in the entire period of tsarism prior to 1917.

The case study approach helps to counteract the great temptation to generalize about "Christians in the Soviet Union." We need more studies of individual groups.

Peter Deyneka, Junior, has also written *Peter Dynamite,* a biography of his father Peter Deyneka, Senior. *Alex and the Informer* is one of a series of children's books on the Soviet Union written by Peter's wife, Anita. Both authors presently serve with the Slavic Gospel Association.

Beside my Bible

Mary F. Heisey

Living discipleship

We learn more of Christ as we study the Scriptures. Reading recommended passages in a variety of translations can heighten devotion and deepen service to him. This week's books testify to the abiding presence of Jesus in the ongoing challenge for faithful discipleship.

My Personal Pentecost, *edited by Roy S. and Martha Koch (Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and Kitchener, Ontario, 1977, 278 pages).*

Thirty-four Mennonites tell how they received the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Roy Koch lovingly prepares the way for their revelations in his introduction that explains and advocates spiritual renewal.

God's power and human praise permeate these moving stories of liberated Christians. Read one a day to gain a better understanding of the Spirit's power and how vital it is to our health as Christians.

A Christian Declaration on Human Rights, *edited by Allen O. Miller (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1977, 190 pages).*

Why is it deep ideas seem deeper when they're in small print? Get ready to strain both your eyes and your brain on this scholarly book. I sought God's enlightenment daily as I tackled these theological studies of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (Presbyterian and Congregational). I commend them, and the cross-bearing struggle for human rights, to you.

Walks of Jesus, *by B. Lewis (John Knox Press, Atlanta, Georgia, 1977, 92 pages).*

Tuck this paperback of meditations in your summer suitcase. Whenever and wherever you read these devotions, they will enable you to walk and to witness in the steps of the Savior.

Life is a long hike, yet we never walk alone. We cannot outdistance Jesus for he is a marathon walker who never grows weary. He walked willingly to a cross and miraculously from a tomb. The prose, poetry, and Bible verses in this book can enrich our journey with the Way in word and in life.

General Conference Mennonite Churc

722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114 316/283-5100

An open letter to General Conference Mennonites

Dear Christian Friends:

We believe that General Conference Mennonite people are committed to Jesus Christ and to his Great Commission, "Go and make disciples of all nations." Active disciple-making takes abundant resources of people and money. Overseas Mennonite churches are asking for more workers. Young people are offering themselves for service at home and abroad. Can they be sent? We believe the answer is yes. But your help is needed to support our workers in evangelism, Christian education, service, and leadership training. Contributions needed from you this year are $3,179,883, up 12 percent over last year's receipts.

We believe that God is at work through General Conference workers in Christian education, missions, and service, and that these are worthy of our support.

We thank God

—for the wide acceptance of our biblical, Christ-centered Foundation Series.

—for the wide interest in teacher training, especially Project Teach.

—for the steady growth in voluntary service workers, now numbering 150.

—for the fifty new fellowships and churches begun in the last few years.

—for the new mission work in Brazil, Upper Volta, and Botswana.

—for the candidates offering themselves for overseas missions.

—for increased interest in pastoral ministry among seminary students.

—for the stream of Christian books, pamphlets, and periodicals being published by Faith and Life Press.

—for the record attendance and good spirit at last summer's General Conference at Bluffton, Ohio.

Some congregations are giving $100 to $200 per member annually to General Conference missions and services. What is God asking you to do this year to fulfill the Great Commission?

> *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age*
> *(Matthew 28:19, 20).*

Grace and peace,

Heinz Janzen General Secretary	Howard Habegger Executive Secretary COM	John Gaeddert Executive Secretary COE	Palmer Becker Executive Secretary CHM	Ted Stuckey Business Manager and Treasurer	Erland Waltner President Mennonite Biblical Seminary

**Our Foundation:
Jesus Christ**

Advertisement

The dedication of the new Glendale Mennonite Church facilities.

GLENDALE MENNONITE CHURCH

A schoolhouse among evergreens became the first place of worship for the Glendale Mennonite Church, Lynden, Washington. Our church was founded in 1945 as a General Conference witness in a place of need.

We are located in the far northwestern corner of the United States, with Puget Sound and the islands on the west, majestic snow-capped Mount Baker and the Cascades on the east, and the Canadian international boundary to the north.

In 1970, at the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary, plans were announced for a new building. Believing that the future of the church lies with the children, adequate Sunday school classrooms were a priority. It was designed so that, in the event of an increase in membership, a large sanctuary could be built on the east.

The current congregation is a blend from several states and Canadian provinces. People from the Kansas Mennonite areas predominate in number. Ten or more active members are from non-Mennonite backgrounds. One couple is from Indonesia.

There is also variety in places of employment and sources of income, so that no more than two heads of households gain income from any one business establishment. Since rural living is an option, incomes in some families are supplemented by poultry, blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, milk and beef, and timber. Retired people are also common and active here.

Glendale is an affiliate of the Pacific District Conference and the Washington Mennonite Fellowship, with active participation in both. Highlighting the church year are the programs at the fellowships' Camp Camrec in the Cascades, for all ages from juniors to senior citizens.

Pastoral leadership has come from many backgrounds, including Bethel College, Grace Bible Institute, and Western Evangelical Seminary. Nearby Canadian Columbia Bible Institute has been a source for pastors and leaders for training sessions.

Although some Glendale people have attended the nearby university (enrollment over 9,000), the community college, and Vocational Technical Institute (all of Bellingham), or other sources of higher learning at somewhat greater distances within the state, Bethel College, Newton, Kansas, has the most alumni.

The 1973 constitutional revision left the doctrinal statement unchanged but renewed emphasis on the purpose of proclaiming Jesus Christ "through a sensitivity to keeping our Christianity relevant and meaningful in an ever-changing world and society," and "through expressed love and concern for those who worship with us that all will develop a personal relationship with Christ."

Sunday school, which precedes the worship hour, is well attended. Some children, other than those of church families, are brought in. The new Foundation Series materials are appreciated.

Warmth and fellowship with openness and informality—flexible enough to include any who come—characterize all services which are simple and fundamental. Potluck meals often follow the service, to share and fellowship with those in whose honor the gathering is called.

Work is also shared. Cleanup of the church and grounds beyond the weekly care, such as landscaping, planting, painting, mowing, and other care, can be the setting of excellent fellowship on "workday."

"Worship the God of the now," proclaimed one enthusiastic interim pastor. So, "sharing time" is an opportunity to witness experiences of only the immediate past week or so. And, together with praise and prayer requests, it remains a continuing inclusion of every service where "every Christian is a minister."

The building is acoustically quite good, an essential where music is important. A console piano and a new organ accompany congregational singing from *The Mennonite Hymnary*. Using a schedule, the music committee assigns members for the special music of their choice. Some voices are solo quality; there is a choir, men's chorus, men's quartet, and several women's vocal groups.

Bible study and prayer service are usually held on Wednesday evenings.

With local rest homes needing devotionals and music, and a rescue mission nearby, there is opportunity for outreach on a regular basis. Other challenges are the migrant workers, the nearby Indian reservation, and the influx of business. There are over 1,000 unchurched persons in the area of the church.

The first Sunday of each month is Mission Sunday. The offering is for missions, and letters from missionaries are read.

Members in full-time service are the Irving Nygrens, missionaries to Pakistan since 1963; the Frank Fasts, Mali Republic, Africa, since 1966; and the Kent Reimers, who are finishing training at Moody Missionary Aviation.

It is appreciated when Glendale is included in itinerations and programs of groups and individuals traveling up the Pacific Coast between California and Oregon churches, or those of Vancouver, British Columbia. There is a cordial invitation to worship and fellowship to anyone who comes to or through the area. *Alyce Reimer*

Letters

Friesen's logic questioned

Dear Editor: Duane Friesen's "A Position on Abortion" (February 28 issue) is perhaps the most vacuous argument ever published in *The Mennonite.* Friesen attempts to construct a plausible argument for liberal abortion laws, yet a linguistic analysis reveals that his terms are so ambiguous that he has deceived himself into believing that he holds a certain position which in fact he does not hold.

The thrust of his argument rests upon his peculiar notion of "person," which he defines biologically. By that definition, he has entrapped himself in one of the most profound yet preposterous fallacies of twentieth-century phenomenological thinking. To hold that person-*ality* is predicated by the manifestation of certain biological characteristics is to disclude the equally as essential qualities of the human person-*ality* lying in the capacities for thought, emotion, and most importantly, for spirituality.

A volitional, emotive, or spiritual quality cannot be measured by degree of its person-*ality* potential on the basis of phenomenological observations. Clearly, none of these qualities are even capable of such observation. To argue for the institution of liberal abortion laws on the basis of a person-*ality* so defined is inane.

I point out Friesen's assertion that ". . . because it is not yet a person, there may be reasons to abort that fetus in view of other overwhelming moral considerations, particularly where the sanctity of some *other* (italics mine) person is at stake." I would particularly like to draw attention to the term "other" within the contextual framework of this statement.

Now to say that some thing is "other" is to say that that thing is distinguishable. If I were to speak of an "other" chair, I must have in mind at the same time a precedent chair, the knowledge of the existence of which I possessed before that of the "other," and of which the "other" is an antecedent. In this case the expression "other chair" not only establishes a relationship with the precedent chair, but clearly specifies that the "other chair" is a thing constituted similarly as its precedent.

In the case of Friesen's statement, the "other person" to whom he refers is the antecedent of a precedent person, which is the fetus. He clearly assumes, then, that the fetus *is* a person, although he deceives himself, by his definition of a "person," into thinking that the fetus is *not* a person. His argument is both self-contradicting and self-refuting.

Friesen's position is half-baked, and does not belong in a publication purporting to deal with spiritual issues, as the subtitle to your publication implies. Ervin Siemens' letter to the editor of the same issue addresses the precise topic which I have sought to present through this commentary on Friesen's inept article.

If articles are to be published in a periodical which will be widely disseminated and widely read throughout the Mennonite community, please publish it on the merits of logical consistency and spiritual relevance, and not on the basis of an emotional appeal. *Gregory M. Friesen, 1329 Ohio No. 3, Lawrence, Kansas 66044* March 7

Christians have divine power

Dear Editor: In the February 14 issue, John Gaeddert presents his concern about a declining Sunday school enrollment. I was perhaps more surprised at the high figure of 1966 than at the low of 1976. Nevertheless, the decline is serious, especially if that denotes a weakening of the Mennonite church (GC), perhaps also of other groups, or even of the Christian church at large. Some other signs point that way, unfortunately, at a time when current affairs portend an impending crisis in the world. The two crises may be related, each affecting the other.

Apparently many people lose interest in the church because too often the message of the Bible has been reduced to trivialities, while others have made themselves impervious to its more stringent imperatives. Surely the measure of civilization attained to thus far must be attributed to the effects of the Christian church, in spite of its apparent weaknesses. Therefore a downward trend in that standard seems to point to a deterioration of the overall ministry of the Christian church.

It may well be that "we're not sure how we should approach or study the Bible." Also, "... we must begin taking Christian education seriously." There is a great need for Christendom to go back to the beginnings to regain the message of Jesus and of his apostles. Mennonites are more apt to go back to the time of the Anabaptists who had largely recovered that early message.

In the *Complete Works of Menno Simons,* we find that he made a quite comprehensive statement about Christians becoming dominant over all aspects of evil and especially over the "enemies of the kingdom, whom they (will) have overcome through Jesus Christ." This dimension of the Christian message has largely been lost throughout the centuries. It constitutes an essential imperative to give Christendom its role, direction, and goal. The correlation of individual and collective salvation gave to the Anabaptist ministry a genuineness which was attested to by the vicious persecution directed at them. That, of course, must then be reckoned with. For the Christian church to fail now, in what could be its moment of truth, would be infinitely more costly.

It does not seem to be generally recognized that the overcoming of evil and its powers is the preponderant topic of the Bible. While the meaning of John 3:16 is well recognized, and rightly so, the meaning of 1 John 3:8b receives little attention. Actually that matter is already introduced in Genesis 3:15 and then resolved in Revelation 19 and 20. The Christian warfare is variously referred to in the New Testament. We will not win a conflict of which we are not aware. In other words, Christians cannot carry out God's purpose on earth with only half of the gospel message.

It is the church's mission to build the kingdom of God; its pattern Mennonites and others have especially found in the Sermon on the Mount. But Christians must also be equipped according to Ephesians 6:16-18 for the spiritual battle. The enemy's greatest strength, deception, also becomes the weakness when it is exposed.

Unfortunately, Christendom has been lulled into a state of complacency by the usual admonition to ever "wait for the coming of the Lord" in a way that does not really call forth responsible action. The fact is, in a sense Christ is also waiting until his enemies are overcome (Hebrews 10:13, KJV). That Davidic statement (Psalm 110:1), repeated about seven times throughout the New Testament, names the initial and key event which touches off the sequence of events pertaining to eschatology, namely the complete fulfillment of the promises of God. *Isaac I Klaassen, Box 36, Laird, Saskatchewan* March 7

Kudo for administrators

Dear Editor: I wish to express appreciation, as an administrator, for the insightful and timely article by Henry Landes, "A Look at Administrators" (February 21 issue). *Frank H. Epp, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G6* March 8

Meditation

Fable for school people

Once upon a time, the animals decided they must do something heroic to meet the problem of a New World. So they organized a school.

They adopted an activity curriculum consisting of running, climbing, swimming, and flying. To make it easier to administer the curriculum, *all* the animals took *all* the subjects.

The duck was excellent in swimming, in fact better than her instructor; but she made only passing grades in flying and was very poor in running. Since she was slow in running, she had to stay after school and drop swimming in order to practice running. This was kept up until her web feet were badly worn and she was only average in swimming. But average was acceptable in school, so nobody worried about that except the duck.

The rabbit started at the top of the class in running, but he had a nervous breakdown because of so much makeup work in swimming.

The squirrel was excellent in climbing until she developed frustration in the flying class, where her teacher made her start from the ground up instead of from the treetop down. She also developed a charley horse from overexertion and then got a *C* in climbing and a *D* in running.

The eagle was a problem child and was disciplined severely. In the climbing class he beat all the others to the top of the tree, but insisted on using his own way to get there.

At the end of the year, an abnormal eel that could swim exceedingly well, and also run, climb, and fly a little, had the highest average and was valedictorian.

The prairie dogs stayed out of school and fought the tax levy because the administration would not add digging and burrowing to the curriculum. They apprenticed their child to a badger and later joined the groundhogs and gophers to start a successful private school. *From the Saber-tooth Curriculum by Benjamin. Submitted by David C. Wedel*

Initiative and finish-iative

George is a fireball at beginning a new project. He talks about it, dreams about it, buys all sorts of equipment and books to do the job right. About a week later, like a slow leaking tire, he goes flat and loses all interest. His home is cluttered with the remains of half-completed projects. I can't claim to have finished every project I've undertaken, but I've climbed mountains and experienced the thrill of reaching the top. I get a similar feeling when I finish mowing the yard.

It pleases God when we finish a job or reach a goal. Look at creation; when it was completed God felt good about it (Genesis 1:31). And note the triumphant cry of Christ on the cross: "It is finished" (John 19:30). It's part of our God-given nature to finish things. We were not made to go through life fizzling out on responsibilities and commitments. We do not please God when we leave a trail of half-finished jobs.

There are many Christians who make good starts in their spiritual lives only to cool off and slow down. They seem to lose interest, to get sidetracked. Jesus called such disciples unfit for the kingdom of God (Luke 9:62). Jesus is interested in beginnings, but he's also concerned about follow-through. When Jesus cried, "It is finished," he referred to the work of salvation.

But applying this full salvation to every weakness and maladjustment of life is not a one-time event at an altar of prayer. The beginning is crucial, to be sure, but it's only the beginning. When Jesus enters our life, he starts a work that will not be completed until the day of his appearing (Philippians 1:6). Until then, we are called into a partnership with him in the process of salvation, which increasingly brings every facet of our personality under his divine rule (Philippians 2:12, 13). It's the conforming process Paul refers to in Romans 8:29 and the transforming process he speaks of in Romans 12:2.

I've been guilty of making deep vows only to conveniently forget them after the inspiration of the moment dissipated. It's easy to make starts, but to hang in there day after day, working with the Holy Spirit to perfect his will in my life, is a tough assignment.

I know that if I keep at it, there will come a time when I'll be able to say with the Apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7). Not only will I feel good about my life, I will be ready to enter heaven and experience the final stroke of God's redemptive brush.

And I shall cry so all heaven and hell will hear, "It is finished!" *G. Roger Schoenhals*

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CONTRIBUTORS

Aldred Neufeldt, 4700 Keele Street, Downsview, Ontario M3J 1P3, is chairperson of Mennonite Mental Health Services and director of the National Institute on Mental Retardation, Toronto.

Brenda Schroeder, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4, is a first-year student at Canadian Mennonite Bible College and is doing a practicum assignment for *The Mennonite*.

Mary Heisey, 56 East Street, York, Pennsylvania 17403, is doing regular book-review assignments for *The Mennonite*.

Alyce Reimer, 1063 West Axton Road, Bellingham, Washington 98225, is a member of the Glendale Church.

This week's meditations were provided by David C. Wedel, North Newton, Kansas 67117, and C. Roger Schoenhals, 503 Robson Road, Winona Lake, Indiana 46590.

CREDITS
Cover, 242, Rohn Engh, Star Prairie, Wisconsin 54026; 244, 245, Dennis Stoesz, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4; 246, Vic Reimer, GCNS; 247, Ralph Miller, MCC; 248, Stuart Showalter.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Healing our memories

"I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart! And the peace I give isn't fragile like the peace the world gives. So don't be troubled or afraid" (John 14:27, *Living Bible*).

The human mind functions like a computer's storage bank. All of our life's experiences are recorded and stored in our central nervous system. Some memories feel good and make us move forward or grow. In the Christian experience, such memories give us a sense of worth and move us closer to God (Psalm 77:11-12; 2 Timothy 2:8).

Other memories relate to experiences where we felt put down, criticized, ignored, hurt. We like to put these memories out of consciousness and hope they'll go away. But they persist and weigh heavily on our mental and spiritual health. They hold us back and make us weak. They keep us from loving—ourselves, others, God—and they make it almost impossible to accept the love of God and the love of other people.

Many of us carry memory scars. They are basically of two kinds: (1) self-inflicted and (2) other-inflicted. We hurt ourselves through mistakes, poor choices, and a sinful following of human desires. Others do violence to our souls through sarcasm, ridicule, and unjust comparisons.

Both kinds of hurt-memories jolt around in our psyche (being). They, often subconsciously, influence our attitudes and thereby affect our behavior. Sigmund Freud developed an elaborate method (psychoanalysis) to help memory-troubled people.

Jesus intends his followers to have the gift of hearts and minds at peace; and he wants us to have an inner peace that's not fragile. He wants for us more than psychoanalysis (even though some form of it may be involved); it is a healing, a transformation of life-dragging memories into a life-giving peace that passes human understanding.

Our hurting memories can be healed. When you feel one bouncing to your awareness, don't push it away. Let it come into your presence, share it with Jesus, and also share it with some Christian friends or a minister. That could be a beginning of healing.

A fifty-year-old woman spoke to me recently about memories of her father. She felt guilty and had often refused church involvements because of her feelings. Her father was now long dead but the memories were strong. I tried to help her stop fighting and to allow those memories to speak up.

She told of bitter conflicts, "He hated me because I was not a son for his farm; he never wanted me. I hate him." As she opened the door to her memories, tears flowed freely, and she almost screamed.

Then we looked at some specific situations. She felt that her father had been reluctant to buy her clothes, "they cost too much and besides, you wear foolish clothing."

I asked if her family had been poor and if her father had been more critical about her clothing than she is today about some of the young people's clothing habits. Could she understand that her father came from a tradition which found it extremely difficult to be openly affectionate, but were rather free with criticism? Could she forgive her father?

We read John 14:27 and prayed and struggled. It became clear that she also needed to forgive herself. She had not bothered to apply some of the good memories (even though she had only a few) up beside the hurt memories.

And then it happened. There was a new flow of tears and the beginning of a new facial expression. She began to accept the sufficiency of Calvary for her own failures and for those of her father. A healing of her memories was beginning.

It was a start and the total victory may be long in coming. But it's a gift worth pursuing. Jesus wants us to have peace of mind and heart. He is ready to heal our memories. BW

Editor's note: Details have been changed to protect the identity of the person involved.

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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...you shall receive
power when
the Holy Spirit has come upon you....
Acts 1:8

The Holy Spirit may be better understood since Pentecost, but he has been part of the Godhead from the beginning.

Filled with . . . baptized with . . . anointed by . . . receiving the Spirit, are some of the references used interchangeably and with varying meanings when talking about the Holy Spirit. All believers are baptized by the Holy Spirit into one body—the church—according to 1 Corinthians 12:13. But, Acts 1:7-8 seems to indicate that some believers had not yet received the "filling" with the Spirit.

There has been much misunderstanding and unkindness due to differing semantics about the Holy Spirit. However, there are also wide theological differences. Some have believed that all speaking in tongues is a ploy of the devil. Others have insisted that only tongues-speaking people will get to heaven. Most of us feed in the Lord's pasture between such extremes.

Open-minded Bible study and open-hearted love are much needed. Satan works tirelessly to draw our minds and hearts away from Jesus' all-sufficiency.

The Holy Spirit is a person. Many people think of the Holy Spirit as "it." Like God the Father, the Holy Spirit is holy, personal, guide, comforter, intercessor, living spirit, friend, and helper. The Holy Spirit can indwell our hearts and bring personal awareness when invited to do so.

R. A. Torrey, a great Spirit-filled preacher and teacher, wrote: "It is impossible to rightly understand the work of the Holy Spirit, or to get into right relationship with the Holy Spirit and know his blessed work in our souls, without first coming to know the Holy Spirit as a person. One of the most fruitful sources of error and misconception, or unwholesome enthusiasm and false fire and fanaticism, is from trying to know the work of the Spirit before we come to know the Spirit.

"Anyone who does not know the Holy Spirit as a person has not attained into a complete and well-rounded Christian experience. . . . Baptism with the Holy Spirit is a work of the Holy Spirit distinct from and additional to our regeneration. It is one thing to be born again and another to be baptized with the Spirit" (Torrey, *The Holy Spirit,* 1927).

There is renewed interest concerning the Holy Spirit today, but there is nothing new about the Spirit's role in the church. The Spirit may be better understood since Pentecost, but has been a part of the Godhead from the beginning.

The Holy Spirit at the beginning. The personality and power of the Holy Spirit are constant; it is we who change. Some pre-Pentecost biblical references are Genesis 1:2 (in creation); Exodus 31:3 (filled with); Numbers 11:17, 25, 29 (rested upon him); Judges 3:10 (came unto him); 1 Samuel 10:6 (will come mightily upon you); Isaiah 61:1 (is upon me).

These and many others, including numerous references in Luke's Gospel, show clearly that many of the Old Testament saints had a good understanding of and relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Speaking in tongues and other spiritual gifts. There are differences in being filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18-19), the gifts of the Spirit (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11), and the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:18-25). Corinthians and Galatians also illustrate a difference between just having the Spirit and being filled with the Spirit.

Speaking in tongues and interpretation of tongues are two of nine gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12. Chapter 14 teaches about the use and regulation of tongues. In between is the "more excellent way" of chapter 13.

Note from 1 Corinthians 14 that speaking in an unknown tongue is (1) speaking unto God . . . not understood by humans (14:2); (2) a mystery in the Spirit (14:2); (3) a means of personal edification (14:4); (4) when used in church it is a lesser gift than prophecy and is to be interpreted (14:5-13); (5) a means of blessing and thanksgiving to God (14:14-17); (6) a cause for rejoicing when properly used (14:18-25); (7) when spoken without love it is only an annoying noise (13:1); (8) is to be spoken by two or three at the most in any one public service and always in an orderly manner (14:26-27); (9) not to be done whenever or wherever it is disruptive (14:28-40).

Many Christians, with a clearer understanding of Scriptures and a new openness to the person and work of the Holy Spirit, have changed, from being fearful and negative, into Spirit-filled persons. Some speak in tongues, others receive different spiritual gifts. They become open-minded, tender-hearted, and have a new God-given love for other persons.

The letters to the Corinthians show that in spite of an obvious practice of speaking in tongues and exercise of other spiritual gifts, they were not a Spirit-filled church.

Some speak in tongues in a short or longer time after receiving the Holy Spirit. Some apparently never speak in tongues even though fully yielded to the Lord and empowered by the Spirit. In any case, the tongue which no person can tame (James 3:8) is totally yielded to the Holy Spirit. He may use it in an unknown language if he so desires.

All Christians need to be alive and alert to recognize and encourage every true moving of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, all

The Holy Spirit unites and draws to Christ. Division and disruption toward fellow believers is wrong.

Spirit-filled believers must be considerate and loving toward those who do not have experiences identical to theirs. The Holy Spirit unites and draws to Christ. Division and disruption toward fellow believers is wrong.

Some have so diligently tried to duplicate the Spirit experiences of others, that they have fasted and prayed while ceaselessly demanding God to respond. Rather than learning to pray "thy will be done," they have finally become discouraged and dropped out in confusion. This is also wrong.

The real issue is not that of tongues, healing, casting out demons, or prophecy. Our basic challenge is to yield our selfish selves to the Holy Spirit's melting and molding in such a way that our lives will be filled and thrilled to do and live God's will.

Receiving the Holy Spirit. Spirit-filled persons like Charles G. Finney, Dwight L. Moody, and R. A. Torrey seem to agree on four basic steps to becoming filled with the Holy Spirit: (1) Begin by confessing and renouncing all known sinfulness (1 John 1:7-9). (2) Be baptized with water (Acts 2:38-39). The amount of water, whether "with" or "in," makes no difference to the Lord. A modern application of Acts 10:45 might read, "And the believers from the 'believers' baptism' were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on those of the 'infant baptism.'" (3) Make a full surrender of body, mind, and heart to the Lord (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). (4) Receive the Spirit by faith. As you received Christ to save you from sin, ask the Holy Spirit to fill and guide your life. Pray Luke 11:13 and invite others to share in this experience (Acts 19:6; Mark 11:24; Galatians 3:2, 14).

The Corinthian church. The Corinthian Christians were new converts without tradition or heritage. They had no precedent. In their eager enthusiasm to follow the Spirit, they made the mistakes of immature and inexperienced "babes in Christ."

Paul was inspired to share 1 Corinthians 13 with them to teach them the central need for Jesus' love in all that we do. The Corinthians were not lacking in gifts of the Spirit, but the *fruit* of the Spirit was not evident.

The fruit of the Spirit. A normal, maturing Christian life and the maturing church increase in both, the fruit of the Spirit and the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23). Spiritual fruit is the personality of Jesus being formed and expressed in the inward heart and outward life of the believer. One is no more filled with the Spirit than with love. Regardless of profession or denomination, anyone who is unkind, unloving—un-Christlike—is not filled with the Holy Spirit. Two things common to all Spirit-filled Christians are a heart for praise and thanksgiving toward God and other persons, and a true concern and compassion one for another and for the world.

Enlightened believers never claim a total filling with the Holy Spirit at all times. Paul writes of himself as the "chief of sinners" who is still seeking to be "filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19).

Without help, Christians lack the power to receive the Spirit-love and may live carnally-minded, even as the Corinthian Christians lived. With a willingness to be open and honest to our real selves and to Jesus, we can expect Jesus' promise to be fulfilled in a greater measure for us: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses. . ." (Acts 1:8).

Conclusion. Young people and others continue to request teaching on this subject. After thirty-two years of ministry, this is how I understand it and can best express it in a short article. I have revised (or been revised by the Spirit) my thinking over the years and am ready to learn more. Any statements from readers, agreeing or disagreeing, will be appreciated; especially from those who have studied this subject. It is my prayer to seek God's truth for myself and to share it with others.

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Frank Horst

The shape for spiritual renewal

Heinz Janzen

The 1977 Conference on Charismatic Renewal drew 45,000 delegates to Kansas City July 20-24. The mass sessions in Arrowhead Stadium featured spirited singing, hands raised in worship, and inspiring messages on the lordship of Jesus Christ and the outpouring of his Spirit. Some 400 Mennonites, including a few dozen from the General Conference, gathered in morning sessions simultaneously with other denominational gatherings. The modern charismatic renewal movement can no longer be ignored.

Past renewal

Look at the renewal movements of past history. One could start with the Book of Judges with its dreary cycle of sin, judgment, repentance, and restoration. But let us only go back to the Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century. Thousands were converted or renewed to new life, but the established churches persecuted these warm-hearted, loving Christians. The Wesleyan revival swept England and the New World in the eighteenth century. Thousands were gripped by the power of God, but were put out of the established churches.

In Pennsylvania, many Mennonites left the church to join the several Wesleyan movements. German Pietism came to Russia in the mid-1880s, leading to the conversion or renewal of many Mennonites. Unfortunately, the church could not deal with these renewed members and the tragic Mennonite Brethren division took place. However, this same kind of Pietism came to America under C. H. van der Smissen, the leader of the Wadsworth school from 1868 to 1878. The pietistic South German Mennonites were strong leaders in the founding of our own General Conference Mennonite Church.

The 1920s and 1930s saw the raging Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy with each side claiming faithfulness and accusing others of unsound teaching. The 1960s saw the civil rights and antiwar movements embraced or resisted within the Mennonite family, with some claiming them as Anabaptist and others as not.

Charismatic renewal

What is charismatic renewal at the center? The mass media obviously have little understanding of spiritual reality, so we cannot trust their biases.

First of all, with our Anabaptist tradition, the charismatic leaders affirm that Jesus is Lord over against secularism, materialism, and civil religion. The kingdom of God is a reality to be experienced now and not postponed to a future dispensation.

Second, this reigning Jesus may be experienced now in worship. When a person yields completely to Jesus, the Spirit makes Jesus real.

Third, just as Jesus healed the sick in the first century, so also Jesus can heal persons today. Healing is ministered to the sick through the believing community using prayer, touch, and anointing. One should note that anointing with oil has always been a recognized practice in the Mennonite Church.

Fourth, the Holy Spirit gives power and gifts to believers in a variety of ways for service to each other and to this needy world. Gifts are to be exercised in and with the body of believers, the church.

Fifth, God's intention for Christian unity is to be demonstrated now. Life in the Spirit is life in the body. This contrasts sharply with fundamentalist separatism, which has so grieved our conference in the past.

Finally, the living Christ leads out in new ways of worship, service, and relationships among Christians. Charismatics emphasize use of the Bible and are strong about morality in the face of our seductive culture. Yet among them is a comfortable kind of freedom and acceptance of each other.

Renewal and stability

All renewal creates discomfort and stress—adult baptism in 1525, John Wesley preaching from a tombstone, Pietist prayer meetings in 1860 in Russia, civil rights marches in 1963, handclapping and handraising in 1977.

Most Mennonites were raised with a rather sober and formal worship, so that new forms cause discomfort. The Mennonite Church has loosened up its worship more quickly than has the General Conference, due to its hundreds of black and Hispanic members with their more exuberant worship. Those who attended both Assembly 77 at Estes Park and our Bluffton Conference

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God is at work in the charismatic renewal, challenging us to receive all the gifts of God for the most effective witness and service to our needy world. It is one shape that he has chosen to bring new life to his church in our time.

commented on how much more restrained we are in song and praise. And yet we are far looser than our churches of thirty years ago.

The charismatic emphasis on Christian community, body life, and prayer cells threatens those influenced by Protestant individualism and professional clergy. Pastors trained to be authoritarian leaders fear erosion of their power and influence when lay people meet unsupervised for Bible study, prayer, and ministry to each other. Tongues-speaking makes us uncomfortable and confused. The emphasis on inner experience seems a threat or obstacle to sound doctrine or strict ethics.

Charismatics in our time

God sends appropriate renewal to his church in times of deepest need. When the church was bogged down in lifeless rituals, he allowed Luther a vision of justification by faith. In the time of a morally corrupt church, the Anabaptists renewed purity and personal discipline.

What characterizes our time? Loneliness due to mobility and the breakdown of communities and neighborhoods is one feature. The technology and science that was supposed to give us power over nature, disaster, and illness, also enables us to multiply the power and extent of war, crime, and corruption. The synthesis of rock music, drugs, and the occult has created a new culture of evil which enslaves thousands.

Charismatic renewal offers the power of God to free persons from the grip of anger, illness, and pervasive evil forces. Renewed persons experience deep fellowship in prayer and praise groups. In the face of massive evil, persons experience the presence and power of a God who is love, offering forgiveness and inner peace. While secular persons invest emotions in sports, business, and commercial entertainment, charismatics worship with their minds, bodies, and their emotions—a total involvement.

Charismatic renewal today is closely aligned with social action and service programs. Charismatic Graham Pulkingham is a writer for *Sojourners*, the journal of evangelical social action. When Archbishop Burnett was installed in Capetown, South Africa, half his sermon was about spiritual renewal; the other half was a ringing attack on apartheid.

Our responses

1. We can try to ignore it. This seems less and less possible, particularly when church members claim a new experience with Jesus and want to talk about it.

2. We can try to suppress it. There are occasional accusations of demon possession directed at charismatics, and some churches have removed avowed charismatics from leadership positions. Stunned by this treatment, they often drift to a church more sympathetic to their experience.

3. We can adopt it uncritically. In our desire for simplicity, we often take one doctrine, experience, or movement and make it the whole of the Christian life. However, leaders of charismatic renewal today are staying within their churches, trying to relate their new insights to the classic doctrines of their churches, whether Catholic, Lutheran, or Mennonite. They are open to dialogue.

4. Domesticate it. Kill it with kindness.

5. With all the discomforts of renewal movements, I agree with those who say that the church needs renewal movements—and renewal movements need the church. Renewal arouses controversy. Yet the New Testament is full of debates in the Gospels, Acts, and the Letters about the new inbreaking of the Holy Spirit, and the resistance it brought from traditional Jews and Christians.

One of Menno Simons' favorite verses was Titus 3:5, "He saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit."

The Mennonite Church has been influenced strongly by charismatic renewal. Its leadership has related positively to this: through the festivals of the Holy Spirit at its colleges; through producing a study guide, *The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church;* and through maintaining ties with Mennonite Renewal Service.

God is at work in charismatic renewal. It is one shape he has chosen to bring new life to his church in our time. Persons involved generally try to stay within their congregations. It is challenging us to receive all the gifts of God for the most effective witness and service to our needy world.

Last December, our General Conference General Board executive committee stated: "In recognition of need and desire for spiritual renewal in the lives of persons in the General Conference, we ask that the Commission on Home Ministries be in dialogue with resources for such renewal, for example, Mennonite Renewal Services. We affirm the involvement of persons in such renewal experiences and desire continued dialogue with them."

Colombian evangelicals discuss strategies

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—Colombian evangelical leaders have issued a call to their churches to emphasize Christian social action as well as evangelistic programs. They are also encouraging interdenominational action in long-range projects.

The president and the executive secretary of the Mennonite Church in Colombia, Antonio Arevalo and Jaime Caro, were present at the February 19-24 meeting in Medellin. Hector Valencia, secretary for Latin America for the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission, also attended. Valencia was one of four executives representing North American mission boards. Among the 100 participants were Colombian denominational leaders, missionaries, and institutional leaders.

Examining the current status of evangelical churches in the country and reflecting on future development were the key concerns. The Colombian church was examined from sociological, theological, pastoral, spiritual, biblical, and evangelistic perspectives. After the presentation of papers, small groups studied each topic and came to the plenary sessions with comments.

A surprising image of the church emerged.

Weaknesses were cited. The church is sociologically and politically aloof, theologically conservative, and continues to perpetuate the dichotomy between faith and deeds. It has an undereducated ministry, many of whom are out of touch with current problems. It is a church which has not worked out a proper relationship between missionaries and national workers. Effects of overdependence are evident. And the church is tired of mass evangelism.

Strengths are also present. Many new and young leaders are emerging. There is a cooperative spirit between them and older leaders. The Colombian church is a growing church, characterized by an evangelistic zeal. It is becoming a more aggressive church, ready to claim its rights under the law. It is a church with a variety of ministries being carried on by mission boards and international para-church organizations such as Campus Crusade, Sepal, Minamundo, and Alfalit. Basic teaching institutions exist, although upgrading is needed.

Hector Valencia noted that the conference was important because it was the first serious attempt by Colombian leaders to critically review the work of the church.

Ignacio Guevara, leader of the fastest growing Pentecostal church in Colombia, addresses evangelical leaders. To his left are Luciano Jaramillo, president of the Evangelical Churches of Colombia; Hector Valencia, secretary for Latin America of the Commission on Overseas Mission; and Juan Vanegas, a Presbyterian church leader.

"People in Colombia," he related, "are awaking to their poverty, and to the lack of freedom in some areas. Religious minorities sometimes feel persecuted. There are social injustices, illiteracy, and ignorance." One of the problems for the evangelical church is its status under Colombian law. An 1886 concordat between the Roman Catholic Church and the Colombian Government gave the Roman Catholics control of education and spiritual matters. Although the concordat was modified three years ago, it has not been rescinded.

Brazil Mennonites join MCC ministries

Akron, Pennsylvania—The Mennonite Central Committee program in northeast Brazil is taking on new dimensions as the Associacao Menonita Do Assistencia Social (AMAS), the social service agency of the southern Brazil Mennonite churches, becomes more involved.

An agreement of cooperation was drawn up between the two organizations at the February 18 AMAS board meeting in Curitiba. Under the new agreement, the program in the northeast is a part of the outreach of AMAS. Both MCC and AMAS will supply volunteers to the program.

AMAS is located in Curitiba, almost 2,700 miles south of MCC's program in the northeast. Despite the distance, MCC's relationship with AMAS has been growing for several years. In 1975, MCC and mission administrators visited southern Brazil to introduce MCC's work in the northeast and invite southern Mennonites to consider participation.

Northeast Brazil is the neediest area of the country. The MCC program began there in 1968 and has grown to include thirty-five workers in agriculture, health, social-religious services, and more recently education and technical development.

AMAS began as a project of the German-speaking General Conference Mennonites in southern Brazil. More recently it has invited other Mennonite groups to participate. Social service and development projects are one reason AMAS is seeking to broaden its base. The organization already has twenty-three volunteers in assignments. Another reason AMAS would like to include the various types of Mennonites is to have a unified voice in working with the Brazilian Government to obtain exemption from military service for Mennonite youth.

Church in India works out differences

This group met March 9 in Jagdeeshpur, India, to make decisions about schools and development projects. Back row (from left): Anne Penner, S. Dayal, Ed Burkhalter, Ramoth Burkhalter; Middle row: Mahendra Kumar, Samuel Stephen (chairperson of Mission Conference), Sukho Das; Front row: P. K. Ram, N. R. Sona.

Newton, Kansas—A move to bring about two district bodies in the Bharatiya General Conference Mennonite Church in India has been countered. Although the church conference has decided to maintain unity, moves have been made to bring about fundamental changes in structure, report Peter Kehler and Verney Unruh.

Kehler, who is the incoming secretary for Asia for the Commission on Overseas Mission, and Unruh, who is the outgoing secretary, visited India February 15-March 21.

The impetus to divide the conference came from leadership in the north, who represent congregations in the Champa, Korba, and Janjgir areas. Their complaint was that leadership in the Bharatiya Church was not representative. In fact, none of the current conference officers come from the north. They are all from one center in the south, Jagdeeshpur. Congregations in the south, which are centered mainly about Jagdeeshpur and Saraipali, have a membership of 3,000. Congregations in the north have half that membership, 1,500. Hence, congregations in the south, with their overwhelming voting power, have generally elected their own leaders to head the Bharatiya Conference. There are also cultural differences between the north and south which have contributed to feelings of injustice.

A confrontation occurred at the annual delegate conference in Jagdeeshpur, October 1977. Feelings ran high, and a second conference was scheduled for December 1977 to work out a division. The December meeting was scheduled for Janjgir, in the north. At the December meeting it became apparent that leadership in the north was not fully representative of the thinking of the northern churches. A thorough assessment happened, implications were studied and discussed, and a new understanding evolved.

Two main principles govern the new structure. Each congregation in the north and south—there are twelve in total—will have one representative on the governing body of the conference. Secondly, of the four executive members elected at the annual sessions, two will be from the north, and two from the south. If the chairperson is from the north, then the vice-chairperson is from the south, and vice versa. A similar arrangement will govern the election of secretary and treasurer.

When COM became aware of these maneuvers, Howard Habegger, executive secretary, informed Indian church leaders that COM would not deal with two separate conferences. Funding for schools, relief and development, and church growth would have to go through one structure. Peter and Verney are not sure what effect this had in bringing about a restructured, but unified and reconciled body.

"I see the new structures," reflected Verney Unruh, "as a creative response to problems of unequal representation within the church conference."

Kehler and Unruh also met with the coordinating committee of the Mission Conference which carries primary responsibility for administering schools and economic development projects. The committee, composed of six church representatives and three missionaries, has decided to continue operating Jyoti Higher Secondary School in Korba, and Champa Middle School.

For the last two years attempts were made to transfer them to the state government for financial reasons. COM said that too high a percentage of the India budget was being used for schools, and the commission put an upper limit of 40 percent of the total budget which could be used for education. Hence, there was a squeeze. Which schools would be phased out? Although the government refused to accept the proffered gift of two schools, it did increase grants. This has made it possible for the schools to continue under private Christian boards of control.

Verney observed that in the context of the millions of dollars spent annually by Mennonite colleges in North America, the three thousand to four thousand dollar annual subsidy required for each of Jyoti and Champa is "peanuts."

P. K. Ram has been appointed by the church governing body as pastor and hostel houseparent in the home mission work in Surguja. Ram also leads twelve village evangelists in work in the area. A new church building is under construction at Surguja.

Two churches in Korba have been given separate congregational status within the Bharatiya Conference. They are the church in the BALCO (aluminum smelting) area, and the group located in the NCDC (coal mining) area. The significant ministry of the Korba reading room will continue.

George Milton Jacob, a recent Union Biblical Seminary (Yavatmal) graduate, has been placed in Raipur by the church conference to give leadership to an urban church-planting effort.

After one year as interim director for REACH (Rural Economic Development and Community Health) ministries, N. R. Sona has been appointed full-time to the work. Efforts will be made to increase community health work.

Kehler and Unruh were able to attend the graduation services of Union Biblical Seminary on March 19. Among the graduates were two General Conference members, Jai Prakash Masih and George Milton Jacob.

Verney said his "last" visit to India left impressions, as he compares India to the country he first visited twelve years ago. Living conditions have improved. People are better clothed and fed. Roads are much improved and vehicles are more dependable. There has been a dramatic increase in bicycles. *Vic Reimer*

Needed: Teachers

Akron, Pennsylvania—"Those who can't do, teach," goes the old saying. "Nonsense," would respond the hundreds of teachers who have assisted student rabbit-raising projects, built solar water heaters, and preached in chapel services, in addition to teaching everything from physics to aesthetics during the past eighteen years of the Mennonite Central Committee's Teachers Abroad Program (TAP).

Again this year, MCC is looking for more than fifty persons who are willing to accept the challenges of a teaching assignment in secondary schools throughout Africa and in the Caribbean.

Sciences, mathematics, and English continue to top the lists of subject areas in which teachers are most greatly needed. However, openings are also available in commercial and technical subjects, agriculture, history, home economics, and music.

There are many aspects of an overseas teaching assignment which are unique. Developing understanding of a different culture and gaining a working knowledge of the local language are crucial to teachers in their work with students.

Teaching volunteers are encouraged to share themselves in more than the responsibilities of lesson preparation and extracurricular activities. Participation in local church fellowships is important. Some volunteers in Africa sponsor student Christian movements.

In many cases, particularly in Africa, MCC teachers' services are requested by schools "off-the-tarred road." This phrase symbolizes the fact that often schools where staff needs are most severe are those in isolated areas where some conveniences of Western life-style are not available. Basic supplies such as chalk and paper may be scarce and more advanced audiovisual aids are often unavailable. In the 1970s, overseas teachers also need to adjust to working under national administrators and directors.

TAP in Africa was begun in 1961 when nineteen teachers left North America for countries then known as Tanganyika, Kenya, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, and the Congo. The original goal of the program was to provide qualified expatriate teachers until the newly independent countries were capable of training and fielding their own personnel for the educational system.

With the growing emphasis on food production and community development in the past five years, the role of teachers in MCC programs has shifted. Rather than being the sole or major area of MCC involvement in a country, as was the case in Africa during the 1960s, they are now part of a diversified team working toward development goals. Nonformal involvement with adults and school-leavers is expanding in MCC planning. Still, today one-third of all personnel in sub-Sahara Africa are formal teachers. Providing expatriate teachers where necessary to secondary schools remains an MCC priority.

The face of TAP has changed over the past eighteen years. MCC continues to project that countries will become capable of staffing their own schools. Programs are no longer envisioned in which TAP is the only component. But the need is there. Sister churches in many countries throughout the world are calling for North American Christian teachers. *Nancy Heisey, assistant MCC secretary for Africa*

Tucson congregations merge

Two Tucson, Arizona, Mennonite congregations formally merged on March 5. Thirty-one persons are either full or associate members of the new Shalom Mennonite Fellowship.

Previously they were members of the Tucson Mennonite Fellowship, or the Evangel Mennonite Church. Their new constitution provides for all members to be on one of four commissions—education, outreach, worship, or internal services. The chairpersons of these commissions also are members of the church council.

The combined group has been meeting since January 8 in the Evangel Church building. James Wenger, who was the coordinator for the Tucson Mennonite Fellowship, is now interim pastor for the joint group. Nathan Oglesby, pastor of the Evangel Church, has left to continue studies in Phoenix. A search is under way for a full-time pastor.

Each of the original groups was sponsored by both the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. This joint sponsorship is continuing. "All new churches in California and Arizona during recent years," notes Leonard Wiebe, secretary for church planting for the General Conference, "are under joint sponsorship."

Why? Generally, wherever church planting has occurred, there has been a nucleus formed of persons from both denominations. They have reasoned that their ministries would be strengthened if a larger group was formed. Another factor is finances. Joint sponsorship eases the financial subsidies contributed by each denomination.

Tyre, Lebanon—Palestinian guerrillas, armed with Soviet-made rocket-propelled grenades and AK-47 machine guns, watch as United Nations peacekeeping forces moved through Tyre on March 24.

MCC assists Lebanese refugees

Mennonite Central Committee anticipates $50,000 to $60,000 will be needed for a special ministry to refugees from the fighting in southern Lebanon. An initial $8,000 was forwarded March 25 to MCC workers Ralph and Phyllis Miller in Sidon. It was spent for food, medicine, and basic kitchen utensils for refugee families, who in the suddenness of the attack fled leaving most household goods behind. A relief shipment was sent March 30 which included beef, beans, and blankets. The Millers are living near the Ain el Hilweh refugee camp, and are assisted by a Lebanese teacher, Munther Antoun, the son of a Sidon pastor.

The Israeli strike has had a limited effect on the basic fighting units of the Palestinians. These consist of several men who drive to battle in cars and trucks with light weapons. By the time the Israelis maneuver heavy artillery into position, or call for an air strike, the Palestinian unit has often moved to a new location. As a result, "the only real effect of the vast quantity of Israeli ordnance discharged over the Lebanese countryside has been to kill and wound large numbers of civilians, destroy the homes of thousands, and trigger an exodus of refugees," said Martin Woollacott, British news correspondent in Beirut.

Donations for the relief effort can be given to MCC offices.

Words & deeds

The Mennonite-Your-Way Travel Directory can be ordered at a single-copy price of $2.00 by writing Box 1525, Salunga, Pennsylvania 17538. Twelve or more copies are $1.20 each to one address. Pennsylvania residents need to remit 6 percent sales tax. The directory contains names of 1,700 families throughout North America interested in hosting visitors traveling into their communities. It has provided opportunity for fellowship among hundreds of Mennonites and other Christian persons. Conceived in 1976 by Leon and Nancy Stauffer, host families committed themselves to placing their names in the directory through 1978 to facilitate persons traveling to the World Conference in Kansas. The directory also includes a map noting more than fifty important places to visit, as well as travel tips.

Lombard, Illinois—Funds are available to assist persons wishing to attend the Mennonite World Conference in Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30. The assistance is available because Kansas hosts have declined to accept payment for those visitors staying in private homes. Instead, it was suggested that persons benefiting from such hospitality contribute to a special assistance fund. The money in this fund would be used to help people who cannot attend without financial assistance. The response has been gratifying. Persons wanting assistance may apply to Mennonite World Conference, 528 East Madison Street, Lombard, Illinois 60148.

A school for Christian writers will be held July 9-12 at Ontario Bible College in Toronto. It is sponsored by *Decision* magazine, official publication of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. The school includes lectures, panels, and a wide variety of workshops, led by a faculty of thirteen editors and writers. Five previous schools have enrolled more than 500 persons from many denominations. For information write to Gertrude Adrian, Box 841, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 2R3.

Asuncion, Paraguay—The Evangelical Mennonite Theological Center opened the 1978 school year on March 7 with eighteen students, an increase of 200 percent over the six students of last year. Although most students are from Paraguay, an international flavor is also evident on the campus with four students from Uruguay, and one each from Brazil and Argentina. Eight are of Spanish-speaking background, and the others are German. Seven are women, eleven are men. Furthermore, there are several part-time students. One of these is a Church of God pastor, Pedro Wareichuk, who has a rapidly growing church, and has radio and television programs. He is studying Greek. The Commission on Overseas Mission provides some staff and support for the school, which is operated by the General Conference Mennonite churches in Paraguay. Currently, David Suderman from North Newton, Kansas, is teaching music courses and choir. Other missionaries from neighboring countries come to the center for extended periods of one to three months to teach various courses. Frank and Anna Byler from Argentina have done this, as will Henry and Helen Dueck from Uruguay. The Bylers are Mennonite Church missionaries. Gerhard Goerzen is the director of the school. Other full- and part-time faculty members include Margarita Goerzen, Blanca Benitez, Milka Rindzinski, and John and Ruth Koppenhaver.

The first General Conference Mennonite Spanish-speaking congregation in Asuncion, Paraguay, was established February 16. The effort to form a Spanish congregation began less than six months ago. The Jakob Falks provided leadership under the direction of the evangelization and social action committee of the General Conference churches in Paraguay. Support has also come from the faculty of the Evangelical Mennonite Theological Center in Asuncion. In December 1977, the Tito Gutierrez family from Bragado, Argentina, was appointed to work full-time. Work with young people was begun. An extraordinary cross section of persons has become involved with the congregation, including university students and illiterates. Three persons were baptized in connection with the establishment of the congregation in February.

A weekend seminar on war tax resistance was held March 10-11 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Specific strategies for implementing war tax resistance were discussed. The final session of the seminar was devoted to understanding biblical material, with a focus on Mark 12 and Romans 13. The discussion recognized the complexity of the war tax question, but encouraged participants to take concrete steps in opposition to war taxes. Although not an ultimate solution to the problems of militarism, it is one manifestation of a life committed to peace and justice. The seminar was organized by The Meetinghouse, a marketplace ministry of Philadelphia Mennonites which sells crafts and provides opportunities for discussion. It is located at 507 South 2nd Street in Philadelphia.

Interested in voluntary service in Colombia? Since 1974, thirty-six couples have each spent two weeks in Cachipay assisting the Mennonite Mission of Colombia in a variety of tasks. The project is also intended to be educational, and hence participants have opportunity for sight-seeing and fellowship with nationals and missionaries. From Miami, Florida, to Bogota the inclusive cost is $380. This year's project, designed for five couples, will occur July 29-August 13. There is also opportunity for family units to participate. Direct inquiries to Edward Stucky, 755 South Harrison Street, Berne, Indiana 46711, telephone (219) 589-2047.

10

Wichita
1978

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Registration forms are available in your congregation or write to:
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Mennonite World Conference
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Record

Ministers

Don Friesen has resigned as assistant pastor at Bethel Church, Winnipeg, to accept the pastorate of the Ottawa (Ontario) Church, beginning in September. He holds the MDiv degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana.

Robert Koehn, assistant pastor at First Church, Reedley, California, has resigned from that position after 3½ years of ministry, effective July 1. His future plans are indefinite.

C. Nevin Miller is serving as interim pastor at First Church, Reedley, California. He is a graduate of Eastern Mennonite Bible College, Harrisonburg, Virginia, and received a master's in religious education from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. *Claude Boyer,* Sugarcreek, Ohio, will be assuming the First Church pastorate in July.

Workers

Roelf Kuitse, former Dutch Mennonite Board of Missions advisor to Indonesia and Ghana, has been named interim director of the Overseas Mission Training Center and associate professor of missions at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, effective in July. He is filling in for *Robert L. Ramseyer,* who will be serving a four-year term in Japan under the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission. Kuitse has taught at the theological school of the Mennonite Church in Java and served as advisor of the Islam-in-Africa Project in Ghana, which seeks to promote better understanding between Islam and Christianity. He has served most recently as pastor of the Mennonite congregation on the island of Texel, The Netherlands.

Kuitse

Willms

Helen Willms, serving under the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission, returned to Mennonite Christian Hospital, Hualien, Taiwan, April 3. She has served there since 1957, and will take responsibility for the public and community health program of the hospital. During her one-year assignment in North America, she enrolled in a ten-week course in public health at Emory University School of Nursing in Atlanta, Georgia. A farewell service for her was held March 12 in the Coaldale (Alberta) Church.

Published

God, Man, Land, a book which seeks to integrate Bible study, nature lessons, and camp activities into a total experience will be available May 1. Subtitled "Interrelationship Program for Christian Camps," it is authored by Paul Paetkau with Gary Harder and Don Sawatzky. It contains seventeen five-day programs. Eight of the programs are written for nine-through eleven-year-olds, six for twelve- and thirteen-year-olds, two for the age group fourteen through sixteen years, and one is adaptable for bicycle, canoe, or backpacking camps, or for family and senior citizens' camps. Introductory material includes a description of age-level characteristics of youth, and a discussion of ways in which the material in the book might be used. It will be a spiral-bound paperback. The price for the book has not been set yet, but it will be published by Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kansas, and will be available through bookstores.

Paetkau

Calendar

May 1-4—Ministers' get-acquainted seminar, General Conference central offices, Newton, Kansas

May 4-7—Eastern District Conference annual sessions, Deep Run Church, Bedminster, Pennsylvania

July 25-30—Mennonite World Conference, Wichita, Kansas

August 21-25—Project Teach, Bluffton (Ohio) College

Central

May 24-26—Twentieth anniversary celebration, Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana

May 27-28—May Day and commencement exercises, Bluffton (Ohio) College

Western

May 21—Commencement exercises, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas

The Rosthern Mennonite congregation invites all past members and friends of the Rosthern Mennonite Church to its

SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY HOMECOMING CELEBRATIONS,

June 30-July 2 at Rosthern, Saskatchewan.

Overnight facilities are available at the Rosthern Junior College dormitories and the trailer campground.

Pictures of the past are needed for a display. Please label these well and send to Bruno Klassen, Box 851, Rosthern, Saskatchewan S0K 3R0, by May 15, if possible.

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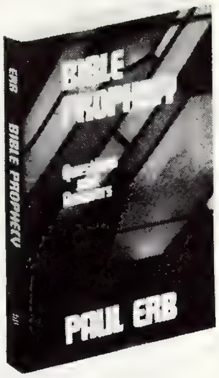

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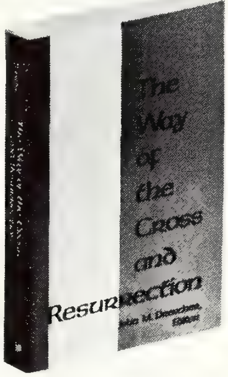

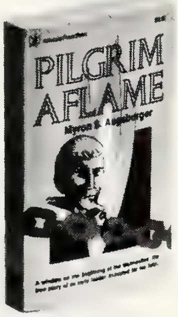

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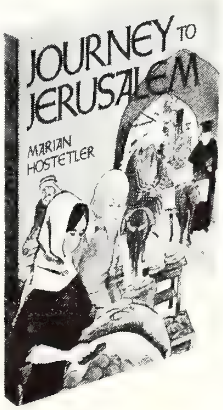

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Christians and world events—a comment

The North American military—2

Canadian Mennonites, who have always been overshadowed by their cousins to the south, have been relatively quiet in recent years regarding Canadian militarism. Its effect on us, and how we as a pacifist people should react to it, has received little discussion in our circles. The situation is serious enough at this point that we need to give vigorous attention to it.

Canada's participation in the manufacture and sales of arms to other countries is very real. Our industries, to the tune of several hundred million dollars annually, turn out a wide range of armaments. They are primarily, although not exclusively, sold to the United States. In fact, perhaps the major reason for our close economic ties with the United States is due to our joint military production. In the era of World War II, prior to the US entry into the war, the two nations decided upon a common defense strategy. In that process, many arms-related businesses sprang up in Canada.

Besides the United States, we also sell arms to countries like Chile, Argentina, Greece, Pakistan, and India, just to name a few. According to Ernie Regehr (*Making a Killing,* McClelland and Stewart, Toronto), our arms industry exists exclusively for the profit motive. We are making money so that others can kill. Since the firms involved pay taxes, Canadians are receiving government services from some of this blood money. Is this an issue for Mennonites at the midtriennium session?

The issue of the armaments industry is not our only concern. What of our own defense department? Most Canadians feel that because our military effort is meager, compared to that of the United States, there is little to discuss. Besides, everyone knows that our armed forces could not hurt anyone. Also, we are peacemakers in the world; we send our armies to UN peacekeeping missions.

There is truth in the above observations. Living securely in the shadow of our big military ally, we have seen our army shrink from a World War II high of 800,000 enlisted men to a force of 80,000. Military expenditures in 1976 were only 9 percent of our federal budget. It seemed, at least for a while, that our present prime minister was attempting to minimize the role of the military. Our troops do receive special training for peacekeeping duties. (It is interesting to note, however, that at points we have had to beg to be involved in peacekeeping duties—our present presence in the Middle East, for example.)

Suddenly, however, the Trudeau government is doing an about-face. It appears that the ever increasing conservative nature of the cabinet has won the battle to begin increasing dramatically our defense spending while all other areas of the budget are in restraint. Several billion dollars are being committed to modernizing planes, tanks, ships, and armored vehicles.

The press has also changed its perception. Instead of continual stories of an inept military, we are being told that US and European generals insist that Canadian troops are among the world's best.

Let me suggest three possible reasons for this dramatic shift. First, as the country continues to move to the political right, there is a cry to shore up defenses. A renewed cold war is not impossible. The recent eviction of twenty Soviet diplomats for spying activities will hasten that day.

Second, it is felt that bolstering our NATO commitment in Europe will enhance an increase in trade and commerce with Western Europe. Trudeau's foreign policy, that of the "third option" (decreasing dependence on the United States by increasing interdependence with European nations), hinges, we are told, on our NATO commitment. Hence, we are attempting to buy friends with guns.

Third, by awarding arms contracts to companies who would guarantee a certain amount of Canadian participation in construction, the government hoped to convince the public that a much-needed stimulus was being given to the ailing economy. Critics insist, however, that this is a poor return on our money. Surely there are more beneficial ways to spend money for jobs.

Has the time come for us to seriously look at the taxes we pay, which enable our government to kill? Can we any longer brush off war taxes as a US issue? What of our Canadian Mennonite politicians in Ottawa? Can they any longer idly stand by as we rearm ourselves and participate in the manufacture of war machinery? Are we as a nonresistant people only going to stand back and watch traditionally nonpacifist churches (United, Anglican, Roman Catholic) be the only vocal voices against rearmament?

Let us go to the midtriennium conference to discuss with our brothers and sisters our concerns, and maybe together we can help each other to find how we will speak to these timely issues in our respective countries.

Harold Fransen, from Smithville, Ontario, is a senior student at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg.

Moscow inter-Mennonite conference—1925

Condensed and translated from Der Bote, *January 18, 1978. The original writer, Gerhard Lohrenz, Winnipeg, was a delegate at the Moscow conference.*

The outbreak of war in July 1914, between Russia and Germany, had far-reaching consequences for the Mennonites in Russia. Thousands of our men were drafted. Great material sacrifices were demanded from our people. We were soon being criticized and labeled as Germans. Large gatherings, which we had heretofore held regularly, were prohibited.

A few years later, when the Revolution and civil strife put the whole country into turmoil, the communication became minimal among the different Mennonite colonies. For years, we heard very little from our fellow believers in northern and eastern Russia.

Eventually, the Bolsheviks took control of the whole country. By 1924, the turmoil seemed to be letting up. The Mennonites got permission to convene an all-Mennonites of Russia conference at Moscow in January 1925.

Our congregations had great expectations, possibly for two reasons. We would hear, personally, about the experiences of our other settlements; and we hoped that an agreement for our further stay in Russia could be worked out to our satisfaction with the Russian Government. (How naive we were!) Each congregation was invited to send one delegate per 500 members.

I attended the meeting where our large church elected two delegates—Elder Heinrich Voth and myself.

The thirty-six-hour train ride to Moscow was an overwhelming experience for me as a twenty-five-year-old, the youngest delegate (to my knowledge) at the conference. Elder Voth and I shared a compartment and had opportunity to discuss many things. I would see Moscow, the city of czars.

Johann M. Janzen, Memrik minister and teacher who had studied at the University of Charkov, was chairperson of the planning committee. The whole conference ran smoothly. Many delegates were lodged at the same hotel, a number of men together in each room. The conveniences were limited. Our meetings were convened in a large room, with Elder Jakob Rempel as conference chairperson. We met for several days of intense deliberations.

Here I learned to know Elder Kornelius Harder of Siberia, the uncle of my wife. Particularly noted were also Peter Dyck, Alexander Ediger, Jakob Paetkau, Kornelius Martens of Gnadenfeld, and Abram Klassen. I remember Daniel Braun because his home had been plundered and his wife and several children murdered a few years prior. We had read of this in the *Kroeker-calendar*. At the Moscow conference I met C. A. DeFehr who now resides in Winnipeg.

Participants at the Moscow inter-Mennonite conference. Back row (from left): Johann Funk, David Koop, Heinrich Rempel, Johann Martens, Julius Pauls, David Paetkau, Kornelius Enns, Peter Schellenberg, C. A. DeFehr, Jakob Reimer, Cornelius Wiens, Johann Loewen, Kornelius Martens, H. Unruh, H. Friesen, N. Friesen, Peter Braun, Gerhard Kopper, — Martens. Second row: I. Krahn, J. P. Bueckert, Peter Neufeld, Jakob Siemens, Jakob Letkeman, Jakob Hubert, Jakob Wiens, Peter Bergen, Daniel Braun, Jakob Toews, Abram Teichgroeb, Jakob Wiebe, Henrich Janzen, Aron Toews. Third row: Peter Dyck, Dietrich Koop, Bernhard Wiens, Dave Redekopp, Johann Wiens, A. Dyck, Alexander Ediger, J. A. Rempel, J. Wiens, Jakob Paetkau, Aron Dick, A. Ediger, Jakob Rempel, Abraham Willms, Jakob Paetkau, Kornelius Martens, Abraham Klassen, Jakob Loewen, Johann Kliewer. Fourth row: Kornelius Nikkel, Nikolas Janzen, Peter Siemens, David Penner, Herman Rempel, Heinrich Penner, Heinrich Voth, Kornelius Harder, Gerhard Willms, Peter Froese, Gerhard Dirksen, Johann Rahn, Johann Klassen, Abraham Neustaedter, Dietrich Wiens. Fifth row: Johann Peters, Gerhard Lohrenz (writer of this report), David Reimer, J. Martens, Peter Pauls, Johann Janzen, Peter Epp, Gerhard Gaede, P. Fridrichsen. Front row: Franz Martens, Heinrich Siemens, F. Tiessen, B. Bergen, P. Klassen, D. Loewen.

A photograph was taken of all the delegates present. This photo and the decisions of that conference are included in my book *Heritage Remembered* (second edition), 1977, CMBC publications, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4, pages 88 and 134. (This book can be purchased in German or English by sending $15 to the above address.)

We agreed on eight points which we wanted to discuss with the government. Not one of our requests was granted by the government. This clearly indicated the deep conflict between our beliefs and those of the new Russian Government.

Today, I know of only C. A. DeFehr and Elder David Koop, besides myself, as still living. But the delegates to the 1925 conference were sincere brethren who generated respect for their faith.

In 1967, on a visit to the Soviet Union, I had occasion to meet Elder Heinrich Voth once more, at Alma Ata. He spent many years banned from his home area. But wherever he went he faithfully shared God's Word. He was one of those believers who could not be silenced. When more freedom was granted in 1967, he once again performed great services among the scattered congregations. Many of the Russian Mennonites still speak of him as one of the giants in God's kingdom.

I consider it a rare privilege to have been drawn into church work from an early age on. Through it, many unique experiences have become part of my life. I have learned that the Lord has his faithful followers in unexpected places. Christ accepts any persons who open their hearts to him and want to be his followers. I have become deeply convinced that outward forms, over which we have so often quarreled and hurt one another, are insignificant when seen in terms of eternity. The Lord looks at the heart, and only the heart.

Letters

Appreciation and challenge

Dear Editor: I wish to express appreciation for the articles dealing with ethical decisions that confront us in dealing with human life (February 28 issue). The article by Ted Koontz especially provided a good stimulus from a Mennonite ethical perspective to carefully weigh the issues. We protect human life at all stages, recognizing that there may be at times the necessity of the anguish of taking human life for the sake of human life, whether in hospital rooms or in society at large.

I also wish to respond to the series of articles by Perry Yoder on creation, which I feel were inadequate and surprisingly biased. The issue of origins is critical to various aspects of Christian theology. We must be aware of the implications of a position on origins to our view of the nature of man and his need, and of what our essential mission as a church must be. We can quite unwittingly compromise on essentials of our faith.

Yoder stresses God as the creator of order rather than as the originator of creation. What he says is true but it is not complete. His acceptance of the translation "When God began to create . . ." for Genesis 1:1 as better, without giving any supportive reason, is presumptuous.

Edward J. Young in *Studies in Genesis One,* elucidates the grammatical questions in translation and the importance they have to the Christian faith. The translation Yoder gives as better, as U. Cassuto also points out in *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis,* almost requires an emendation of the second verse. Language is scarcely capable of more directly describing creation ex nihilo than it does in Genesis 1:1.

Young in his conclusion paraphrases "The beginning was by means of a creative act." Genesis stresses the work of God as originator as much as that of creator of order. God is absolute creator of a universe totally dependent on him for the purpose of his glory. The use of the word *bara* to describe the creative act, as Yoder himself describes it, points to this truth.

The emphasis of God being originator may also have implications for God's present creative activity. Yoder's application (in article 2) is to stress God's present creative activity in establishing new order. The Bible stresses God's present creative activity as establishing something new, as well as radically transforming the old order. The same stupendous kind of creative act is required in recreating man in regeneration as was required in original creation. God originates a new person and reorders his life. Both are involved in making us new creatures.

To disregard the originating aspect of creation is to deny how God does his creative work. Our world is transformed, life is made different, only when they are first made new by the Creator. Our status quo is changed only as people are first made new men. God originates men, then brings new order. To disregard this is to dilute our message, and to deny it is to desert the Christian belief about the nature of man.

I also disagree with Yoder's blithe acceptance of evolutionary theory.

I am grateful for the good articles in *The Mennonite.* A magazine of its quality ought to have higher quality articles than those on creation. We should not be narrow and dogmatic, and should be more incisive on the implications of critical issues. *Gus Konkel, Rural Route 1, Winkler, Manitoba R0G 2X0* March 10

Commends MCC ministry

Dear Editor: Recently I had the privilege of a most unusual, unforgettable experience through the courtesy of MCC worker Paul Quiring of Jerusalem.

I accompanied Paul's associate, Mark Siemens, and Yacoub N. Amer, MCC Arab village level coordinator, on their day's work south of Hebron. Their mission that day was the distribution of small olive trees to Arab farmers and to sign an agreement between a group of Arab farmers, Mennonite Central Committee, and the Israeli military government.

This was my second visit to Israel in little over a year. As one travels and listens from the Golan Heights on the north to the Gulf of Aqaba in the south it becomes increasingly difficult to separate impressions from facts. The news media have played up the struggle until one gets the impression here at home that it's very dangerous to travel in Israel. The minister of tourism in Jerusalem assured me of the complete freedom to travel, which we later enjoyed.

I am writing to testify to the significance and uniqueness of the presence and the work of MCC. Paul Quiring and Mark Siemens are two of the very finest young men I have met. They are truly doing a great work in the name of Christ, helping poor Arab farmers reclaim eroded, hilly, rocky, seemingly barren land. (Had our Lord yielded to the temptation to turn stones into bread, he would have had an endless supply.) I saw the results of what seems to be making something out of nothing.

With an excellent spirit of encouragement, some expert know-how, subsidizing road (trail might be more accurate) building and terracing, along with supplying small olive trees, it is absolutely amazing to view the results. You have to see it to believe it. And believe me, it's worth seeing.

The Lord willing, I hope to return next year and see the work in the Jordan Valley. *William H. Stauffer, Stone Creek, Ohio 43840* March 10

Jesus and women

Dear Editor: For several years now I have intended to write to *The Mennonite* (under several editorships) to express my appreciation for its articles and news. I wish to thank you, and those who have preceded you, for your responsible editing.

Of particular interest to me recently have been Gayle Gerber Koontz's articles about women in the Bible and William G. Johnsson's article, "Jesus—A Revolutionary?" I felt that both authors touched on an important issue that cannot be overlooked. Johnsson casually mentioned Jesus befriending social outcasts—"Gentiles, the poor, and *women*" (italics mine). Koontz gives a brief overview of attitudes and laws concerning women in Jesus' day. However, perhaps due to its brevity, the ultimate significance of Jesus' revolutionary attitude toward, and treatment of, women was not fully communicated.

In a thought-provoking article, "Jesus Was a Feminist," Leonard Swidler supports the thesis that indeed "Jesus vigorously promoted the dignity and equality of women in the midst of a very male-dominated society."

These ideas are of particular relevance in our current situation. The Kansas state legislature apparently has introduced a measure for recision of the Equal Rights Amendment. I would hope that Kansas Mennonites and various Kansas church groups would strongly oppose this legislation. In addition, I would expect Mennonites in unratified states to take the lead in assuring that equality under the law will be practiced, regardless of a person's sex, by promoting ratification.

Jesus has set the example. Let us follow in his footsteps. *Linda Hiebert Sekiguchi, 425 East Haleloa Place, Honolulu, Hawaii 96821* March 14

Meditation

The Holy Spirit—Who?

Some years ago, the late Karl Barth told Billy Graham that the church of the 1970s would direct its attention to the Holy Spirit (Myron Augsburger, *Quench Not the Spirit*). It has come true. The shelves of bookstores are stacked with books on the Holy Spirit and the Charismatic Movement has touched all denominations.

The charismatic people talk about the Holy Spirit as a vital and exciting personality, giving to their lives the deep inner satisfaction that so many are seeking. Other people in our churches hardly know who he is. When did they last hear a sermon on the work of the Holy Spirit?

I believe that we have failed to inform people about the work of the Holy Spirit. Our thinking has been binary. Mennonites have an excellent theology and an excellent Christology, but where is our pneumatology? Our proclamation of the gospel has become unbalanced. Perhaps lack of awareness about the Holy Spirit is one of the reasons behind the new surge of moral problems among us. "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth . . ." (John 16:13a).

The churches of the Book of Acts were alive and growing because of the powerful presence of the Spirit in their midst. Why do our churches grow only biologically and not by conversion of neighbors in our communities?

Paul writes to Timothy that he shall "stir up the gift" which is within him. Why have we isolated the gift of a pastor-teacher, attaching to it "reverend"? The person with the gift of music is not an ordained "reverend." Why not recognize all gifts of church members—administration, prophecy, counseling, hospitality? Do we really not believe that each person who is born again receives a spiritual gift for the edification of believers (1 Corinthians 12:11; Ephesians 4:12)?

When I speak with fellow Christians about the Holy Spirit, many become defensive. They point fingers at the Charismatic Movement and say: "Look what happened to that specific church," and "That person spoke in tongues, yet lived an immoral life." The fear of the unknown causes us to see only the negative and bad results. With good reason I agree that we must check out a new product before we buy it.

Young people who observe newlywed couples while contemplating marriage find that stories of broken relationships and divorce keep sticking in their minds. It leads them to doubt whether "good" marriages can happen. Are they right in thinking that?

Outsiders tend to view the new spiritual awareness in a similar way.

Marriage has its problems, and we must also admit and allow for mistakes in the Charismatic Movement. Some who have experienced a new vision of the Holy Spirit become spiritually proud. We will also meet people who put on a front.

Although we recognize faults, we may not use them as excuses to quench the Spirit's work. Who is the Holy Spirit? What is he doing in and through my life? What can I learn?

Let us accept the Trinity in its totality. Let us trust God to strengthen our faith in the Holy Spirit who works as the motivating force in Christians' lives. Then churches with 1,000 members will not need to ask an outsider to teach Sunday school. We will see the Spirit appoint Christians with specific gifts to fill the missing gaps.

"The church as it involves individual believers and the corporate body must know his (Holy Spirit's) presence. No group can ever become a spiritually disciplined church without knowing the Holy Spirit. He is God's means of manifesting the lordship of Christ over contemporary believers. Spiritual authority resides in the mind of Christ and we have to understand the mind and words of Christ and the work of the Spirit" (Myron Augsburger, *Quench Not the Spirit*).

We suspect people who talk freely about the Holy Spirit of breeding division in the church. They fail to be consistent with Scripture (overemphasizing speaking in tongues, insisting that the baptism of the Spirit is a necessary second salvation experience).

I believe that a greater problem lies with those church members who do not want to know about the Holy Spirit. Those who resist the movement have never taken the awareness of the Spirit seriously. At best we tolerate these people, at worst we drive them out. We must stop treating these people as "spiritual lepers." Mature leadership is needed to integrate this new movement into our churches. The Catholic Church has surpassed Mennonites in keeping the unity of the body in its diversity.

D. Gary Loewen

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CONTRIBUTORS

Frank Horst, Box 766, Warden, Washington 98857, is pastor of the Warden Mennonite Church.

Heinz Janzen, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114, is the general secretary for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Gerhard Lohrenz, 261 Renfrew Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3N 1J5, is a retired historian and pastor who is active in leading travel tours and writing books.

D. Gary Loewen, 1016 Warsaw Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 1E5, is a second-year student at Canadian Mennonite Bible College and serves as student pastor of the Sterling Mennonite Fellowship.

CREDITS
Cover, Judy Bauer Boschmann, 219 West Pershing, Muncie, Indiana 47305; 260, Robert Maust, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801; 262, Jack Voelkel; 263, Verney Unruh; 264, RNS.

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

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Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Trusting the Holy Spirit

"You will succeed, not by military might or by your own strength, but by my Spirit" (Zechariah 4:6b, *Good News Bible*).

The US Constitution was designed by a special Constitutional Convention two hundred years ago. In the midst of one crucial debate, Benjamin Franklin rose and said: "I have lived a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured that 'except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel: We shall be divided by our little partial local interests; our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and byword down to future ages" (Van Doren, *The Great Rehearsal,* page 101).

Whenever and wherever we human beings turn to our own devices, there will arise confusion, frustration, and consternation. We see it about us on every hand.

God's chosen Israel had been in bondage for some time. Now they had returned to the homeland and Zerubbabel was king. The Prophet Zechariah comes to the king with a special message from the Lord. Don't put your hopes on a new military deterrent or on any other human innovation. They can only fail. If you want to restore Jerusalem and build a nation with a solid foundation, build on God's Spirit (Zechariah 4:6).

Israel went into bondage because they turned from God's Spirit to their own spirits. Our countries are in trouble today because we have trusted too much in the human spirit.

If we want to see renewal in our own lives and revival among those outside the churches, we will have to learn to trust upon the Holy Spirit.

The late 1970s are evidencing a new awareness to the spiritual dimension of life. People from all denominations are responding to the freedom and warmth of the Holy Spirit. The most obvious and powerful sign of this is the Charismatic Movement.

I hear this topic across Canada and the USA. What does it mean? How shall we respond to charismatics? Is there a way to authenticate the Holy Spirit's working in our midst? Many are afraid. There have been divisions of whole congregations. People who once sat in the back pews of the church have become vocal and articulate proponents for Holy Spirit power in all of our lives. Prayer and Bible study groups have sprung up among people you couldn't drag to church before the Charismatic Movement began.

It is appropriate to ask questions. The counsel of 1 John 4:1 says frankly: "My dear friends, do not believe all who claim to have the Spirit, but test them to find out if the spirit they have comes from God. For many false prophets have gone out everywhere" (*Good News Bible*).

There are several tests to which we need to subject all of our spiritual life and witness.

The first is listed in 1 John 4:2, "Anyone who acknowledges that Jesus Christ came as a human being has the Spirit who comes from God." The Holy Spirit verifies the impact of Jesus upon our lives. Any spirit that contradicts or denies the Jesus-faith of people, is not from God.

A second test is whether your spirit-experience grows out of everyday living or out of artificial stimulation. "The Holy Spirit works through the normal processes of the mind—attention, data collection through the senses, remembering, associating, perceiving, dreaming" (Wayne Oates, *The Holy Spirit in Five Worlds,* page 29). If your spirit consciousness comes out only when emotionally stimulated, it's probably more of your spirit than of God's Spirit.

A third test is the time factor. Authentic Holy Spirit guidance does not turn on and off like a machine. Our openness to God will not always be the same, but his Spirit will be a constant urging in our lives.

A fourth test is the matter of relationships. False spirits often work for isolation, separation, and put themselves up above other people. The Holy Spirit of God is the source of love, joy, peace, kindness, self-control, and power. The Holy Spirit affirms the fellowship of believers and builds relationships to other Christians. God's Spirit leads us to a winsome encounter with unbelievers.

Any spirit that does not pass such tests is a spirit of error.

When God's Holy Spirit enters our lives, we can trust him for victorious living. That Spirit we can trust without reservation. He may lead us in surprising ways—to see new and strange bridges of understanding and healing—but he will be the Spirit of truth. BW

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The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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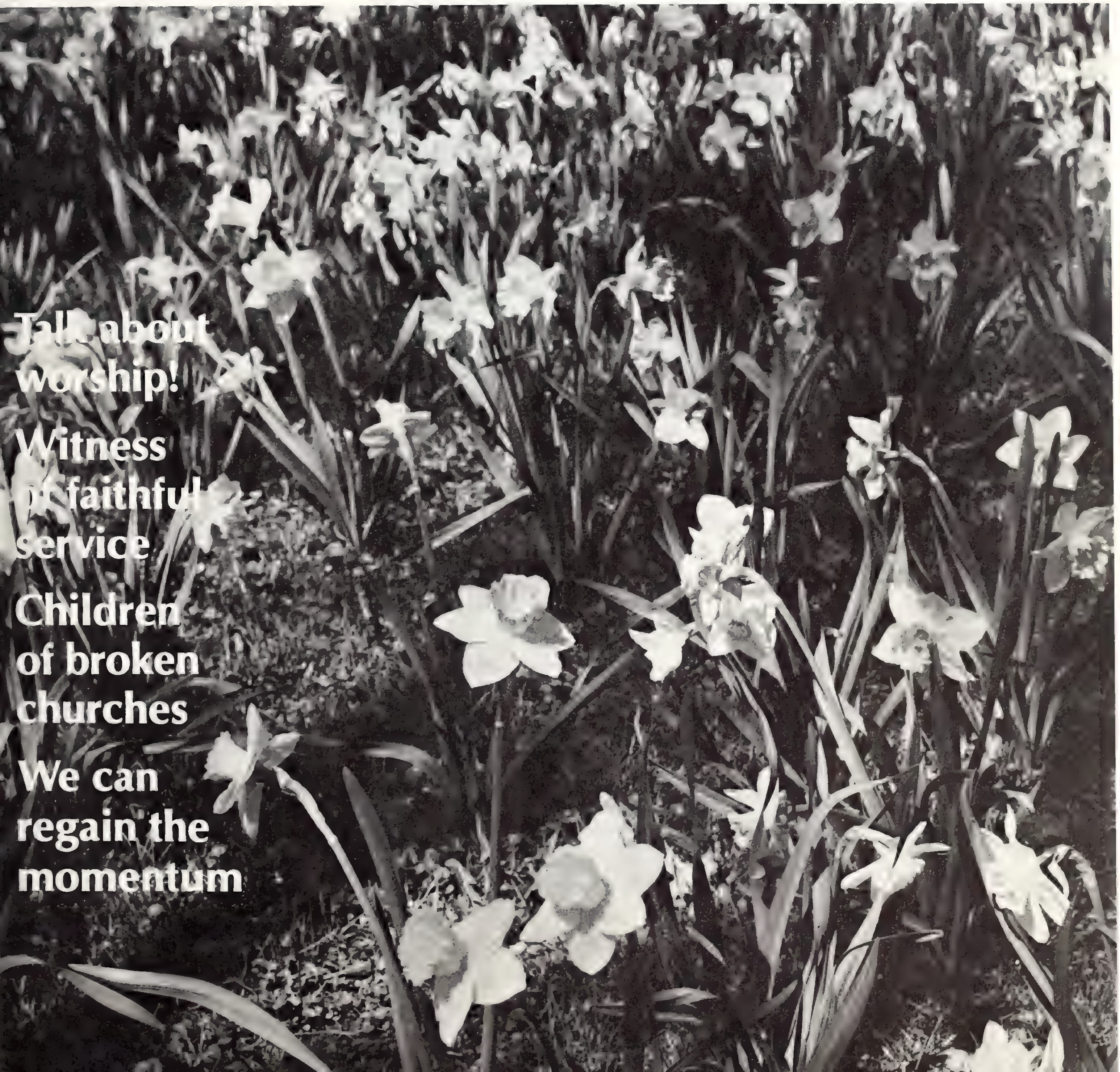


Talk about worship!

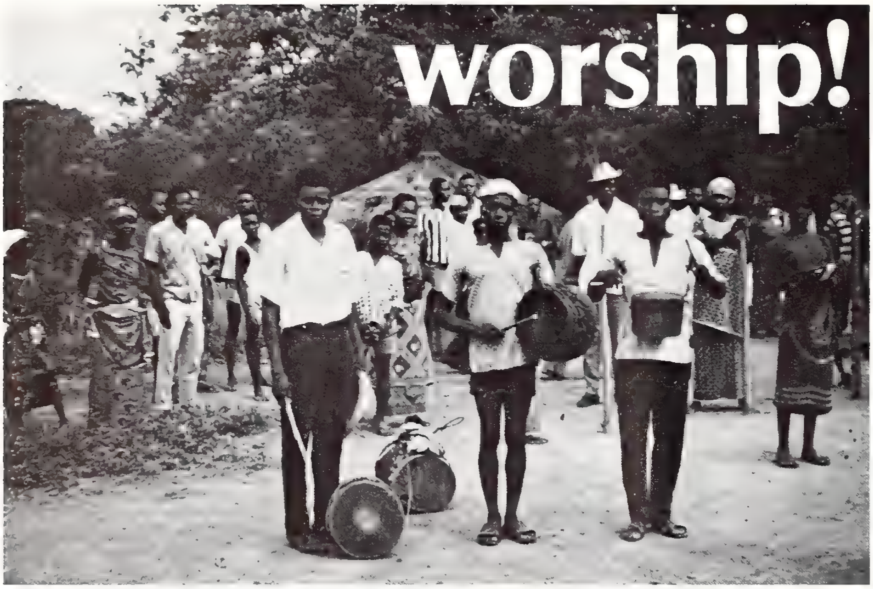
Witness of faithful service

Children of broken churches

We can regain the momentum

V. Johnson

Talk about worship!



The congregation broke into a "happening," the likes of which I had never seen in church before.

There were no pews. There was no organ. There was no piano. There was no electricity. There were no hymnals. There were no stained-glass windows, nor even windows. And there were no walls.

But there was joy and love and celebration and acceptance and warmth!

We came upon the little church in a clearing about a half-kilometer outside the village. Driving up in our Ford Bronco, the symbols of the two worlds met: Four-wheel drive—a bamboo-frame church whose total floor space was perhaps the size of the kitchen of a middle-sized American church; automatic transmission—a tin roof that would have leaked like a sieve if it had been raining; cushioned white bucket seats—split-log seats eight inches off the dirt floor, lying in the crotch of a forked stick driven in the ground; two-way radio—no walls except for a few palm branches woven together on two sides of the building; Cushionaire tires—a crudely made altar table covered by a white cloth with the words "Persevere 'til I return" embroidered on it.

We were early. The choir was rehearsing softly off in the grass somewhere; people were coming, all on foot, some with enormous loads on their heads from the market which had just closed. The women were carrying babies strapped on their backs; the men walked alone; goats and chickens were scattered around. The handsome pastor, complete with clerical collar, greeted us warmly, as did many others—"Moya" (greetings).

We took a seat near the rear in order to better see the whole worship scene. The parishioners sat segregated, men and boys on the right, women and girls and babies on the left, and latecomers on the grass outside. The church was packed. We were told that at the Christmas service, when the church could not hold the crowds, they simply removed the palm-branch walls and people sat outside on all sides of the building. There were three benches for the choir at the front left, perpendicular to the congregation's benches and facing the altar table.

Now let the worship begin! The choir (seven men) entered in procession singing, and took its place in front. The music is written on a five-tone scale, sounds as though it is sung in three or four parts, is extremely close harmony, and is sung with an uninhibited gusto that includes not only the voice but also the hands, the body, the head—total involvement. After a brief call to worship and prayer, the congregation sang—perhaps *enacted* would be a better word—"Hallelujah, thine the glory,/Hallelujah, amen!/Hallelujah, thine the glory,/Revive us again!" I thought to myself, "They think they need reviving?"

There was a quiet time for confession, and then the choir sang of the birth of Christ. There was a strange sound at the conclusion of the anthem, which at first I took to be the bleating of one of the goats wandering around outside the church. But it happened a number of other times, and I finally realized it came from a woman in the congregation. It had variations all the way from a rooster crow to an Indian war whoop and was the equivalent to an "Amen" or a "Hallelujah" in some uninhibited American church.

The pastor announced who was ill or in need within the congregation and asked a woman to pray for them, which she did mightily and lengthily. Now the congregation broke into a "happening," the likes of which I had never seen in church before. It was singing and dancing and clapping and stomping and embracing, a beautiful dance of happiness for the birth of Christ. One old man in particular was really swinging, hat in hand and arm in arm with another worshiper, right in front of the altar. It was reminiscent in ways of an old-fashioned square dance or barn dance at home. It was beautiful to see and to hear and to feel.

Our host told us later that occasionally missionaries come to Zaire determined to change worship forms to their tastes—to make worship as boring an experience as it always was for them when they grew up. But, he said, the Africans are wise and patient; since such missionaries never last very long, the Africans just wait until they leave and are then free to return to genuine worship.

The sermon text was from Luke 2: 25-40, the story of the presentation of Jesus to Simeon in the Temple: "Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. . . ." It was an animated, even illustrated and dramatized, sermon. The pastor walked up and down the short aisle carrying an African baby basket complete with baby blanket (but not with baby, as far as I could see). He spoke of the African tradition of giving gifts to babies and then made analogies to our gifts to Jesus. The audience responded in unison to unfinished sentences or to questions (with obvious answers) which were asked them by the pastor. There was complete participation on the part of the audience. No one was asleep. And the pastor had obviously never graduated from an American seminary—he preached just thirteen minutes. May his number increase!

But the high point of the service, for me, was still to come. The offering was not "collected." Rather, people went forward down the one aisle, put their gifts in a basket, and returned to their seats—children first, then the men, and the women last. I don't know about relative amounts of money given, but the women outdid everyone else combined by a country kilometer in the abandon with which they entered into the offering ritual. While we sang verse after verse of "Bring your gifts,/Bring your gifts to the living God," the women shouted and clapped and embraced and danced in what might irreverently be called a "snake dance" in and around the church, the "bleating" and "crowing" and "war cries" going all the time. It was really something else.

There was a dialogue and duet by two young men—"To do the Lord's work/Is good for our hearts"—and a final hymn, "Stand up, stand up for Jesus,/Ye soldiers of the cross!/Lift high his royal banner,/It must not, it must not suffer loss."

We sang the benediction and a threefold amen and left the worship, not with the feeling that we were PhD candidates in anthropology watching some primitive rite, but feeling that we had worshiped the Child and the risen Lord with fellow believers in Christ.

A family dwelling in a Zaire village

A church in a Zaire village

Witness of faithful service

Malcolm Wenger

Barbara Habegger, left, and Pamela Medicine at the September 1976 cross-cultural camp in Oklahoma. Both women died in 1977. Window to Mission *carried an article about Pamela Medicine by Lawrence Hart.*

The death of a person who has had a significant influence on one's life often becomes a time for reliving in memory some of the important experiences with that person. This was the case at the funeral of Barbara Habegger at the White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church on August 17, 1977.

Barbara and her husband, Alfred, had moved to Busby, Montana, from Berne, Indiana, in the spring of 1918. The next forty years of her life were spent among the Northern Cheyenne people in missionary and church work. After twenty years of retirement in North Newton, Kansas, she died as a result of injuries from an automobile accident on August 14, 1977. It was always her desire to be buried at Busby with her husband, her son Bernard, and the Cheyenne people that she loved.

The following quotes are selected from spontaneous statements made by community people at her funeral in Busby.

"I was raised by my grandma Buffalohorn. There were many times that Alfred and Barbara Habegger would come over to our place and encourage us. . . Her influence and guidance gave grandma a lot of encouragement when grandma was lonesome. She would go over to the church. They would talk to us. They would feed us. They were teaching for Christianity. I am thankful for their teachings.

"I remember one particular time. . . Mrs. Habegger picked me up and set me on her lap. 'You know, someday you are going to grow up,' she said. 'Grandma is not going to be with you all the time. Be good to your grandma. Someday, you are going to have an office job.' At the time I did not know what she meant. But as I grew up and started working for the government, I often remembered that day when I was sitting on her lap and she told me that." *John Buffalohorn, administrative officer for the Bureau of Indian Affairs on the Northern Cheyenne reservation*

"John (Buffalohorn) grew up under the most adverse circumstances. Yet John overcame the bitterness that usually sprouts up in most of the hearts of the people that are reared in those circumstances. I let bitterness come up in my life and it hindered my growth for many many years. . .

"It was Mrs. Habegger that convinced my mother one day to send me away to school at Bethel Academy. As I was hitchhiking to school, the experience of receiving an offering plate full of money—$80 from strangers, Christians in Ransom (Kansas) Mennonite Church—was the beginning of the change in my attitude toward the white man. . . But later on in life, after I began to ask a few more questions, I came to the point where I hated the white man, hated everything that he stood for, until the teachings I learned in this log house came back to me. . . During the darkest

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We never realize how much we influence each other as Christian people.

moments of my life when there seemed no way out, the Bible verses that I learned here surfaced, and these are the words that led me out of the trouble that I was in and gave me a purpose and a different perspective. And today I can say with many people, 'I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.' " *Ted Risingsun, member of the Northern Cheyenne tribal council and staff person for the Mennonite Indian Leaders Council*

"It is a great honor to have someone love you so much that she wanted to come back here to have her body rest.

"Three years ago, before I left for missionary duty, I got to talk to Sister Habegger. It was a great encouragement to me because I didn't want to leave home at that time. . . I thought Alaska was a long way, and I didn't think I would be able to go, but then I thought about her spending the years here with us. I am sure there were more attractive places that she could have gone to. . . but she chose to come here. . . She loved Christ so much that she came here to let us know that God is great and God is good, and God loves us. . . and there is a better way of living, a peaceful way of living. I thank God today for missionaries. . . ." *Carol Red Cherries, former judge of the Northern Cheyenne tribal court and an evangelist in the Pentecostal Church*

"I would just like to praise and thank the Lord for this occasion. . . In spite of the shock, I feel joy. God has called home one of his saints. God chose the Habegger family to plant seed. I can say I am the fruit of a seed planted by the Habegger family. I look forward to seeing them, but most of all to seeing our Savior Jesus Christ. . . ." *Wender Shoulderblade, dormitory director at Busby School operated by the Northern Cheyenne Tribe*

"The day that Alfred Habegger was buried was sad for me. . . I was very new in the church. I didn't have roots quite in the ground yet as far as Christianity is concerned. I was afraid somewhat, I guess, to launch out in the Christian life because of the influences I had in the other world . . . What if I fell, what if I turned back because I did not have the roots grown down in the ground yet?

"We were attending church. I was newly married and one day I remember very well that Barbara Habegger challenged the congregation. . . 'Would there be any young people that want to take training, or go off to school to become a church leader?' I was somewhat interested but I don't know whether I told her; I don't know till this day.

"I think it was the following Sunday she challenged the young people in the congregation again, and then she said, 'Well, I think Joe is going. Joe's going to a Bible school.' I was thinking deep inside. . . It seemed she took the words and put them out in the public and that is where I really started thinking seriously about school. I think the Lord uses people like that. . . This is where I got my start. She had lots to do with it. It's just amazing how the Lord worked." *Joe Walks Along, pastor of the Petter Memorial Mennonite Church and active in community affairs at Lame Deer, Montana*

"Some of the memories, the most precious memories I have, are of this Mennonite church during Christmas season. In those days we were poor. We are poor by some standards today, but in those days it was ridiculous. I remember the time that I got my little sack of candy and the little toys that came with those sacks. . . I remember it so well because just that little token gift, it wasn't much by any man's standard, but it gave me joy, it gave me happiness. . . nobody was left out.

"You know, we never realize how much we influence each other as Christian people. I grew up a kind of renegade, a rebellious sort of guy. . . Every state I went into I was arrested for drunken driving, or disturbing the peace, or something. Until Christ came into my life, I never knew there was another life.

"Today, looking back at the different leaders that have developed in our own reservation community, I see that Christian influence has had a lot to do with our leadership.

"We Christian people are one. And the people that divide the Christian people are ourselves. But I know that if the reverend and his wife were alive today and talking to us, I am sure they would say, 'Cooperate. You are looking for the Lord Jesus Christ. Let that be sufficient. Count yourselves brothers and sisters in the Lord.'

"I believe we owe a lot to two missionaries that dared to come out and live among us and today they are buried with us, and I think this is wonderful. I hope we can take a cue from them and begin to launch out, begin to deal with life realistically, begin to set up our goals and objectives so that we can please the Master, so that we can go out and leave a happy family behind. . . They have left us a heritage and let's hang on to it." *Sylvester Knowsgun, assistant director of the Office of Native American Programs for the Northern Cheyenne Reservation*

Barbara Habegger was named *Manhova'e* by the Cheyennes, "Giver of water to drink." Throughout her life there were many cups of cold water offered in the name of Christ.

During the darkest moments of my life when there seemed no way out, the Bible verses that I learned there surfaced, and these are the words that led me out of the trouble that I was in and gave me a purpose and a different perspective.

Snyder says "myths" cause decreased giving

Akron, Pennsylvania—In mid-March the Mennonite Central Committee executive committee assessed the financial picture at the end of the first quarter and instructed staff to vigorously encourage the need for sustained donations from the constituency.

The Hillsboro Resolution on the world food crisis, approved in January 1974, is a ten-year projection in which priority of funds and personnel are given to problems of food production and consumption.

A goal was established to reduce consumption and expenditures by 10 percent and to contribute the savings to meet the food needs of others. The Hillsboro Resolution was approved unanimously and has been supported by the churches, but currently there are signs of faltering financial support.

Approximately 89 percent of the MCC budget is related to overseas program. The other 11 percent represents programs in North America. Programs in both places take years to carry out, and steady giving is needed to support them. MCC staff do not feel good about the possibility of beginning a major development project if they must pull out because funds are not available.

MCC's approach to fund raising from the beginning has been that of presenting the facts to our constituents and then allowing the Spirit to direct the response.

Three myths may be contributing to the decrease in giving.

Myth 1—MCC has "lots of money." MCC actually operates on a "pay as you go" basis; it has no guaranteed income sources. Each year the total amount for program expenditures for that year must be raised.

The undesignated cash balances available at the end of March will meet the program needs for somewhere between forty and forty-five days. In 1975 at the same time of year, cash balances were sufficient for 105 days. The regular month-to-month contributions from the constituency are vital, and unless they pick up decidedly by the end of June when the executive committee meets, program reductions will need to be considered all along the line. In the first three months of this year (December, January, February) contributions were $375,000 less than the same period last year.

Giving to MCC through relief sales and thrift shops has increased somewhat, but these sources of support, while significant, continue to be secondary to funds received from congregations and individuals.

Two of the major constituent bodies in the United States, the General Conference Mennonites and the Mennonite Brethren, are taking MCC out of their conference budgets and have approved MCC communicating its needs directly to congregations and individuals. This arrangement means contributions should be sent directly to MCC or through the conference offices clearly marked for MCC.

MCC (Canada) had a considerable downturn in giving in 1977, but giving to MCC (Canada) has picked up in the first quarter of 1978.

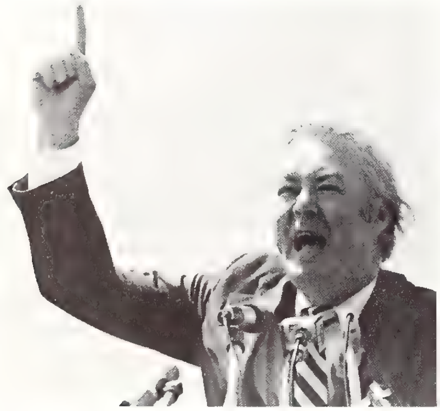
Myth 2—The needs abroad are not as great as they were a few years ago. Actually, despite some growth in the average per capita income in such nations as Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Chad, and Indonesia, inflation is on the rise and the income gap between the rich and the poor is widening. Natural disaster and political turmoil have created thousands of homeless people in India, Lebanon, and southern Africa. Drought in the Sahel and Southeast Asia means thousands more have nothing to eat. MCC workers feel deep empathy with these hurts and are frustrated when limited financial resources curtail their response.

The MCC approach around the world is to help people become productive and to increasingly express concern for justice. The very political foundations of countries are shaken when hunger and poverty are rampant. There is another dimension to helping people who are in desperate circumstances, even beyond our own readiness to share. The late Adlai Stevenson expressed it well when he said, "A hungry man cannot be a free man."

Myth 3—MCC helps leftist or rightist governments. Some people have been reluctant to give generously to MCC because they fear we may be helping rightist or leftist governments. Actually, MCC does not help any government. We attempt to help people who are in need irrespective of their governments, provided we are assured that the assistance will get to the people who need it instead of being siphoned off for other purposes.

When MCC came into being fifty-eight years ago, our ministry to the hungry in South Russia was in an area that was in political transition, but it was possible for MCC representatives to verify the use of relief supplies. That principle still applies as we do everything possible to assure that people know that we come "in the name of Christ" and that our ministry is directed toward helping people rather than governments.

Reg Toews, associate executive secretary for administration and resources, is giving particular attention to the interpretation of program needs. Toews points out that the executive committee has not sounded an alarm on finances, but it is attempting to alert the constituency so that future budget cuts of a major nature will not be necessary. *William T. Snyder, MCC executive secretary*



Moynihan

Tuition bill controversial

Senator Patrick Moynihan (Democrat, New York) is cosponsor with Senator Robert Packwood (Republican, Oregon) of the tuition tax credit act which would provide tax credits of up to $500 per student per year to individuals who pay tuition on the elementary, secondary, trade school, or college level.

Some Christian school associations are urging parents to support the proposal. But the legislation is controversial. Supporters of the measure call it "an example of public policy that will help to make a more just society for all Americans." But its opponents say it would be "federal government subsidization of sectarian division and divisiveness in education."

Retirement bill is alternative to idleness

Goshen, Indiana (MBM)—One effect of the new retirement-age bill in the United States will be to force companies to carefully review the productivity of all their workers—not just the older ones, predicts Tilman Smith.

Smith is director of programs and studies for the aging for Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana.

President Carter is expected to sign into law a bill passed recently by Congress which raises to seventy the age at which employers can require workers to retire.

One of the bill's major benefits is that it provides an alternative to idleness. "One thing seniors do not want is a roleless role," stated Smith, a seventy-five-year-old veteran educator, administrator, and churchman.

Age sixty-five as a definition of old age has been an arbitrary line, he indicated. Retirement at sixty-five, or pegging age sixty-five as the point of eligibility for various services to the elderly, was borrowed from the social legislation of Chancellor Otto von Bismark in Germany in the 1880s.

From a mere 3.5 percent of the US population which reached sixty-five years of age almost 100 years ago, today the number has increased to 11 percent. In Canada the percentage is slightly lower. "One who is sixty-five today is a much different person from his counterpart in 1885, or even in 1935," Smith observed.

The person over sixty-five in the USA and Canada is apt "to be more vigorous physically, somewhat better educated formally, and certainly more broadly educated informally through the media, travel, and intercultural contacts and opportunities," Smith said. "Accordingly, he is more able to contribute from the standpoint of physical energy, accumulated understanding and wisdom, experience, mental acuity, and emotional perspective."

Smith does not expect the new bill to cause widespread changes in the working force, since already 64 percent of people are retired by the time they are eligible for Social Security.

However, companies will be more careful to assess the potential of their older employees, providing perhaps part-time slots to take advantage of their specialities. On the other hand, retirement careers will increase, and as persons learn how to use leisure, more time will be spent on leisure activities.

Luke Birky, Mennonite Board of Missions secretary for health and welfare, supports the idea of older persons assuming new careers in retirement. "It's tough for older people to make decisions in leadership," he said, "but in some roles retired persons have remained creative and innovative as long as they live." Birky cited examples of retired ministers who have effectively filled interim pastorates.

The long-range prospect for the higher retirement age is bright, Smith said, since in less than twenty-five years he sees a worker shortage hitting the USA.

The worker shortage will come about, he said, because the baby boomers of the late 1940s (now causing a bulge on the job market) will be retiring. The present fertility rate of 1.8 percent per woman is less than is needed to simply keep the population from declining.

Other factors which will create a lesser work force include a leveling out of the number of married women who work outside the home—currently almost one-half of all married women. That percentage will come to an end somewhere, he said. In the future we will probably see more husband-wife teams holding part-time jobs, rather than one full-time or two full-time jobs. And persons retiring at age fifty-five will continue to expand retirement career and leisure-time activities. *John Bender*

Manitobans talk peace

Representatives of seven of Manitoba's eight Mennonite schools, faculty from the University of Manitoba, and Mennonite Central Committee personnel met March 15 for a peace consultation. The consultation was sponsored by MCC (Canada) Peace Section and MCC (Manitoba).

The main input was provided by Donovan Smucker, sociology professor at Conrad Grebel College. He outlined five sociological perspectives of war. Smucker claimed that most conflict study presently emphasizes nonviolent confrontation models, and that the Mennonite perspective must center on nonviolent cooperation, or conscientious mutual aid.

Peacemakers also need to be aware of systems analysis to see the application of peace theology to society. Systems analysis asks at least two questions: Do we wish to *change* or *maintain* the present system? What ends do we wish to achieve? From rough estimates, Smucker concluded that Mennonites in North America have a total income of about $1.5 billion and that they give some $100 million to educational and other institutional structures. The question then is whether the institutions can be prophetic in terms of raising questions about the system itself when the maintenance of the institution has become so intricately tied up with the system.

The afternoon session saw a sharing of curriculum and program ideas by the faculty of the schools. Of special interest was the question as to what can be done at the University of Manitoba campus where there are more than twenty Mennonite faculty. There appears to be lack of impact on peace emphasis within that group, and Leo Driedger and Henry Rempel expressed willingness to be part of a movement that would create a stronger vision of peace perspectives on the campus.

Taiwan churches support Philippine mission

The Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan (FOMCIT) met at Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hualien for its twentieth annual conference, February 13-15.

Overseas mission work in the Philippines will now be supported by FOMCIT. The decision by the conference calls for each of the fifteen congregations to incorporate special prayers and offerings for overseas mission on the first Sunday of each month. At least 2,000 Taiwanese dollars (US-$50) will be sent every three months to Missions Now, a ministry of evangelism and development southeast of Manila.

FOMCIT accepted in principle a request from the Nan-tun Gospel Church for membership. The conditions for membership are to be worked out by the executive committee in consultation with representatives of Mennonite churches in the area. Nan-tun began two years ago as an independent church-planting effort.

Ministerial leadership was another area of concern. Encouragement, the gathering decided, is needed for both men and women to enter seminary and become pastors. It was stated that young people should be allowed to participate more fully in the life of the congregations.

To assist lay Christians in evangelism, home visitation, Sunday school teaching, and other facets of church work, training courses will be planned. Retreats will emphasize Anabaptist doctrine and teach participation in the practical work of the church.

Benjamin Tsai is the new chairperson.

Project Teach

"... no hitches"

Several of the twenty resource personnel discuss curriculum materials available for Sunday schools. From left are LaVonda Claassen, Newton, Kansas (kindergarten); Waldemar Janzen, professor at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba (Bible studies); Sharon Sawatzky, Canadian Conference Resource Centre, Winnipeg; Judy Sawatzky, Winkler, Manitoba (art); Ted Janzen and Jack Suderman, coordinators for Project Teach.

The first session of Project Teach for 1978 received glowing comments from participants. Ninety-one persons, seventy-five of whom were from Saskatchewan and Manitoba, attended the teacher-training course March 27-31 in Rosthern, Saskatchewan.

Since the first Project Teach in 1973, 475 Sunday school teachers and superintendents have attended the five-day workshops. The gathering in Rosthern was the seventh time local organizers, together with assistance from the Commission on Education, have produced the educational effort which is to help participants improve Christian education in the congregation.

Previous Project Teach workshops have had weaknesses. But on this, the seventh one, everything meshed—the act was put together—and there were no hitches, reported John Gaeddert, executive secretary of COE.

Ted Janzen, who chaired the local committee, stated, "The resource persons were uniformly good. They had much to offer." He particularly highlighted the input by Carl Krause of Saskatoon which dealt with the development of a person. John Gaeddert observed that the studies of the Bible and Anabaptist history had an integrating effect on the workshop. These studies, led by David Schroeder, Waldemar Janzen, and Walter Klaassen, produced a sense of identity among the participants, he said.

A disappointment to the hosting church was the scant representation of Americans—only three came as students. "There simply were not enough people from the United States," asserted Herta Funk, director of adult education for COE. "Canadians have traveled readily to the six previous training programs, all of which have been in the United States."

For the hosting congregation, the Rosthern Church, there was another bonus besides the learning which occurred. To prepare for the occasion, the congregation decided to do a major upgrading of the Sunday school classrooms. About $3,000 was spent on materials for fourteen rooms. Basement walls were strapped, insulated, and sheetrocked, wall-to-wall bulletin boards were installed, carpet was laid, and interior decorating added.

The eighth Project Teach, and the second for 1978, is scheduled for Bluffton, Ohio, August 21-25.

Juhnke discovers major themes in history of missions

"How might the Mennonite mission movement have been different," asks James Juhnke, "if Mennonites had worked consciously from an Anabaptist viewpoint?"

Juhnke, history professor at Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas, is using his sabbatical year to research and write an interpretive, readable survey of General Conference Mennonite Church mission efforts. More than 600 persons have served in twelve countries since 1877 under General Conference mission programs.

The written records of these ministries are good. "Mennonites were proud of what they did," observed James, "so there is a lot of material. I am surprised at the unflattering things revealed."

Juhnke

His study indicates that the first decades of mission work were characterized by optimism. Mennonites were part of the missionary movement which was going to win the world for Christ. But World War I shattered the image of Christendom.

Mennonites picked up their pattern for missions from other Protestant groups. Hence, the theme of discipleship was less important than salvation. Further, says Juhnke, a triumphant church was emphasized in contrast to a suffering church. He wonders how these emphases would have affected, for example, the Mennonite church in China, if suffering and discipleship had been dominant aspects of the Chinese church. He noted that enthusiasm for Anabaptism is a relatively recent characteristic of Mennonite missions.

Juhnke is looking at 100 years of mission endeavors. Among the marked changes is that of independent national churches being formed in the wake of national independence movements. The emergence of these national churches is a central theme of the book. Previous histories have highlighted missionaries and mission structures. Furthermore, previous histories have focused only on particular mission fields, and have generally been celebrative in nature rather than analytical. Juhnke's book will not overlook achievements, but it is also intended to evaluate overseas missions in the light of changes in strategy.

The primary sources in his research are official files in historical libraries, *The Mennonite* and *Christlicher Bundesbote*, and interviews with missionaries, national leaders, and mission administrators. Perceptions of the latter three groups about events in missions sometimes vary considerably, he observes. Anecdotes have been collected, many of which will be woven into the history.

Juhnke's research and writing are funded by the Commission on Overseas Mission. A 275-page paperback book will be available by March 1979.

Gays dialogue with church leaders

Washington, D.C.—Church of the Brethren and Mennonite gays met January 21 with representatives of the Mennonite Church.

A March news release from the Brethren-Mennonite Council for Gay Concerns states "an atmosphere of openness and caring" was present. One representative of the church expressed two key questions: Is expressing the homosexual orientation a sin? Is the way gays are treated a sin? Participants noted that on the first question the church intellectualizes, quotes Scripture, and in the process drives gays away from the love of Christ. Homophobia is present in the church. People need first to deal with their own sexuality before they can learn about gayness.

Gays said there is a need for listening and understanding between gays and other people. Religion has been a stumbling block in accepting one's gayness. Gays want to stay in the church, but fear rejection by the church. They feel lonely and alienated in the church. Although the church proclaims the loving noncondemnatory words of Christ, it also gives the message that being gay is sinful and that a gay person is to hate herself or himself.

An overview of significant views about homosexuality by leaders in the social sciences was presented. Questions were raised. What is homosexuality? What causes it? If homosexuality comes from conditioning, does the church have the responsibility to engage in behavior modification? If homosexuality is deviant, how does the church respond to anything but perfection? What about obesity, affluence, divorce?

Church representatives cautioned about looking for rapid change.

At work —local initiative

St. Jacobs, Ontario—Seasoned communicators of the Mennonite faith in nonchurch settings met early in March to plan a Mennonite information center for St. Jacobs. The three-day meeting also assessed what has been done to date to tell the Mennonite story to non-Mennonites and to Mennonites.

Designers, filmmakers, composers, tour guides, writers, and persons from the St. Jacobs and Elmira Mennonite congregations were present. Participants were persons involved in the People's Place, Tourmagination, *Festival Quarterly*, and similar ventures. They came to share their expertise with local planners.

A number of principles were agreed upon for The Meetingplace, as the St. Jacobs center will be called. The atmosphere should be warm and friendly. In telling the story one must start where the people are, then answer the questions they may have about Mennonites. The "us versus them" approach ought to be avoided whether it is "Mennonites versus non-Mennonites" or "our kind of Mennonites" versus "those other kind of Mennonites." An approach which emphasizes image-building and public relations was rejected.

Glenn Fretz, Toronto designer, presented a full sequence of plans for each of the major areas in The Meetingplace—a reception area, a screening projection room, a self-guided exhibit, and a lounge area where volunteer staffers could lead discussions and answer questions. The center is expected to be operational by 1979. Vernon Leis (pastor of the Elmira congregation), Glenn Fretz, and Tom Jutzi were appointed to head up the project.

62,000 refugees live in severe straits

Akron, Pennsylvania—Monthly material aid shipments by Mennonite Central Committee to destitute Rhodesian refugees in Mozambique have begun.

After a visit in early March to Doiroi Camp where 23,000 refugees live, Ray Brubacher, MCC secretary for Africa, reported that the food warehouse was virtually empty, that the camp is sometimes without food for three successive days, and that there were essentially no school supplies or soap.

Currently 42,000 Zimbabwean (Rhodesian) refugees are living in four camps with another 20,000 in transit camps. Most of the refugees are young, between ages fifteen and twenty-five. They live in dormitories which were surprisingly clean, reports Brubacher, considering there is no soap in the camp.

Shipments totaling twenty to thirty tons of food, clothing, medicine, and soap will be shipped monthly through November. About $50,000 will be needed to finance freight costs and to purchase local supplies. The shipments will be addressed to Isac Mahlalela, general secretary of the Christian Council of Mozambique.

MCC relationships with Protestant church groups in Mozambique have developed slowly. During 1974-75 Mozambique moved from Portuguese rule to independence. Prior to independence, the Roman Catholic hierarchy was identified with the Portuguese colonial government. Protestant groups maintained a low profile. The new government, socialist-Marxist in philosophy, nationalized church-operated hospitals and schools.

Uncertain as to its status with the new government, the Christian Council did not encourage foreign assistance. However, since 1975 attitudes have changed. The country's constitution guarantees religious freedom, and the growing churches are more confident about their role in reconstructing the young nation.

MCC delegation to visit Vietnam

Akron, Pennsylvania—The fourth Mennonite Central Committee delegation to Vietnam since 1975 will arrive in Hanoi May 13.

Renewing contact with church leaders and visiting the sites of completed and proposed projects are the main purposes of the ten-day visit.

Since Vietnam is suffering from a serious food shortage, projects to increase food production receive emphasis. During 1977, cement and transformers were provided for an irrigation system near Danang. A reservoir and thirty miles of canals were dug by hand for this system. Equipment for an agriculture research and service center in Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon, is the proposed project for this year. Checking on these projects provides a viable reason for visiting the country. It is thought that MCC delegations would not be allowed to visit Vietnam if there were no projects. In this way personal contact with the church in Vietnam is maintained.

The delegation includes five persons: Vern Preheim, MCC secretary for Asia; Albert DeFehr, treasurer of MCC (Canada); Betsy Beyler, MCC Peace Section Washington Office; Takeji Nomura, secretary of the Japanese Mennonite Christian Church Conference; and James Stauffer, Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions secretary who is now in the Philippines. Stauffer spent about twelve years in Vietnam and speaks fluent Vietnamese.

Previous delegations have been permitted to attend worship services and talk with church leaders. A similar request has been made for this delegation. Further, the delegation will request the Vietnamese Government to allow MCC workers into the country. Since volunteer Yoshihiro Ichikawa left 1½ years ago, no MCC workers have been living in Vietnam. For this reason only material aid items for particular projects have been sent.

Words & deeds

Inaugural ceremonies for Elmer Neufeld, president of Bluffton (Ohio) College, were conducted April 21. He became Bluffton's seventh president on January 1, after serving as academic dean since 1974. The inaugural address was presented by Harold Schultz, president of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas. Bluffton's 1978 commencement exercises will be Sunday, May 28. J. Lawrence Burkholder, president of Goshen (Indiana) College, will present the address. One-hundred and twenty-five students will be candidates for graduation. The speaker at the baccalaureate service that morning will be Howard Raid, professor of economics and business at Bluffton.

The urban church will be the focus of a consultation in Chicago May 5-6. Almost thirty workshop and plenary sessions are planned, featuring nationally known spiritual leaders and urban specialists. William Pannell, professor of urban ministry at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, is the keynote speaker. The consultation is being sponsored jointly by the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, and the four other seminaries in SCUPE (Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education). Early registration is advised. For further information contact SCUPE, 737 North LaSalle Street, Chicago, Illinois 60610, or telephone (312) 944-2153.

A three-day twentieth anniversary celebration of the Spanish department of Grace Mennonite Church in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, is scheduled for June 23-25. The first Spanish pastor, Guillermo Chegwin, Edgewater, Florida, will be the speaker. Although many of the Spanish worshipers are members of Grace Chruch, they prefer the Spanish language in their worship services. Josue Abreu has served as pastor for the last seven years, but has resigned and will leave when a new pastor is called.

Waterloo, Ontario—Churches cooperating in the MCC Benefit Shop had their first annual reporting session in March. During the first nine months, $16,600 was forwarded to MCC. Helen and Peter Rempel, who initially managed the store, completed two years of MCC service at the end of December 1977. The new managers are Mr. and Mrs. Gabe Hofstra.

Eureka, Illinois—The forty-six-bed Eureka Hospital has been sold to the Mennonite Hospital Association. Mary Parker, owner and administrator of the Eureka facility, was specifically interested in selling the hospital's assets to the association because of its large representation in the local area, and because its ownership of the Mennonite Hospital in Bloomington would extend additional services to the Eureka area. The Mennonite Hospital Association is comprised of fifty churches, six of which are located within ten miles of Eureka Hospital.

Mennonite Mutual Aid, Goshen, Indiana, intends to have a simpler health plan drawn up by January 1, 1979. Complicated claims procedures were listed as a major reason for a simplified plan.

Berne, Indiana—First Mennonite Church honored Naomi Lehman on Easter Sunday (March 26) for the twenty-one years she has prepared the weekly half-hour radio program "Songs of Praise." Initially the program, now aired over three stations, consisted of music and a message, but in recent years it has highlighted music interspersed with inspirational comments. Mary Beth Huser is the new director. Naomi Lehman is the outgoing president of Women in Mission.

Record

Ministers

Henry Braun will become the pastor of Glendale Church, Linden, Washington, beginning July 1. Henry and Sally Braun served with the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission in Zaire, 1970-72. Since 1975, Henry has been studying at Associated Mennonite Seminaries in Elkhart, Indiana.

Braun

Mast Burnett

Workers

Kristina Mast Burnett has been appointed director of Mennonite Central Committee's Information Services beginning in June, replacing Sarah Ann Eby. Mast Burnett is currently an MCC volunteer with United Indian Planners Association, where she serves as publications editor with *uipa news,* the organization's monthly journal.

Diane Sanders, physical education instructor at Buhler (Kansas) High School, will join the Bethel College faculty next year as instructor in the health, physical education, and recreation department and women's volleyball coach. Sanders replaces *Barbara Graber,* instructor at Bethel College since 1973, who has resigned. A native of Salina, Kansas, Sanders is a graduate of Fort Hays (Kansas) University, and earned an MS degree in 1974 from Kansas State University.

John Sommer, overseas personnel secretary for the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission, will be at the Overseas Mission Study Center in Ventnor, New Jersey, April 12-June 5. In addition to several courses of study, he will continue research on the dynamics of recruiting and training missionaries. He will be accompanied by his wife, Sharon, and their two children.

Calendar

June 5-9—Mennonite Voluntary Service orientation, Camp Colorado, Colorado

June 15-18—Northern District Conference annual sessions, Dawson County High School, Glendive, Montana

June 15-18—Pacific District Conference annual sessions, Mount Elden Southwest Conference Center, Flagstaff, Arizona

Canadian

August 15-20—Mennonite Graduate Seminar, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario; topic, "Prophetic Vision Applied to One's Academic Discipline;" coordinators, Robert Charles, John Rempel

Secretarial openings

Two immediate secretarial openings are available in the Commission on Overseas Mission department, General Conference Mennonite Central Offices, Newton. Inquiries and applications should be made to Personnel Office, Box 347, Newton, Kansas. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

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Letters

Is it really a position?

Dear Editor: In the article "A Position on Abortion" (February 28 issue) the writer attempts, I assume quite seriously, to focus the real issue (in spite of the ambiguity which is constantly referred to).

I commend such an attempt, yet find it somewhat disconcerting to speak, read, and hear ambiguous terms being used to help *define* an ambiguous situation: "there may be reasons to abort. . . where the *sanctity* of some *other* person is at stake." Just prior to this statement, an attempt is made to assure us that this fetus is merely a "*potential* human person. . . (with) a sanctity and holiness about its being. . ." (italics mine).

I recognize the difficulty of being "precise," and while I cannot become vehemently opposed to the article, I personally felt disappointed in that the "position" promised in the title did not become clear in my mind.

I feel that it would be more helpful if there were actual "positions" shared together with reasons why the particular position is held. Perhaps pro and con positions would be more helpful to those of us who are not close to the issue. I believe that most of the serious contemplations on this (these) issue(s) have revealed the ambiguity. I affirm the writer's concern that "the church should affirm the value of the person. . . ." How true! *Clare Neufeld, Box 33, Mather, Manitoba R0K 1L0*

March 17

Abortion requires attention

Dear Editor: I appreciated Duane Friesen's article "A Position on Abortion" (February 28 issue) and the thoughts on "Hard Choices: Abortion and War" by Ted Koontz. This is a complicated issue, but one that we as God's people cannot evade. The fact that it is so widely accepted and practiced in our society seems to me an indication of a serious lack of respect for the sanctity of life and our responsibility as stewards of it.

I rejoiced to know that the General Conference was spending a whole week last year with "Family in Focus," but was disappointed to learn that their only recommendation was that we study the issue. The issue begins in attitudes and relationships before abortion becomes a problem. Surely there is no better place to begin than in the family and in the church. I agree that the church should give moral guidance.

In your February 14 issue you reprinted a news item entitled "Give Arms, Abortion Equal Attention," in which a Catholic sociologist was calling his church to give as much honest effort in the cause of peace as to the support of right to life. Are there, perhaps, some issues for which we also need to give as much earnest effort as we do to the cause of war and peace? Abortion is an issue that does not require speaking out to the federal government but one that touches us right where we live. I am glad that you have given us these articles to stimulate our thinking and action. *Frieda Guengerich, 6650 West Butler Drive, Apartment 6, Glendale, Arizona 85302*

March 20

Thanks for abortion article

Dear Editor: Thank you for the article on abortion by Ted Koontz. I feel that this article reflects depth, scholarship, and a realistic approach. I would hope that articles of this quality will continue to appear in *The Mennonite*. This article deserves to be reprinted.

Sometime soon I would like to see an article on a Bible study of whether the Scriptures consider the unborn baby as a human being or only a potential human being. Is the unborn baby a somebody or a nobody? I have not made a study of this but it would be interesting. The study might begin with Exodus 21:22; Luke 1:41, and Genesis 25:21-23. Also it might help us to clarify our thinking to study what it is that makes us say, "This is human life and this is not human life." *Paul F. Goossen, Route 2, Wayland, Iowa 52654*

March 16

Decide with awareness

Dear Editor: Thank you for the informative report on the discussion of the war tax and civil disobedience issues by the General Conference leaders. I hope that all of the Mennonite conferences will very soon be addressing these questions.

Our church leaders might decide that 1978 is not the time and the United States is not the place for civil disobedience in the form of war tax resistance to the nuclear arms race crisis. It is possible. But if they do, I would like to be able to have the confidence that they made their decision in full awareness and with truly informed knowledge of the dimensions of the nuclear abyss into which we are staring. At this point I do not find it possible to have that confidence.

Why? Simply because so far at least it is not clear that those who counsel us against civil disobedience have done their homework on the statistical, political, and military probability of a catastrophic nuclear holocaust.

In all good faith it must be said that their cautions against civil disobedience appear to come from the best of intentions. But I remember a saying about good intentions. . . In any case, it is not obvious that their information is as good as their intentions. They are not quoting the scientists who have studied the matter and are alarmed. They are not carrying the books which report the prodigious but discouraging efforts of arms limitation negotiators. They are not reading the trade magazines of the untiring manufacturers of weapons systems. In short, they are not showing us that they are aware of the danger about which they tell us not to be so concerned.

We and our children deserve better than this. The church deserves better than this. And I think God expects more than this.

I do not wish to imply that tax resistance or some other form of civil disobedience is the only kind of response which faithful Christians should be making to the unprecedented evil of the nuclear arms race. (It is my judgment that the situation confronts us with more than adequate grounds for civil disobedience.) However, I do wish to imply that those who counsel against tax refusal and civil disobedience would be much more convincing if they were leading out in other visible kinds of response to the nuclear crisis. *John K. Stoner, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501*

March 13

Forgiveness or forgiven?

Dear Editor: Reading *The Mennonite* these last few months has made me wonder whether we have inherited a new doctrine of forgiveness. God has not taken a leave of absence, nor is he on a vacation. We are so proud to forgive, which is good and biblical, but it frightens me when we are ready to forgive before the sin is even committed. That is not according to God's principles. In doing so, we are actually opening the door and inviting sin to come into our own lives and also into the lives of others and the church.

It seems to me that there are a number of evidences that the church will need to return to its former position and practice church discipline, or face a disaster sometime in the future. In order to do this, we will need to become clear in our teaching and preaching. This dilemma of confusion may be the result of our weakness in this area of ministry. If that is the case, we ministers should be willing to take the blame.

Certainly we do believe in a God who is love and who forgives. But a sin can only be forgiven after the sinner is willing to repent of sin and will separate from it.

If we want to understand God and how he deals with sin, we must study the Scriptures, and especially the Old Testament. That is where we find God in action. It is there that we learn his principles. Even in the Old Testament, God would not deviate from them.

Here is an illustration. When the people of Israel, that is the Northern Kingdom, were carried away by the Assyrians about 722 BC, that was the end of the ten tribes. Apparently the Jews knew that they would not be united again before the latter days. In Deuteronomy 29:28 we read: "And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day."

During the great tribulation these ten tribes will reappear, according to Revelation. But two of the tribes, Dan and Ephraim, are being ignored. Levi and Joseph are taking their place, as they are being sealed for a special ministry. The reason for this seems to be because they were the first two of the tribes that led the people into idolatry. Through the ministry of the twelve sealed tribes, Dan and Ephraim will be led to repentance and then they will receive forgiveness, because we find them all united in the latter part of the Book of Revelation.

Forgiveness is for everybody, the same as salvation. Not all receive forgiveness, because some do not repent.

Another example is Peter and James in the New Testament. Why was Jesus so desperate to meet them on the resurrection morning? Private discussions were needed to resolve some of the problems that were evident, for a personal relationship with the Lord, but also for their future ministry's sake. Sometimes people are quick to agree with human ideas without questioning the Scripture.

Years ago a church was going to discipline a member that was living in sin. In the discussion of this case, an older brother rose to his feet in defense of the erring brother and said: "If you are without sin, you may cast the first stone. . . These are words of Jesus and should be considered in a case like this." Unfortunately, this brother had never learned that there is a difference between a brother in the church and a sinner outside of the church. Jesus in a number of cases was dealing redemptively with sinners. The church, too, must deal redemptively, but at the same time according to biblical principles, as Brother Lohrenz has pointed out (letter in March 14 issue).

Forgiveness is available for all. Forgiven are those that ask to be forgiven and make a clear break with sin. That means that we do not go on in sin after our relationship with God is renewed. *Peter J. Froese, Winkler, Manitoba R0G 2X0*

March 21

Greatest act of creation

Dear Editor: The letter by Norman J. Schmidt (March 21 issue) entitled "Who Made the Soup?" influenced me to read the three articles by Perry Yoder in the January 3, 10, and 17 issues once more. As a result I wish to share the following reactions.

First, I am happy that there are people who know and understand the Hebrew language better than I do. Consequently, I feel that their definitions of Hebrew nouns or verbs might be more accurate than any definition I might wish to impose upon them to substantiate any "preferred" interpretation I might hold or wish to have perpetuated.

Secondly, I tend to agree with Perry Yoder that the greatest act of creation occurs when the Holy Spirit gathers up the broken pieces of a human life and puts them back together according to 2 Corinthians 5:17 which says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." *Louis A. Janzen, Box 501, North Newton, Kansas 67117*

March 23

Questions January 17 issue

Dear Editor: In the January 17 issue appeared an article by Dorothy Friesen and Gene Stoltzfus, Mennonite Central Committee workers.

It began: "Manila—Billy Graham," a little farther Cesar Chavez, and opposite this a picture of a student street riot. It went on to criticize the heads of state and some church people, including Billy Graham. It is difficult to correlate this in one report. My first question is whether MCC workers should become involved in foreign domestic strife. The MCC trademark known around the world is: "In the Name of Christ."

Rather than ignoring Billy Graham's crusade, it could have been a documented report of how God worked those five days, November 23-27, 1977, in Manila.

A state dinner to welcome Billy and Ruth Graham was given by President Ferdinand E. Marcos, Madam Imelda Romualdez Marcos, the First Lady of the Philippines and governor of Metropolitan Manila. The latter said in her address at the convention center: "We can never, never have enough divine leadership and its spiritual fullness. It is only those who are Christ-informed and Christ-conscious who are strong."

There were 5,000 voices in the crusade choir, with hundreds coming into Rizel Park to sit in front of the Quirine Grandstand to hear Billy Graham's messages. During the five days of the crusade, a total of 412,000 people attended, with 150,000 at the closing meeting. Recorded by the end of the meetings were 22,512 who made commitments to Christ. To capture the impact of the Holy Spirit on the people is impossible so soon.

Compare this MCC report to the four MCC workers, one Japanese and three Americans, who stayed in Vietnam after the war. It took courage for these men to lose contact with their homeland, to face the uncertain future. The Lord blessed and selected them as liaisons between the Vietcong and MCC, creating a very important link between two former enemies, the Vietcong and the United States. Those commissioned by MCC are an arm of the Mennonite church and should keep this vow inviolate.

The other comment regards the letter to the editor in the same issue of *The Mennonite*, over the signature of Loel E. Graber, of Wayne, Michigan. Your experience is not unusual after only a short time. I wish that you had not written this letter. Menno Simons has been tested for centuries. The Lord has richly blessed; Mennonites are known around the world. Our MCC, which includes voluntary service and Mennonite Disaster Service, is known to the far corners of the world. Along the way there have been many martyrs to bring us to where we are. There is no claim that Mennonites are faultless; they are human the same as other denominations, none are perfect.

With your zeal, the Mennonite church will continue to grow and win souls for Christ. *Lawrence A. Bartel, Mennonite Home, Frederick, Pennsylvania 19435*

March 23

Three-church voluntary service unit

Karen J. Miller

"The voluntary service program in Champaign, Illinois, had its best year ever in 1977," according to Jim Dunn, pastor of the First Mennonite Church.

For several years three local churches—First Mennonite in Champaign, East Bend in Fisher, and Dewey—have been working to determine how voluntary service fits into their missions. "Relationships between the voluntary service unit and the congregations are now at an all-time high," reports Dunn.

Voluntary service workers contribute to the life of all three congregations. Most of Champaign's eleven unit members regularly attend services at First Church, although several float among all three congregations and all attend occasional services at each church. A newsletter, times of reporting, and occasional services planned by these volunteers keep members up-to-date on unit happenings.

A committee, made up of members from each of the three churches, gives direction to the mission of the unit. In addition to supporting the unit, by working with the Mennonite Board of Missions to determine what outreach activities should be undertaken by the workers, the three congregations have helped meet the many spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of the group.

Extended families have become homes for each volunteer. Shared meals and other activities help form meaningful relationships throughout the year. The sharing goes both ways. On a very cold Sunday afternoon before Christmas, wrote Ruth Steiner, all eleven adults and four children piled into the van and Christmas caroled at the home of each extended family. "The ice inside the van never melted and we wondered if our toes would ever thaw, but joy and excitement kept us warm inside," said Ruth.

"There have been so many expressions of love from our supporting churches," writes Ruth. For example, the unit was the grateful recipient of the groceries Dewey church members brought in for their Thanksgiving harvest festival. "Boxes of groceries were piled all over the livingroom rug one night when we got home from work," Ruth said. Unit business that night was sorting through the boxes and stocking the shelves of a makeshift pantry needed to hold the foodstuffs.

Dewey Women's Missionary and Service Commission also provided new drapes for unit bedrooms. Several unit members joined Dewey women for a night of measuring, cutting, pinning, pressing, and sewing. "As we began to see some of the finished product, excitement mounted," shared Ruth. "Everyone stayed later than they planned to get the job done. We had the drapes hanging in the rooms by midnight that night. What a face-lift!"

East Bend primary Sunday school donated $300 for house repairs. Members of each congregation provided produce for canning and freezing during the summer months, and many smaller items needed for the unit. Other gifts—a mechanic's know-how, baby-sitting the four Steiner children to give parents a weekend off, making retreats possible, meals and fellowship in members' homes, prayers, and support—all add up to an impressive list of God's blessings.

Voluntary service workers in Champaign extend the outreach of their supporting congregations' day-care and youth center work, homemaker services, secretarial services, and home repair.

Vietnamese flower vase made out of a 165 mm artillery shell.

Shells by the shore

James Klassen

Vietnam
courts the sea
for thousands of miles
But, no, these shiny shells
were not gifts from the sea
because they were military brass
casings once leaded now beheaded
having breathed their final roars.

Vietnamese
found the shells
for thousands of miles
And turned the empty shells
into shapely vases you see
since they love fragrant flowers
more than any awful ugly wars
and plowshares more than swords.

Meditation

Children of broken churches

Everyone worries about the children who are the real victims of a broken home. But sometimes children are also victims of a broken church.

By the time I was fourteen our church had split three times, the third time with such great and far-reaching consequences that even today—eighteen years later—we still reap the sad results.

The age of thirteen is crucial in the spiritual life of a child. Until that age, young people tend to accept at face value what they are told. But then they begin to question, and even in the best of situations faith may waver. When I reached this period, conditions in our church were far from good.

All of us kids were especially close to our pastor. He encouraged us in our faith and always found opportunities for us to be of service. He was usually happy and energetic. He did whatever needed doing at the time. He was a self-taught pianist, who could play for us when necessary. He could substitute for any absent Sunday school teacher, and sometimes on Saturday afternoon he would mow the church lawn. So dynamic were his sermons that it was necessary to hold two services on Sunday morning to accommodate the large attendance.

But suddenly we began to hear whispers. Not everyone was as happy as we young people were. Members no longer seemed as friendly. A gigantic snowball named "Rumor" had started and no one seemed able to stop it. The gossips were having a heyday. Suddenly there was a stampede to "get rid of that man!"

"What has he done?" we asked, bewildered that the pedestal had been pushed from beneath him and had shattered into pieces that could never be repaired.

There didn't seem to be any answers to our questions as "sides" began forming. We were flung into a business meeting ("We need your votes."), the memory of which has been indelibly stamped on my mind.

Those who had taught us, and had meant so much to our lives, stood up to spew out their anger as we sat stunned, watching the familiar faces contorted with emotion.

Others whom we had always admired for their leadership and spiritual maturity snarled at one another in loud, hate-filled voices. They could no longer perform their duties as leaders, so great was their hatred.

Some girls were crying and the boys were trying hard not to. We sensed that we were about to lose a pastor whom we loved and who loved us. All that we had been taught was being smashed before us. It took many years before we were to find our way again.

Shortly after that, some of the people left with the pastor to form a new church. Those of us who remained wanted to go, too.

"Follow God—not the preacher," one of the adults counseled our class in an effort to stall further transferring of memberships.

God—where was he? "Certainly not here," we whispered among ourselves. Each of us was remembering how this "devout servant of the Lord," who was giving us this advice, had stood two pews in front of us, shaking his fist and shouting, "Get him (the pastor) out, or so help me, I'll burn the building down myself!"

It seemed to us that God—if he had ever been there at all—had fled.

Gradually, one by one, young people dropped out, and four years later as we approached high school graduation and prepared to go our separate ways, only four remained out of our original group of twenty.

We have never again had the same interest and love for our church and its members that we had prior to the split in our fellowship. Only in the last few years have I been able to reconcile my feelings, walk into church, and sincerely greet those who were involved in the disturbing events. Even though in my mind's eye I still see how they acted that awful night so many years ago, I am at peace now.

Eighteen years is a long time, yet there is not one of us who does not carry some scars from that awful period. Somehow I believe that God uses all things for good, whether or not we can see it ourselves. I rejoice that he has brought healing. And I pray for others who are children of broken churches. *Elizabeth Silance Ballard*

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CONTRIBUTORS

V. Johnson, Chicago, reflects on an African worship service experienced while he was teaching in Zaire. The article and photos were reprinted by permission of *The Covenant Companion*, © 1978.

Malcolm Wenger, 212-40 Eveline Street, Selkirk, Manitoba R1A 2K4, is a Native Ministries worker for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Karen J. Miller, Box 370, Elkhart, Indiana 46515, is a writer for Mennonite Board of Missions.

James Klassen, Route 2, Box 102A, Newton, Kansas 67114, served in Vietnam during and after the war.

Elizabeth Silance Ballard, 1014 Schall Place, Jacksonville, North Carolina 28540, is a free-lance writer.

Howard J. Habegger, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114, is executive secretary for the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Silas Manasses Grubb (deceased) served as editor of *The Mennonite* from 1916 to 1936.

CREDITS

Cover, Harold M. Lambert, 2801 West Cheltenham Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19150; 274, 275, *The Covenant Companion;* 275, Larry Kehler, GCNS; 276, Jack L. Mace, 504-B Molly Mall, Hutchinson, Kansas 67501; 278, RNS; 280, Frank Letkemann, Rosthern, Saskatchewan; 286, James Klassen.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman

We can regain the momentum

Howard J. Habegger

Recently during a championship basketball game, the sportscaster predicted that the underdog team would win the game because they had the momentum. His prediction was correct. The difference was momentum.

As a former basketball player and lifelong sports enthusiast, I understand momentum. Momentum is positive action in one direction. It is forward movement. Momentum is often created by team spirit and a common goal. The unpredictable happens when one team suddenly "catches fire" and regains the momentum.

Through the turbulent sixties it appeared that the church had lost its momentum and its equilibrium. Critics from within and without accused the church for being irrelevant and outdated. For most involved in the life of the church, the seventies ushered in a new spirit and sense of hope.

This new spirit and hope was felt at the Fresno Conference in 1971. Mennonite institutions began to think and plan with enthusiasm. Commissions picked up on the positive attitudes and geared up with programs of action that received strong support. The momentum continued through the 1974 St. Catharines Conference. New goals to expand outreach overseas were strongly affirmed. Development of The Foundation Series was in full swing. A call for renewed efforts in evangelism received responsive affirmation throughout that conference.

From 1972 through 1975, giving to all causes increased dramatically and budgets were met and exceeded. The General Conference had caught fire. There was a general feeling of optimism. More new programs and projects were inaugurated. We had momentum.

Even though giving fell off slightly in 1976, people went away from the 1977 Bluffton Conference believing the church was moving forward with faith and vision. When the conference chairman posed the question about the possibility of cutting back commission programs, there was a resounding no! In the almost euphoric atmosphere of joyous singing, spontaneous clapping, and Mennonite togetherness, who would have predicted the abrupt change in mood from the summer of '77 in Bluffton to the winter of '78 in Newton?

The atmosphere at the Council of Commissions this year was sober. While there were attempts to downplay the financial realities facing the commissions and the seminary, no amount of rhetoric could change the fact that for the second straight year budget commitments were not met. Serious questions were asked by commission and board members—few were answered.

Has the General Conference lost faith in its leaders, in its program, in its goals? What are the real reasons for the shortage of money? Depressed farm prices, inflation, the supposedly large reserve balances held by commissions? Do our people really know that giving has been on the decline? Was the fact that money was needed communicated clearly? No one seemed to have a satisfactory answer.

Could part of the answer be that we lost the momentum?

Can the momentum of faith, vision, and goals we had in the first five years of this decade be regained? I believe it can. A fresh wind of the Spirit, bringing personal and corporate renewal in our lives, will help us regain the momentum. A new sense of the lordship of Christ, governing our rich spiritual and abundant material resources, will enable us to regain the momentum. A clear understanding of our common calling as God's people, to be active disciples in today's world, can assist us to regain the momentum.

The game is not over. There are eight months left this year to regain the momentum as God's people, as his church, and as a conference. Let's catch fire and regain the momentum.

Would he believe today?

"It has been estimated lately that for every twelve marriages in the United States there is one divorce. Such figures are alarming and decent people are beginning to wonder how long this state of affairs will continue. Are the morals of America gone to the dogs, and does the marriage vow mean nothing but a mere form?" *from an S. M. Grubb editorial,* The Mennonite, *December 10, 1908*

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:18 MAY 2, 1978

Christian farmers today

Velda Glick

Mennonites have a farming heritage. Through long periods of our history it was assumed that sons would follow fathers into farming. It was considered an honorable vocation compatible with Christian virtues and values.

Increased educational and vocational opportunities of the twentieth century called many to nonfarm pursuits. However, interest is again shifting to rural values and life-styles. There is renewed respect for the production of life-sustaining bread.

The once simple and elemental cooperation with nature has now become an increasingly complex business enterprise. Farmers are grappling with serious issues, and the church is recognizing the need to share with farmers as they search for answers to these issues. Assuming that our Christian/Mennonite faith has something to say about our approach to farming issues, what are some of the challenges farmers are presently facing and what direction does our faith give in dealing with them?

The Inter-Mennonite Farm Issues Task Force, meeting recently at Freeman College, attempted to pull together the important issues. This is their list:

1. *Land use*—(a) preservation of prime agricultural land; (b) preservation of soil fertility; (c) conservation; (d) other uses of

Opponents of chemical fertilizers point to the perfection of God's creation. "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good" Genesis 1:31.

land (selection); (e) choice of crops

2. *Synthetic chemicals*
3. *Labor*—economics of, meaning of, employment of
4. *Economics*—efficiency, bigness
5. *Ownership possibilities*—(a) trusts; (b) corporations; (c) state or government; (d) family farm
6. *Hunger*—distribution, politics, production, grain reserve, government policies
7. *Life-style*

Land Use. One aspect of land use concerns the preservation of prime agricultural land for farming purposes. Not all may agree that this is an issue in our present state of surpluses. However, land, being our most fundamental natural resource, is nonrenewable. Farmland lost to urban sprawl, commercial development, and highways, cannot be reclaimed. Concerned farmers can support legislation to preserve prime farmland, and those with land to sell may want to commit themselves to innovative plans or financial sacrifice in order to maintain the land for agricultural production.

The quality of soil is also an issue of land use. The question of whether or not to use chemical fertilizers or pesticides is highly controversial. Mention the issue to a group of farmers, and a spirited debate will begin. Those who oppose the use of chemicals point to the perfection of God's creation, especially as stated in Genesis 1:31, "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good." In other words, God placed the necessary nutrients and minerals into the soil, and, if properly cared for, they will continue to nourish crops.

The proponents can point to Genesis 3:17, where as a result of the Fall God cursed the soil, promising struggle and toil, thorns and thistles. Why not help the less than perfect soil with some chemical applications?

Economics. The basic economic issue for many farmers today is how to make ends meet. For several months now the American Agriculture Organization has attempted to organize farmers into strike and protest actions to dramatize their economic difficulties. Gary Franz, in a recent paper entitled "The Agriculture Strike and the Christian Farmer," urges Christian farmers to find a positive and creative approach. He asks for research into alternative uses for our grains.

Ownership. An issue under ownership is the difficulty young persons have in starting farming. In fact it is nearly impossible unless parents or some other interested individuals stand behind them. Inflated land prices and costs of machinery and operation lead to staggering debts which discourage many prospective farmers. Careful planning, preferably with someone sympathetic to Christian objectives of stewardship, can help in an equitable and beneficial transfer of a farm from one generation or owner to the next.

Hunger. Is there hunger amid our surplus? Jon Jantzen, in a recent Mennonite Central Committee release, says, "Yes, there is hunger." Some of the causes are the inability of the poor to pay, political problems between countries, and the fact that the type of grain available may be inappropriate to the need.

The Lord taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." It would seem to be his will that we all have food to eat. Christian farmers are sensitive to the needs of the hungry and want to help feed them. MCC believes that primary efforts must be devoted to long-term rural community development in order for other countries to help feed themselves. We also need to commit ourselves to simpler living, reduced consumption of limited resources, and political action on behalf of the world's hungry.

Proponents of chemicals point to Genesis 3:17, where as a result of the Fall God cursed the soil, promising struggle and toil, thorns and thistles. Why not help the less than perfect soil with some chemical applications?

Energy crisis. Nearly every farm operation is dependent on energy supplied from a fossil fuel source. I do not believe that farmers are wasters of energy, but because they are so dependent on it they need to consider the issue of energy use on their farms, and work to promote alternate sources of energy. Then, if the day comes when fossil fuel is no longer available, there will be another energy source ready to ensure the continuous production of essential foodstuffs. Solar and windpower energy are already in limited use. Continued research should be encouraged in alcohol fuels made from field crops and biogas, a methane made from farm manures.

As part of the energy crisis, the farmer faces the issue of whether or not to use a petroleum-based fertilizer, and how to limit field tillage in order to conserve energy and still produce good crops.

Faith. How does our faith help us in dealing with these issues? We believe that God is the Creator as seen in Genesis 1, and that "The earth is the Lord's" Psalm 24:1. We believe that God's creation and concern extend not only to people but to all that he has made. Alvin Beachy has stated, "The human species does not appear on the scene until an environment that can sustain human life has been created. And when God at last creates the human race as male and female, humanity is not given a special day of creation, even though made in God's image, but shares the day with the animals who lack the divine. The animals and the human race share the table that has been prepared for both."

We can see God's concern for the earth as well as for the people he created to care for it. He still owns the land, the air, the sea, the water. Christian farmers have an opportunity as well as responsibility to sustain and care for this creation. While living in harmony with creation, they want to provide for their families and produce essential foodstuffs to feed their neighbors. This is not an easy task; but with the support, sharing, and concern of the larger Christian community, it can be accomplished.

CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

Salem Church today is still a landmark at the same rural location where the congregation was established seventy years ago. The tower, when lit up, is visible at night for many miles.

Salem Church as it was for over fifty years

SALEM MENNONITE CHURCH

When the Mennonites came from Russia in the 1870s and settled in the East Freeman area (Freeman, South Dakota), one of their first tasks was to establish a church. As the community expanded, some of the members felt the distance was too great for them to drive by horse and buggy, so a second church was built 2½ miles to the south. Today the sister congregations continue, widely known as the North Church (Salem-Zion congregation) and the South Church (Salem congregation). It is the Salem congregation at which we shall take a closer look.

The new congregation was organized late in 1907, and a new house of worship was begun October 1 on the hilltop overlooking the Turkey Creek valley to the south. Visible for miles, the church spire was to become a well-known landmark throughout the community. The first service was held on January 12, 1908, with pioneer minister Christian Mueller officiating. Mueller agreed to act as minister until a permanent one could be obtained. A call was extended to Christian Hege, then teaching at Henderson, Nebraska. Hege assumed leadership of the congregation on October 1, 1911, serving for the sum of $1,000 a year, the first salaried minister. Through the seventy years since the Salem Church was established, ten pastors and their families have given faithful guidance to members, with Roland Goering being the present pastor for the congregation of 544 members.

The congregation has twice outgrown its facilities. The original building was enlarged and remodeled in 1917, and in 1966 the congregation moved into a new building, on the same grounds but at a different location. Since 1917 when a parsonage was built, the ministers have lived adjacent to the church.

The church is in this needy world to serve, and Salem congregation has put a prime emphasis on serving in its teaching and outlook, not only for the many who have gone out to serve as missionaries, ministers, and Christian teachers, but also for the whole congregation.

Through the years members have generously given of their money, of their time, and of themselves in many avenues in the community and outside of it.

One ongoing avenue of outreach is through the M-2 (man-to-man) program. This ministry to the offenders at the state penitentiary has brought the knowledge that someone cares to men serving their debt to society. A number of men have faithfully visited the prisoners in an effort to help in rehabilitation.

Women have been visiting one of the wards at the Yankton Human Services Center—the state's institution for those with mental problems—on a monthly basis for approximately twelve years. The ministry of love means much to the women of the ward, who eagerly look forward to their regular "party" the second Tuesday of each month, and especially to the annual trip to be guests at the homes or church of these friends. They particularly enjoy the chance to visit on a one-to-one basis with outside friends; it is a helpful contact with a world from which they are largely isolated.

Since the establishment of the various conference service avenues, many young people and adults have taken active part in voluntary service, Mennonite Disaster Service, Teachers Abroad Program, agricultural service, and other areas.

"They that wait upon the Lord will renew their strength" was a Scripture passage lettered at the front of the sanctuary until the present house of worship was built. Though no longer a visible inspiration, it continues to be an expression of the spiritual attitude and faith of the members of Salem congregation. *Elma Waltner*

David E. Ortman

Family farms and values

Mennonites are known to be excellent family farmers. Our faith resources could help us to be prophetic for nations.

In order to talk about agriculture you need to talk about economics. In order to talk about economics you need to talk about politics. In order to talk about politics you need to talk about values. Let's consider values.

From 1940 to 1964 the number of farms in the United States was halved from six million to three million. Since that time the loss of small family farms has been coupled with the loss of up to a million acres of prime agricultural land per year. Such figures tell only part of the story. Since World War II an estimated 1,000 American farm families each month have abandoned their farms because of their inability to make a living. What about the total "social cost" of displaced farmers joining the ranks of the urban unemployed? What about the nutritional value of foods designed to be mechanically harvested instead of eaten? What about the cost-energy consumption of capital-intensive farming? What about the resultant low farm commodity prices?

In a paper presented at a Future of Rural Pennsylvania conference last year, Kevin Goss of Pennsylvania State University wrote: "The societal goals and values which affect small farmers have their roots in Jeffersonian ideals expressed during the early history of the United States. These ideals included freedom, independence, self-reliance, ability to resist oppressors, the right to own land, and the right to employment and income."

Such a land ethic has had far more appeal for American and Canadian Mennonite farmers than Leviticus 25:23, "The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with me."

The family farmer plays an integral role within the community. In 1946 the US Department of Agriculture sent Walter Goldschmidt, now a renowned anthropologist, to study two small California towns, Arvin and Dinuba. Chosen because of their similar size, location from urban centers, and agricultural production, their major difference was that Arvin was surrounded by large corporate farms while Dinuba was in the midst of smaller family-operated farms.

The results of this comparison were striking. For instance, the small-farm community supported sixty-two business establishments compared to thirty-five in the large-farm community. Schools were far more numerous and offered broader services in the small-farm community. There were twice as many churches in the small-farm community.

A 1977 update of the 1946 study of these two communities carried out by the California Department of Housing and Community Development showed that Goldschmidt's basic thesis was substantiated. The small-farm town of Dinuba still generates a more diversified and richer community life than the large-farm town of Arvin.

Back to politics. Government policies in both the United States and Canada play an important part in the future of family farms. According to a report on the family farm in California, marketing is at present the single most limiting constraint on the operation of small farms. Many farmers could grow certain crops but they do not, simply because markets for small producers are particularly limited, uncertain, or unknown. Most importantly, the marketing system does not reward the family farmer for what he can do most competitively, which is to provide the market with a product of particularly high quality.

The report goes on to say that US Government rules and programs (and I would presume in Canada as well) are very important in determining who shall have priority access to markets and resources. As now implemented, they often favor the large farmer rather than the family farmer.

A different sort of politics surfaced recently in Washington, D.C., when farmers brought their national farm strike to the capitol. In an impromptu speech before the House Agriculture Committee on January 20 (as reported by the *Washington Post*), Alvin Jenkins, a farmer from Campo, Colorado, brought hundreds of farmers to their feet cheering when he warned that farmers who ignore their call for a strike—defined as a refusal to plant crops—and attempt to capitalize on nonproduction by their neighbors might be "shot out of the cabs of their tractors."

However, the *Post* continued, "Despite their baseball caps, bib overalls, and twangy speech, few of the farmers here are from small impoverished farms. For the most part they come from large- and middle-sized farms whose acreage is measured in the hundreds and whose debts have soared into the tens of thousands of dollars."

According to Marion Kuhlamn, who farms 800 acres of wheat, milo, and corn and raises cattle in Sharon Springs, Kansas, the 1.8 million smallest farms with sales under $20,000 account for only 10.7 percent of agriculture sales and "we don't need them on our side."

Speaking about economics, TENNECO, which owns California's largest farming operations, had the following to say in its agricultural report for November of 1975: "TENNECO recognized early that the economics of scale, which are so apparent

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Agriculture does not exist separate from communities or people.

in most lines of business, sometimes do not apply in agriculture. From the standpoint of efficiency, there is no effective substitute for the small- to medium-sized independent growers who live on or near their farmlands, who are knowledgeable in the science of horticulture, and who have a deep personal involvement in the outcome of their efforts. . . . Company farming was deemphasized because, as previously noted, the successful independent growers are almost invariably more efficient in agricultural production."

And yet what is happening to the culture? The agri-culture? According to Richard Blum of Stanford University, ". . . the modern successful farmer, like his successful urban counterpart, is part of a different system, one generating a different personality to fit the occupation. (The corporate) 'organizational man' may not be far from a likeness of that growing cadre of landless agribusiness employees. Like the rest of Americans whose personalities have been the subject of a commercial takeover bid and merged permanently into an organization no longer self-directed, one can see how such folk could be a new kind of character—less optimistic, more specialized, more rule-bound but less trustworthy, more interdependent but socially superficial, and more uncertain in a now heterogeneous conflicted community of which they can never be so close and enduring a part."

Is this where our Mennonite farming community is headed, or are there other models to draw on? Blum goes on to point out, ". . . a modern farming system which really maintains the 'old ways' and survives is the Amish agricultural community. It encourages other-oriented rather than selfish conduct, it avoids specialization in favor of diversified production that is in keeping with the goals of self-sufficiency. It is environmentally sound . . . families are close, simple, resilient, stable, integrated into a religious community of others like themselves. And they are effective even today because they are cooperative, unacquisitive, disciplined, and successfully independent."

Agriculture does not exist separate from communities or people. If we want to deal with farm problems, we need to begin with basic people values. These are rooted to our Christian faith. Mennonites are known to be excellent family farmers. Our faith resources could help us to be prophetic for our nations.

"We walk for the love of our people"

Newton, Kansas—About 100 Indians have walked from California's coast to the Kansas prairie—1,400 miles—and are continuing on to Washington, D.C.—another 1,200 miles. Other Indians, and sympathizers from various races—black, Chicano, Japanese, white—have swelled the group to more than 200 at various points.

The group was in Wichita, Kansas, during the April 14-16 weekend. A few spokespersons came to Newton on Monday, while the majority walked on to Lawrence. Buffy St. Marie joined them in Lawrence, and sang at a benefit concert Tuesday evening.

Why are they walking? Two Congressmen from Washington State have introduced legislation which would vastly influence native American affairs. These bills would abrogate all Indian treaties, liquidate trust responsibility, rescind hunting and fishing rights, and upset tribal government.

Although some of the proposals are not expected to get very far in Congress, the 800,000 Indians in the United States view them as a real threat to their human rights. In the tradition of other historic marches, the National Indian Coalition in Davis, California, organized this march—The Longest Walk—to publicize their hurts.

"Indians are not a political force. We are too few people," said one of the Newton visitors, Dominguez Henry, an Apache living in San Jose, California.

Another speaker, David Hill, stated that Indian hunting and fishing rights only allow Indians to live in poverty. The average life span of an American Indian is forty-four years; the average income is $1,500 annually.

Control of natural resources is the real motivation behind the legislation, said Henry. More than half of the coal, oil, and uranium reserves in the United States are on Indian land, held in trust by the US Government. The incessant talk about energy shortages, Henry alleged, is preparing the American public for a justification to take over Indian land. "Big business," added Hill, "is the push behind anti-Indian legislation."

Henry also emphasized the spiritual dimensions of the walk. It is not a militant walk. Each day begins, and ends, with the immemorial sacred-pipe ceremony. It is the symbol of the trust, peace, and brotherhood with which each sovereign Indian nation made treaty with the US Government. There are approximately 350 Indian treaties.

An intergenerational and interracial audience of 150 listens to Dominguez Henry explain Indian concerns.

The pipe ceremony, which includes prayers, also symbolizes the spirit of unity among the various Indian tribes. More than ninety tribes have participated in the walk. Another meaning attached to the sacred pipe is the unity of man and the earth with the Great Spirit, the Creator.

"How can people expect God to provide a better place to go to when they can't take care of what God has given them?" asked David Hill.

Henry related that each day of the walk tests their faith—mentally, emotionally, physically. At one town in Nevada they were met by riflemen aiming their guns at the walkers. The group kept walking, nervous about what would happen. Within the town itself, however, they were welcomed and hospitality was extended.

The United Methodist Church, through its local congregations across the United States, is organizing local committees which provide logistical help, food, clothing, parade permits, and money. In Newton, Lutherans, Mennonites, and Methodists worked to plan the hosting.

"We walk for the love of our people," reflected Dominguez. *Vic Reimer*

Taiwan hospital organizing development drive

Harry Martens is spending a month in Taiwan (April 24-May 21) as a consultant in the development fund drive of Mennonite Christian Hospital (MCH) in Hualien.

The hospital is in the midst of a ten-year development plan that includes the replacement of the original wards built in 1954. To date approximately $100,000 has been spent in remodeling the kitchen and dining area, building a warehouse, and in renovations to the obstetrics ward and the out-patient department. An additional $1,000,000 is needed to replace wards housing seventy-one of the 116 beds in the hospital.

A matching grant has been approved. EZE (Evangelische Zentrastelle fuer Entwicklungshilfe), the Protestant Central Agency for Development Aid of West Germany, has approved a grant of $501,053, subject to it being matched by other funds. Mennonite Christian Hospital hopes to raise $184,000 within Taiwan, and the balance from North America. Martens' role is to assist the MCH committee in planning a fund drive. He emphasized that he is not going to raise funds. W. Tsai, a social worker at MCH, will head the fund-raising campaign.

Conflict normal —church can help

Kansas City, Kansas (MCC)—"The conflict process is normal, not only in the world but in God's people," Mennonite theologian John Howard Yoder told participants at the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section assembly on conflict intervention and conciliation held April 6-8 in Kansas City, Missouri.

"Dealing with conflict in the midst of community is part of the process of becoming a community. The idea that Christians don't confront is not biblical. Conflict is natural, normal, not an abnormality according to the Bible."

The assembly had three goals: to learn about the skills required in conflict resolution, to learn about the experiences the group had in conflict situations, and to learn what resources can be drawn upon to deal with conflict.

The focus was on community-level conflict as opposed to conflict on the personal, psychological level or broader conflicts such as the coal strike.

"We are talking about social, political, or economic issues where power and resources are involved," said James Laue, sociology professor at the University of Missouri. Persons intervening in a conflict should have two goals. The solution should be jointly determined by the parties involved and it should be a win-win solution that both parties feel good about rather than a win-lose situation in which one party exerts power over the other.

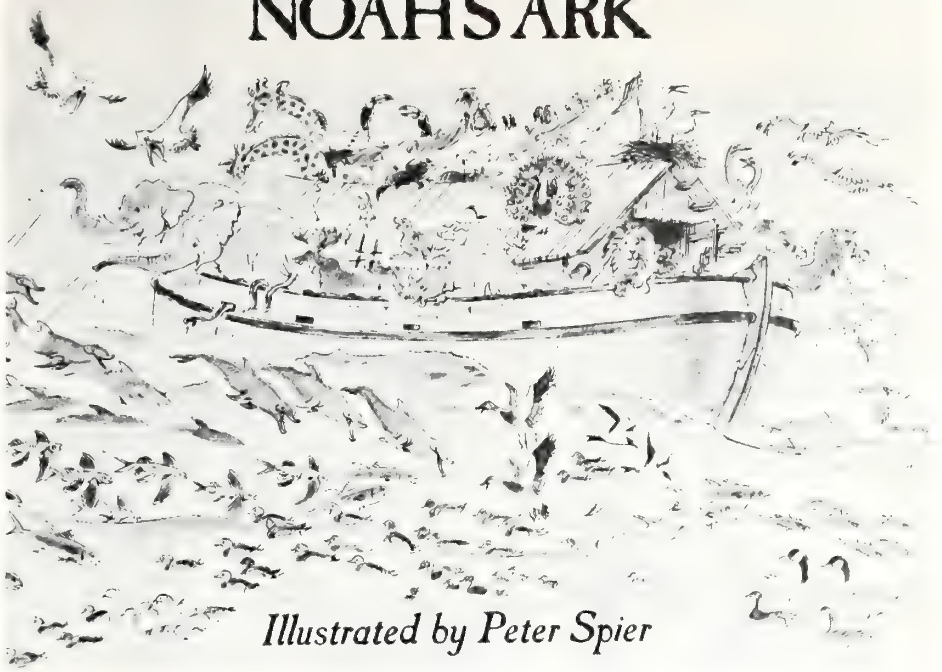
If conflict is emerging, said John Adams, director of the Methodist Church's Department of Law, Justice, and Community Relations, "it either supports the status quo or helps to bring about change."

Advocating nonviolence is an important intervention role for the church, Adams said. "Violence is the absence of just and realistic options. People abstain from violence if other options are available."

Mennonites have not demonstrated any level of success in handling conflict, tension, or leadership questions in their own congregations, Yoder noted. Nor are they good at maintaining a separate identity from white, middle-class, North American society.

While indicating support of Mennonites becoming more involved in conflict resolution, several participants expressed concern that the church not allow that role to be substituted for a prophetic witness.

Peace Section will continue to develop the conciliation effort by supporting local and regional training efforts, and by providing information on conflict intervention experience and resources.



The joy of the Lord is our strength

New York—This is the delightful cover of the award-winning Noah's Ark, *the illustrated book by Peter Spier. In addition to receiving the Christophers' Medal as the best picture book of 1977, the volume has been selected as the winner of the 1978 Caldecott Medal for the most distinguished illustrated book for children.*

Korea—Reflections and hope

In 1958 we traveled to Korea on a 6,000-ton freighter, a journey which took three weeks. My wife, Katherine, and I were sent there to direct the work of MCC in the wake of the Korean War. Now, almost twenty years later, going to Korea for a few days' visit, the same distance by jumbo jet took about eleven hours' flying time.

Our hearts were filled with anticipation. What would Korea be like now?

We were immediately struck by the outward appearances of prosperity: wide boulevards, high-rise buildings, freeways, automobiles, service stations, and parkades. Gone are the ox carts, A-frames, thatched roofs which once were visible everywhere.

Shops were filled with consumer goods and brightly-colored signs inviting people to buy, eat, drink, smoke, dance, read, and consume. Korea's competitive position in world markets gives it a favorable balance of trade and access to hard currencies. Korea is certainly no longer among the so-called most needy developing countries.

The Korean churches continue to grow. Bells still call Christians to prayer every day before daybreak and Korean church leaders are in demand as resource people in church growth conferences and clinics around the world.

Democracy and certain civil liberties have been set aside in South Korea as a means of strengthening its defenses against the North, ruled by communists. To a certain extent, economic prosperity has made the current situation more palatable to the people, but there are people concerned about it.

Some churches see the present policy as an extension of the day of grace for the church in South Korea and look upon it as an opportunity to extend its witness and work. Others see the irony of accepting a dictatorship and a virtual state of siege as a means of "keeping South Korea free."

Among the highlights of our visit were meeting three of MCC's former employees. These encounters were deeply moving experiences and helped to renew interest in and concern for our brothers and sisters in Korea.

Reflecting on the twenty years of MCC's involvement in Korea, one asks: Was it worth it all? What's left of our efforts? Perhaps one never could or even should attempt to assess the value. One can only hope and pray that what was done was an expression of faithfulness to our Lord who called us to this devastated land following the Korean War in 1953. The lives touched by the work of the vocational school, the material aid program, the widows' rehabilitaion project, the hospital staff training program, the child-care training program, the educational and family child assistance program, are numerous. *J. M. Klassen, executive secretary of MCC (Canada)*

Homosexuality workshop in Kansas City

Rainbow Boulevard Mennonite Church in Kansas City is the site for a workshop concerning homosexuality, the Bible, and the church, May 8-10.

It is to be a forum on the philosophical, psychological, and theological understanding of homosexuality. It is intended to help church workers minister to gay people who come in contact with—or who are already a part of—Mennonite congregations.

Three persons will present papers and lead discussions—James Glyer, Frank Ward, and James Yoder. James Glyer, pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church in Kansas City, openly acknowledges being gay. He is a graduate of Union Biblical Seminary (MDiv). His church ministers to a significant number of gay men and women.

The workshop begins at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, May 8, and closes at noon on Wednesday, May 10. A fee of $15 covers registration, but not meals and lodging. There are motels nearby, and some limited accommodation in private homes.

Inquiries may be directed to Frank Ward, 1444 Southwest Boulevard, Kansas City, Kansas 66103, or telephone 913-236-8820.

FACT or FICTION?

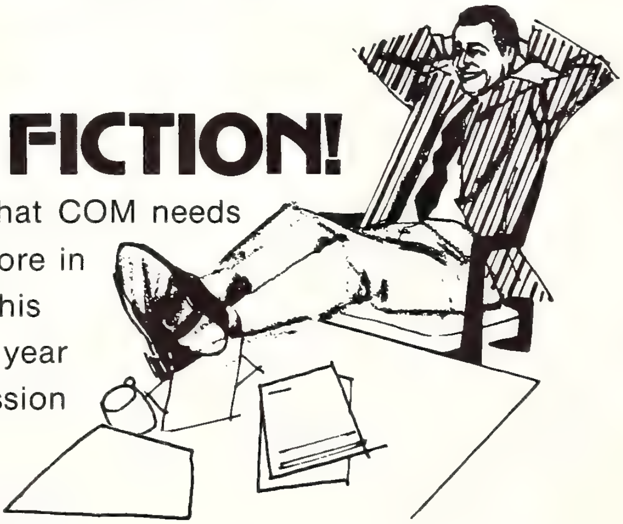
Since COM did not increase its budget commitments this year, increased giving to overseas missions is *not* necessary.

This is FICTION!

The FACT is that COM needs at least 12% more in contributions this year than last year to meet its mission program.
$250,000 more is needed in 1978.

NEEDED IN 1978: $2,084,949

COM



Making war on war

—the peace church staple

Issues come and issues go but none endure as well for a peace church as war and preparation for war.

At a meeting in Wichita, Kansas, April 15-16, members of the three historic peace churches had the choice of dealing with disarmament, world hunger, and human rights. But it was disarmament and its war-related evils that got all the attention.

"This is one of the times for which we have been called into being," said Edith Stucky, McPherson, Kansas, member of the planning committee for the Mid-America New Call to Peacemaking, referring to the crisis of militarism and the current preparations for nuclear warfare.

But a position paper on building institutions for peace presented by William Keeney, professor of religion and Bible at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, defined the call to war resistance as one of more than talking.

World hunger and the violation of human rights do offer opportunities to test peace church theology. But they received scant attention at the two-day conference.

"World hunger is the greatest human need and both a result and a cause of violence," said the study paper, of which Keeney was one of six authors. "There can be enough food for everyone, but inequalities in production and consumption cause scarcity resulting in suffering and violence."

In appealing for consideration of human rights, Keeney's group gave special attention to the crisis in southern Africa. The racial oppression of the white minority government of South Africa is a "violent denial of human rights." As a result, "the direct violence of guerrilla war and police action has led to great suffering and more than 100,000 refugees."

The task force appealed for peace church people to provide a haven in the United States and Canada for those people, white and black, fleeing the violation of their human rights in South Africa.

But it was only on the militarism issue that the meeting responded. It called for support for and promotion of war tax resistance, for enactment of the World Peace Tax Fund Act, for passage of the Transfer Amendment, and for creative US involvement in the coming United Nations Special Session on Disarmament.

The Wichita group sent a resolution of support for the special disarmament conference to the President. The letter will ask Carter to show support by addressing the world meeting in New York. *Maynard Shelly*

Family Life Committee seeks abortion input

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—Guidelines for the study of both the moral issues of abortion and practical ways in which the church can minister to persons facing unwanted pregnancy have been drawn up by the Commission on Education for the Family Life Committee.

The study was mandated by a resolution passed at the triennial sessions of the General Conference in Bluffton, Ohio, August 1977.

Congregational and personal input is essential to the study. The Family Life Committee would like responses from any church or individual. These could be statements agreed upon by churches, statements of personal conviction, lists of bibliographical and audiovisual materials, and names of persons who could act as resources.

After these have been received, Herta Funk, director of adult education, will oversee the analysis of the responses. It is expected that the analysis will focus the questions and concerns about abortion.

Thereafter a list of resources—people, print, audiovisual—will be compiled and keyed to the questions. The study guide and resource list will be available to churches by February 1979.

Send responses to Abortion Study, Commission on Education, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

Jewish leaders protest evangelization

St. Louis, Missouri (AJC)—The American Jewish Committee has sharply criticized the special missionary campaign of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, that seeks to convert Jewish people to Christianity.

The synod, at its 1977 convention, passed a resolution committing itself to "a two-year goal of persuading 50 percent of our congregations to prepare themselves for effective witness to Jewish people" and to "encourage especially those congregations located in or near Jewish communites to reach out to the Jews and share our faith that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah."

Rabbi A. James Rudin, the AJC's assistant national director for interreligious affairs, declared: "By singling out Jews for intensive proselytizing, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has, in effect, branded Judaism as an inadequate and incomplete religion. By undertaking this program, the Missouri Synod has sadly revived the medieval image of the Jews as a theologically deficient people. The resolution is a moral affront to the Jewish people and to forty centuries of Jewish religious life and theological self-understanding."

Representatives of the AJC and Missouri Synod leadership have met twice since December 1977. The Jewish leadership not only expressed their deep concern about the intent and implications of the resolution, but specifically called for an immediate suspension and a total revision of a highly offensive training manual entitled "Witnessing to Jewish People." The manual was designed for the training of Lutheran missionaries.

"The manual employs base stereotypes that do gross violence to the integrity of Jews and Judaism. It is replete with caricatures and inaccuracies," said Jordan Harburger of the American Jewish Committee.

Mennonite Brethren plan modest expansion

Hillsboro, Kansas (MBMS)—The Mennonite Brethren Board of Missions and Services (BOMAS) chose a cautious but modestly expansionary path during its annual mid-March meetings.

Next year's budget was upped slightly to $2.8 million, while cost-paring made room for a net increase of twelve new workers.

In other business at the March 16-20 meetings, held at Deer Creek Christian Camp near Denver, Colorado, the board appointed a commission to study the relocation of the BOMAS offices and approved new development projects.

Relocation of the Hillsboro, Kansas, office to an urban setting has been discussed repeatedly during the last decade. A recent study by the General Conference (North American) board of trustees added new momentum to the question by recommending a move to Denver.

Cost-cutting was an agenda item from the first session. The board was told that total giving to the end of the fiscal year in May would probably reach $2.45 million, short of expenses of $2.65 million. Closing the gap will likely exhaust cash reserves by June.

Despite a goal of zero budget increase, after an afternoon of budget review the bottom line seemed to be a budget of $2.8 million. Giving of $78 per member in North America will meet that goal.

Twenty-one new workers were approved. With the termination of twelve present workers, the appointments increase the total number of missionaries and Christian Service personnel in the Mennonite Brethren agency to 241.

Peter Kroeker, the agency's development consultant, attended the board sessions to explain three new development projects which Missions and Services will begin

IRS sues war objector group

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (CCCO)—The Internal Revenue Service has brought suit against the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (CCCO) for its failure to pay the tax debt allegedly owed by a past employee who has refused for reasons of conscience. In the suit filed in Philadelphia Federal District Court, the IRS charges that not only must CCCO pay the tax debt for their past employee, but must pay a 50 percent penalty as well for failure to pay an earlier levy.

Carol McNeill, CCCO associate secretary, explained that the past employee, Steven Gulick, had based his refusal to pay on the Quaker teaching that one should not support war or preparations for war.

Federal courts have previously upheld the right of IRS to recover taxes against tax resisters who based their resistance on religious grounds. However, IRS has never previously brought suit against the employer of a tax resister, nor have the federal courts previously permitted IRS to penalize an employer or tax resister who based their position on religious principles.

CCCO is a peace organization which supports the rights of conscientious objectors and other people resisting militarism nationwide. Founded in 1948, its office is at 2016 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103.

Musicians needed for World Conference

Instrumentalists and singers are needed for a large symphonic concert band and an assembly choir for Mennonite World Conference in Wichita in July.

Songs used by Mennonites throughout the world will be a highlight during the eleven major sessions—songs that may be sung in five or more languages simultaneously. A choir is being formed to give singing support to the assembly of some 5,000 as they sing. Mary Oyer of Goshen (Indiana) College will direct the singing. Two rehearsals of the choir are planned, one for Sunday afternoon, July 23, and another on Tuesday.

Leadership for the band is being given by Lonn Richards of Tabor College, Hillsboro. This group will play at the Saturday evening music festival July 29 at Cessna Stadium where about 15,000 participants are expected.

Anyone interested in participating should send name, address, and voice part sung or instrument played to Sharolyn Funk, Route 1, Box 26, Lehigh, Kansas 67073 promptly.

Words & deeds

Postponement of the MCC delegation visit to Vietnam has been announced. The five-member delegation, headed by MCC Asia secretary Vern Preheim, had planned to arrive in Hanoi May 13 for a ten-day visit to development projects and to contact church leaders. A cable was received from Hanoi which requested postponement until late summer or early autumn.

About 100 Mennonite Disaster Service workers recently converged on flood-stricken Valley, Nebraska, to assist in cleanup. Among the leaders were Darold Friesen from Henderson, Nebraska, and Henry Friesen of Meade, Kansas. Grace College of the Bible in nearby Omaha assisted in housing the workers.

King, Senior

"Hate is not in a person at birth. It is taught, and this bothers me. We must work to stop this," Martin Luther King, Senior, told 1,000 persons at Bluffton (Ohio) College April 12. His visit to the college was part of Black Emphasis Week. He added that we still live in a racist society, but that we are all God's children. Although segregation is dead and gone, integration is still necessary, but that is something in people's hearts. He said whites have thrived on black division since the death of his son, Martin Luther King, Junior.

For the first time the Union of Evangelical Christians and Baptists in the USSR has elected a Mennonite as superintendent responsible for spiritual oversight of congregations in a district. In Tashkent, Traugott Quiring was elected to replace retiring M. Smotugin. His responsibilities extend throughout the Central Asian republics of Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan, Kirgizia, and Turkmenia. Until this election the usual arrangement was to appoint a Mennonite as assistant in districts where there are many Mennonites.

Winkler Manitoba—A choral festival by five Mennonite Bible and high schools attracted more than 1,000 people, April 7-8. The festival included 155 participants from the touring choirs of five schools in Saskatchewan and Manitoba—Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Rosthern Junior College, Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, Elim Bible Institute, and Swift Current Bible Institute. Leadership for the festival came from the various choir directors who rehearsed the singers for 1½ days prior to the public concert Saturday evening. It included selections by the individual school choirs, and ten pieces by the mass choir. During the weekend the principals of these schools, members of the Canadian Association of Mennonite Schools, planned a faculty convention for January 3-5, 1979, to be held at the Blackstrap Health Center near Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

10

Wichita
1978

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MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE
Tenth Assembly
July 25-30, 1978

By pre-registering you will:
—*Avoid* delays, long lines, and disappointments at Wichita
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—*Reserve* your packet of registration materials (*International Songbook, World Handbook, Program Book*, etc.)

Hundreds of persons are involved in planning for the comfort and convenience of thousands of participants. Your cooperation will be deeply appreciated. **To encourage pre-registration, the deadline is extended to May 25.**

Registration forms are available in your congregation or write to:
Tenth Assembly Registrar
Mennonite World Conference
528 East Madison St.
Lombard, IL 60148

The Menno-Home in West Berlin requires a host couple. It is used as a meeting place for various organizations associated with the Berlin Mennonite Church, and also provides accommodation for up to nineteen overnight guests. These are often from East Germany. Living quarters are provided for the host couple. Inquiries about the work may be directed to Horst H. Krueger, Promenadenstrasze 15b, 1000 Berlin 45, Germany.

A return to orthodoxy was advocated at a Christian writers' conference in late March held near San Jose, California. About 150 writers and editors attended. Responding to a question on current trends in Christian publishing, Peter Gillquist, book editor for Thomas Nelson Publishers, said, "I'm not sure this is a trend, but if it isn't I want to make it one. We need to return to orthodoxy in our evangelical literature. By orthodoxy I don't mean something which is dry and lifeless, but content which has been tested and has endured with vitality for 2,000 years." Gillquist called for less "fluff writing" about Christian celebrities and superficial piety, and more emphasis on Bible study which reflects historic truths rather than private interpretations, and what it means to live the Christian life.

New drought warning: The director-general of the Food and Agriculture Organization issued a warning recently that drought is again threatening parts of West Africa's Sahelian Zone, and that substantial food aid will be needed to cope with it. Edouard Souma, set the amount needed at "at least 200,000 metric tons of cereals over and above their normal imports."

An average of one religious radio station was established every week, and one religious television station opened every month in the United States during 1977. Presently there are 1,064 radio stations and twenty-five television stations, mostly cable, in the religious broadcasting field. The Association of National Religious Broadcasters says 114 million Americans listen to religious radio, and fourteen million Americans regularly watch such television evangelists as Oral Roberts, Jerry Falwell, and Jimmy Swaggart. It is estimated that donations gathered by these efforts amount to $500 million annually. However, observers note that audiences are mainly Christian, and that religious television has generally failed to attract audiences in major cities.

Record

Workers

Leland and Bertha Harder are taking an extended three-year leave from teaching at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, to give leadership to the St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship, Missouri. This will be a part-time responsibility beginning this summer. Bertha teaches Christian education at AMBS; Leland teaches practical theology and is director of field education.

B. Harder

L. Harder

Harold A. Penner of Akron, Pennsylvania, has left for Guatemala City, Guatemala, where he will serve a two-year assignment as administrator for Church World Service, the international relief and development arm of the National Council of Churches. He will also be helping manage the agency's earthquake rehabilitation program there. Penner holds a BS degree from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, and a MDiv degree from Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana. For two years he served as an administrative assistant to the national director of CROP, the community hunger appeal of CWS, in Elkhart. He is the son of Alfred and Bertha Penner of Elkhart, and is a member of First Church, Beatrice, Nebraska.

Ministers

Carl E. Carlisle has begun serving as pastor of Faith Church, Geneva, Nebraska. He received a BA from John Brown University, Siloam Springs, Arkansas, and a master's in religious education from North American Baptist Seminary, Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He has held previous pastorates at Salem Mennonite Brethren Church, Bridgewater, South Dakota, and Open Bible Mennonite Brethren Church, Wichita, Kansas.

Calendar

July 10-12—Council of Mennonite Seminaries summer school, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas

Canadian

May 27—MCC relief sale, New Hamburg, Ontario

June 3—MCC relief sale, Swift Current, Saskatchewan

June 17—MCC relief sale, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Central

July 29—MCC relief sale, Arthur, Illinois

August 5—MCC relief sale, Fairview, Michigan

August 5—MCC relief sale, Kidron, Ohio

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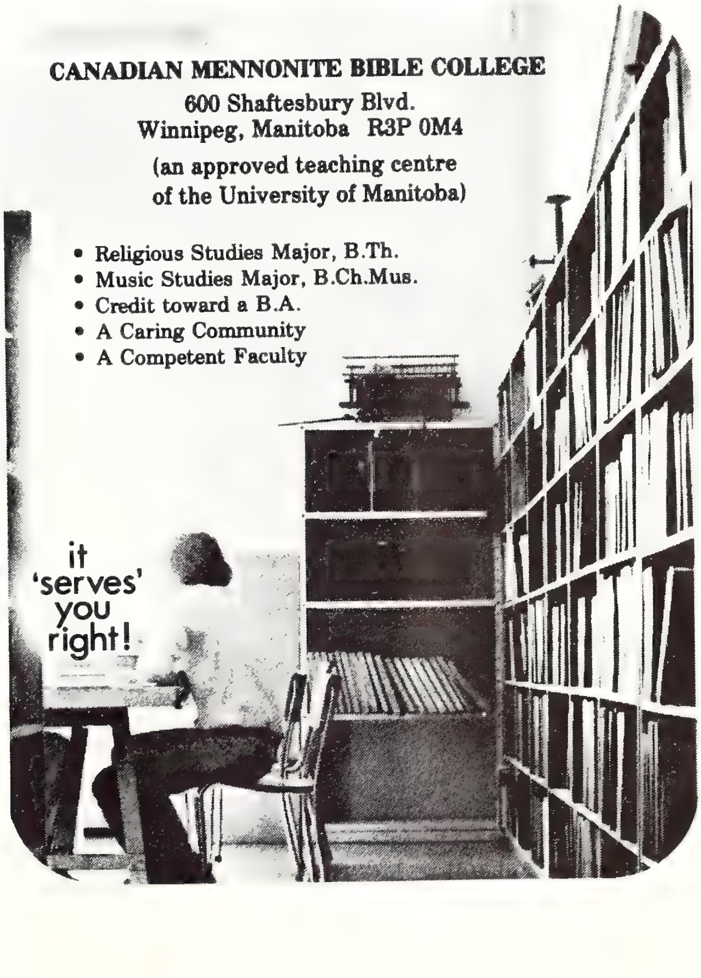

Review

Living the questions

Living the Questions, *by Robert A. Raines (Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1976, 142 pages), is reviewed by Jurgen Schonwetter, pastor of the Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver, British Columbia.*

Questions, questions, questions! That's what life is made up of. To search for meaningful answers seems to be the quest of every human being, Christian or not. Our times are burdened with an overabundance of ready-made answers. Many voices are crying in the wilderness and propose to have the answer to every question.

Robert Raines challenges the "answer man" with the "packaged" approach to life's questions. He suggests very strongly that meaning in life is not the final arrival at a given answer, but the "living out of the question." To live the questions of life causes meaningful discoveries which a seeming shortcut—as provided by the answer man—could never provide; in fact, such a shortcut may even rob a person of a unique discovery.

The style of writing is unique. The author uses a variety of vehicles in communicating his ideas in writing: quotations, poetry, exposition, narrative, biography, autobiography, and a sprinkle of personal prayers.

The dominant mood of the book is that of remorse; one cannot help detect the author's seeming regrets. I concluded after finishing the reading assignment that the author must have experienced the crumbling of values gained and treasured earlier in his life. These values seemed to have crushed under the weight of consequences that regretful decisions brought about.

Another mood which prevails in the content of the book is that of a deep longing for forgiveness and acceptance, other-acceptance and God-acceptance. He is pleading forgiveness for human frailties and mistakes. He almost begs for acceptance, leaving the reader with the feeling that he feels the burden of rejection.

There is also the mood of guilt and fear, perhaps of a condemning conscience. He seeks freedom from that.

The reader feels drawn into the innermost parts of feelings and deep soul expressions that begin to captivate. One is made to have a close look at one's own feelings and hurts. Introspection—an honest, almost too honest look at oneself—seems to be a key concept.

Robert Raines has a fantastic ability to use words artistically. His book has only a few difficult words. He refrains from using clichés, worn-out phrases; he is very idiomatic in his expressions, and so very new.

The frankness of expressing very deep and searching questions generates in the reader a feeling of discomfort. Raines admits that "This book is comprised of my pressing questions of recent years. I have gone through divorce and remarriage, change of job and geographic location, changing relationship with parents and children, and the breaking and remaking of my self-image and my image of God. My questions come out of the particular pain and promise of this period of my life" (page 13).

The format of the book is attractive. Modern art, very low-keyed though, gives a touch of contemporary life. I felt a bit embarrassed by the seeming waste of space on the expensive paper of this book. Maybe the author needed to be more conscious of our immense use or abuse of nature's resources.

To be honest, I would never have picked up the book if it had not been for the challenge of the book review. At first glance through the pages, I was convinced that the format was not that of my taste. But I am glad that I read the book thoroughly, not only for the sake of the assignment, but for the insights gained.

Beside my Bible

Mary F. Heisey

Living victoriously

James 1 parallels all three paperbacks beside my Bible this week. If you never get around to reading any of them, you may glimpse their lessons in James' advice, particularly, "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" James 1:22.

The Way of the Cross and Resurrection, *John M. Drescher, Editor (Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and Kitchener, Ontario, 1978, 272 pages).*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer believed, "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die." This profound collection of twenty challenging meditations for the Lenten season similarly bids us follow Christ with lives prepared to suffer for him, his church, and his glory. As his disciples and servants, we are committed to living "the word of the cross" (the gospel) in the world.

I read these meditations (Editor Wiebe has one about Palm Sunday) during Lent and was blessed by their logical arrangement, historical illumination, and thorough theology. One weakness: No bibliography.

Plan to experience this book's transforming power.

Passages Out of My Life, *by Henry Peter Rempel (The Edwin Mellen Press, Toronto and New York, 1977, 96 pages).*

These anecdotes are like peanuts—flavorful, salty, and habit-forming. Mennonite Rempel, a lifelong practical joker, died in 1977. He was a Canadian storyteller who worked hard, traveled widely, and observed life everywhere. My favorite tale: "An Incredible Journey."

Someone should tape-record this spring tonic of nostalgia.

The Devil Did Not Make Me Do It, *by Paul M. Miller (Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and Kitchener, Ontario, 1977, 236 pages).*

Some people need the frightening testimony of a book like *Satan on the Loose* by Nicky Cruz. Others prefer the convincing strength of a scripturally based study such as this. I believe there is room in our sinful world for both approaches, and Christians should probably read examples of each.

Playing down exorcism, Miller maintains that "God wants persons to take responsibility for their own lives and that he offers a way of victory over the powers of evil."

Oh, no, not suicide

La Vernae J. Dick

"I have a very difficult and sad announcement to make this morning," the pastor said. "One of our members took his own life yesterday."

Suicide, the willful taking of one's life, is one of the most painful experiences a family can have. Such families often have guilt feelings that may last a lifetime. They ae plagued with wondering what they did to cause it and what they did not do to prevent it.

Suicide is a social stigma, admitting failure in the ability to make life worth living. It is considered a sin. There are people who believe that no suicide victims will make it to heaven. Many people feel it is an unforgivable sin because God, the giver of life, is the only one who should decide when life shall end. The persons committing suicide have taken the role of God into their own hands.

Suicide is a tragedy of society. It is also a part of biblical history. Very few people will name a child Judas, since he committed suicide after selling Jesus' life for thirty pieces of silver. It is also a tragedy which strikes the church more often than we'd like to admit.

Nothing can be done to help a person who has successfully committed suicide and is dead. But many suicide victims are unsuccessful in their first attempt. Others will tell an individual, like a pastor or a friend, that they are contemplating suicide.

Many suicide attempts, or acknowledgments that a person is contemplating such a deed, are labeled trivial, manipulative, or cheap because the medical risk seems low. One pastor writes in an article "Counseling Is a Waste of Time" (*Christianity Today*), "I'm losing faith in humanity: All those people down through the years who threatened to slit their wrists, and not one has followed through."

That the attempt was not successful or that a person superficially talked about doing it is not a guide to the seriousness of the attempt. Sometimes a desperate individual bent on self-destruction, who has found that the chosen method of suicide failed completely, will find another way to die. One-car accidents are often suicides. Some serious illnesses may be a way to commit suicide when another method has failed. Any person who plays the hazardous game of attempted suicide, or talks about doing it, is at the time distressed and in need of help.

Some of the best efforts to prevent suicide and help people deal with problems causing them to contemplate such an action are being done by volunteers who man crisis intervention telephone centers. The plan is a simple one. Volunteers receive some training by the center. The emphasis is on befriending the individuals calling for help by offering them an opportunity to be listened to, and encouragement, support, and persuasion that things are not as hopeless as they seem. Wherever crisis intervention programs have been tried, the results are remarkable. Suicide rates from such areas go down.

Attempted suicide is often associated with broken or at least badly torn interpersonal relationships, inadequate family ties, too little neighborhood and church support. Many persons who think they want to commit suicide show dramatic improvement in response to being listened to and understood. It is often all that is needed to prevent such a tragedy.

The Mennonite church, which views itself as a family with God as father and members as brothers and sisters, has many supports built into its structures which, when capitalized upon, can prevent suicide attempts. Developing good interpersonal, family, and church relationships are an important part of the Mennonite church. The whole person, not just the spiritual life, is viewed as an important dynamic which requires support and affirmation.

We do need to reemphasize how good relationships within the church are built and sustained. Here are some ways to do that:

1. Be available when people want to talk.
2. Let your voice be warm and friendly.
3. Avoid asking too many questions which might be viewed as challenging.
4. Let the person talking know that you are listening and understanding by the responses you make.
5. Try to get close without being overly familiar. Some people shudder when touched and are turned off by such familiarity.
6. Take the role of an older brother or sister who is wise but not judgmental.
7. Don't be afraid to suggest professional help when you feel the problem is beyond your capacity to handle.

Vital relationships built upon these premises will help people who are so distressed that suicide seems to be the only realistic alternative to see that life is indeed worth living. God wills for you and me to be life-builders for and with all people.

Letters

Mennonite psalm

Dear Editor: On page 55 of the Adult Bible Study Guide in the lesson for January 29, 1978, the commentator-writer, Ernest D. Martin, suggests that we write our own "psalm of life." I decided to do just that and decided to think of myself as possibly expressing the way of life for Mennonites instead of just for myself. When I was finished I thought perhaps I could share it with the readers of *The Mennonite*. *Pauline Badertscher, 2359 South Kohler Road, Orrville, Ohio 44667*

February 3

Editor's note: See Meditation in this issue.

Burden of proof on deviant

Dear Editor: I was very much impressed with the caliber of the coverage for the recent Council of Commissions meetings (February 28 issue) as well as that of the conference sessions. The dynamics of the meetings come alive on the pages of *The Mennonite* in a remarkable fashion.

There remains a lingering concern on my mind about the tax issue. I have only admiration for the courage and conviction which leads individuals to take action as they feel they must on government taxes. They must speak and they must be heard. What really disturbs me, however, is a less than completely honest persistence in using labels to create a straw man to attack. It would be more appropriate to label the wheat, which Kansas farmers grow, as "war wheat," than any tax paid by US citizens as a "war tax"; for at least wheat is a basic commodity actually consumed in large quantities in conducting war. Money is only a convenient medium of exchange and not a real necessity to conduct war. Certainly the Soviet Union is not dependent on taxes to produce war material, although they do have some taxes.

I have no quarrel with the person who simply wants to refuse to pay taxes as a protest technique. As an attention-calling device it may very well be effective. It is not exactly the kind of role I would feel led to play, but I would not want to condemn anyone who felt they must use such a tactic. I would, however, strongly protest any attempt to make such a tactic mandatory for all Mennonites, and this is exactly what is being attempted. Not mandatory, of course, in the sense that it would be a test of membership, but mandatory in the sense of a normal commitment expectation for a nonresistant Christian.

I maintain that tax resistance is a deviation from our heritage of faith. The fact that it is a deviation in no sense makes it wrong and certainly does not mean that we pay no heed. It does, however, very much suggest that the burden of proof is on the deviant, and that the deviant ought not to equate obedience to God with conformity by others. *Carl M. Lehman, 218 Grove Street, Bluffton, Ohio 45817*

March 17

Six million abortions

Dear Editor: The US Supreme Court decision of January 22, 1973, on abortion eliminated any protection for the life of the unborn child. Up to the very moment of birth, the unborn child may now be destroyed legally because he or she is unwanted, possibly imperfect, or merely inconvenient.

The February 28 issue of *The Mennonite* showed several dead babies, in a black plastic garbage bag, killed at a hospital. I can't get that picture out of my mind, because it says that those babies were *alive* at birth. How were they killed?

In debating the abortion issue, people bring up the question of when life begins. We were created at the moment the chromosomes from our father's sperm joined those from our mother's ovum. And from that moment on nothing has been added but nutrition.

Another point raised is the quality of life the child would have, if unwanted. First, even though the biological mother may not want her baby, adoption agencies are crying—there are many loving mothers and fathers who can't have their own—that there are none to adopt.

Second, we visited the hospital at the State Home for the Retarded at Beatrice, Nebraska. Some of those babies are grotesque; but they were in bright, cheerful surroundings, and the nurses seemed loving and compassionate. No one suggested mercifully killing these little ones.

A third point is that women will abort anyway, and we should especially help the poor mothers on welfare. Connie taught seven years in an urban high school in Omaha. Many girls got pregnant. But, by and large, the black mothers kept their babies, and so did the poor whites. They brought their little ones to school on occasion, talked often about them, brought pictures, etc. And yet, statistics on abortion in Nebraska (by the Division of Health, Data, and Statistical Research, Lincoln) show that abortions in Nebraska have been going up by 500 a year since 1974. In 1977 there were 4,417 legal abortions in Nebraska alone. We heard on the radio that the average mother who kills her unborn baby is white, teenaged, and middle- to upper-class.

In an article in *Good Housekeeping* a mother wrote of her teenage daughter's abortion. It was an agonizing time; but the only two options that crossed the grandmother's mind were abort or keep the baby. Adoption wasn't considered.

One point used in counseling is that the baby is really not alive, just a "mass of tissue." And yet, when we were expecting, the doctor never referred to our little one as a "clump of cells."

To date, there have been an estimated six million babies killed in this war on the unborn (pamphlet, Nebraska Coalition for Life, Grand Island). This is an uncomfortable reminder of the six million Jews killed in Germany. Where were the church people then? The Nazis said these Jews were unwanted, a burden, and not really human after all. But who speaks up for these babies today? Dear God, not even we Mennonites, who passionately refuse to go to war knowing that Christ said, "Love your enemies" . . . even unwanted babies.

We spend hours discussing whether we should withhold taxes from our employees because a part of these taxes are ultimately used for destruction. But abortion brings a total of three articles in *The Mennonite* (one pro-abortion) and a motion at our North American conference to table any resolution on abortion for at least three years.

We're not against abortion when it's a choice between killing mother or child, but this massacre is something beyond that.

Jesus also said, "Let the little ones come unto me"; he didn't say, "*send* them to me." *Steve and Connie Buller, 1458 Butler, Blair, Nebraska 68008* March 31

About letters: To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Brevity is encouraged. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations. Editor

Meditation

Mennonite psalm of praise

O Lord, we believe that you are the creator of all that is great and good. You have given us life. We thank you.

O Lord, we believe that you are the heavenly Father of us all. You have given us Jesus, your Son. We thank you.

O Lord, we believe that you are the giver of all we need to live. You sustain us in many ways every day. We thank you.

O Lord, we believe that you are the center of all our being. You give us your promise in your Word. We thank you.

Because you are the creator of all our world, because you have placed us here, and because you want us to glorify you, we believe that you have work for us to do.

We know that there have been other Mennos, Ammans, and Brethren who have heard your call and have gone before us in doing work for you. We praise you for them.

We know that your call is still meant for us today. We praise you for calling us.

We know that following you must mean meditation, study, quiet contemplation, and good judgment. We praise you for asking us to study your Word for guidance.

We know that time spent in these areas must mean taking on commitments. We praise you for these.

We ask you for a clear vision to discern what you are saying to us. We ask you for wisdom to carry this out to those near and far. We ask you for courage to tackle difficult problems in our lives. We ask you for strength to work steadfastly, unflinchingly, and peaceably for your cause. We ask you to give us purposeful direction to remain true.

Then you can bless our plans, as we have our committee meetings.
Then you can bless our money, as we give to missions and relief.
Then you can bless our worship services, as we meet in the sanctuary.
Then you can bless the leaven, as we bake our bread.
Then you can bless the beef, as we cut and can it.
Then you can bless the auctions, as we bid in your name.
Then you can bless the poor and the needy, as we give the benefits to them.
Then you can bless the disasters, as we help to rebuild.
Then you can bless our conferences, as we meet to share further ideas.

Thus, with your blessing, we can reach a destitute world, not because we are the proud unmatched giants of the earth, but because our hearts, minds, and labors are acceptable to you and you know that we want the fruits of our labors to be peace, loving-kindness, neighborliness, joy, and humble satisfaction that will reveal you to others.

We thank you and praise you for giving us so much to do.

We know you must have been the one who led Menno Simons to reflect on your Word. You must have been the one who gave him the courage of his convictions. As followers of you through our first forebear, and known by the name of Mennonites, we need you to move the songs and visions of our hearts, minds, and souls into active being through the work of our hands as we clasp them with others to surround the world with love. Only as we clasp our hands with your hand and truly worship you can your message be heard.

O Lord, do hear us. And, O Lord, help us to be real doers only and not hearers only so that following you, we may do our special part as Mennonites in your wonderful world in your wonderful way of getting needful work accomplished. *Pauline Badertscher*

A way of escape

Recently I went into a local bank to get papers out of the safety deposit box. The young woman took me into the vault room. While we were inside, the vault door slammed shut. "Oh, no," she said. I asked her if she thought that they would bring us our meals. She said she hoped so. But then she was able to open the door.

Sometimes we get trapped by our own carelessness, sometimes by our good intentions, and other times by Satan himself. In every situation God is faithful and "will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Ward W. Shelly

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CONTRIBUTORS

Velda Glick, Route 4, Minot, North Dakota 58701, serves as editor of the Farm Issues Task Force newsletter.

Elma Waltner, Box 190, Freeman, South Dakota 57029, is a member of the Salem Mennonite Church and is a partner with her brother, Willard, in Crafts Designing-Pictorial Reporting.

David E. Ortman is a research associate with Friends of the Earth, Washington, D.C., under the Mennonite Voluntary Service unit, 643 G Street S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.

Mary F. Heisey, 56 East Street, York, Pennsylvania 17403, is a book reviewer for *The Mennonite*.

LaVernae J. Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338, is secretary of the General Conference.

Ward W. Shelly, 109 East Adams Street, Washington, Illinois 61571, is pastor of the Calvary Mennonite Church.

CREDITS
Cover, David Hiebert, Box 301, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 291, Waltner; 293, Bureau of Reclamation; 294, Joseph Sullens; 295, RNS.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Keep your eye on the doughnut

The lecturer was speaking on creative and constructive attitudes towards self, towards God, and towards today's world. He concluded with a simple rhyme:

As you ramble on through life
And you want to reach a goal
Keep your eye upon the doughnut
And not upon the hole.

It sounds silly and simplistic. How can you measure life and doughnuts in the same breath?

But there is a basic truth here. When it comes to charting our life, much of what we are is determined by the substance that we choose from all that is available to us. And that choice is extremely confusing. The headlines are grabbed by violence, scandal, crime, natural disasters, sensationalism. It is not difficult to feel depressed and discouraged. There are so many signs of human decay and abuse.

Many people become fixated upon negatives. They fail to see any hope or any accomplishments. Instead of comprehending the doughnut—that which has substance—they become convinced that all is doom and gloom; there is only a hole.

We see it among families. Parents experience frustration with their children and regard themselves as utter failures. Adolescents see the rising unemployment and feel that our system needs to be completely scrapped.

We see it in our churches. There are those who violate our sense of devotional Bible study, prayer, and disciplined witness. Brothers and sisters in Christ begin to question the legitimacy of each other's claim to being disciples of Christ.

The Lord knows that there are needs in our families, in our congregations, and in our world. There is room for much growth and greater sensitivity to those who are hurting.

But, one of the things that keeps us from making a bigger impact is our attitude toward our own selves. Jesus said, "Love your neighbor *as yourself*" Mark 12:31 (italics mine). If I regard myself as a total failure, I will probably regard you the same. Because I am a person restored to wholeness in Jesus Christ, I can regard myself as a precious person with Christlike potential. I can then regard you in a similar manner. It makes me want you to realize the fullness of God's image in you. Jesus' love in my life makes it possible to focus upon the substance—the essence of life—rather than upon all the outer things which clutter and hide the truth.

A person who focuses upon the "holes" needs to hear again the words of Paul: "Finally . . . whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, *think about these things*" Philippians 4:8 (italics mine). If you learn to keep your eye upon the doughnut—the substance of Christian witness—you will find that the good news is transforming lives and is able to sustain families, individuals, and nations. God acts in 1978 as surely and clearly as he ever has. God's people are being the "light of the world" and "salt of the earth" in many amazing ways.

But you cannot see God at work if your eyes are hole-fixated.

This is not to say that all Christians are doing their best; many need to be confronted and challenged. You and I can do that when we demonstrate the living, active Christ in our own lives. The experience of Christ's loving life will be an inspiration to others. It will cultivate appreciation for the doughnut.

If God's people dwell upon denouncing the hole, what contribution does that make to building the kingdom?

Take a look at yourself through God's eyes—you are beautiful because God's image is upon you. Then look at others—they are or can be beautiful if we can help them discover that God's image is also upon them. Keep your eyes upon the doughnut and not upon the hole. BW

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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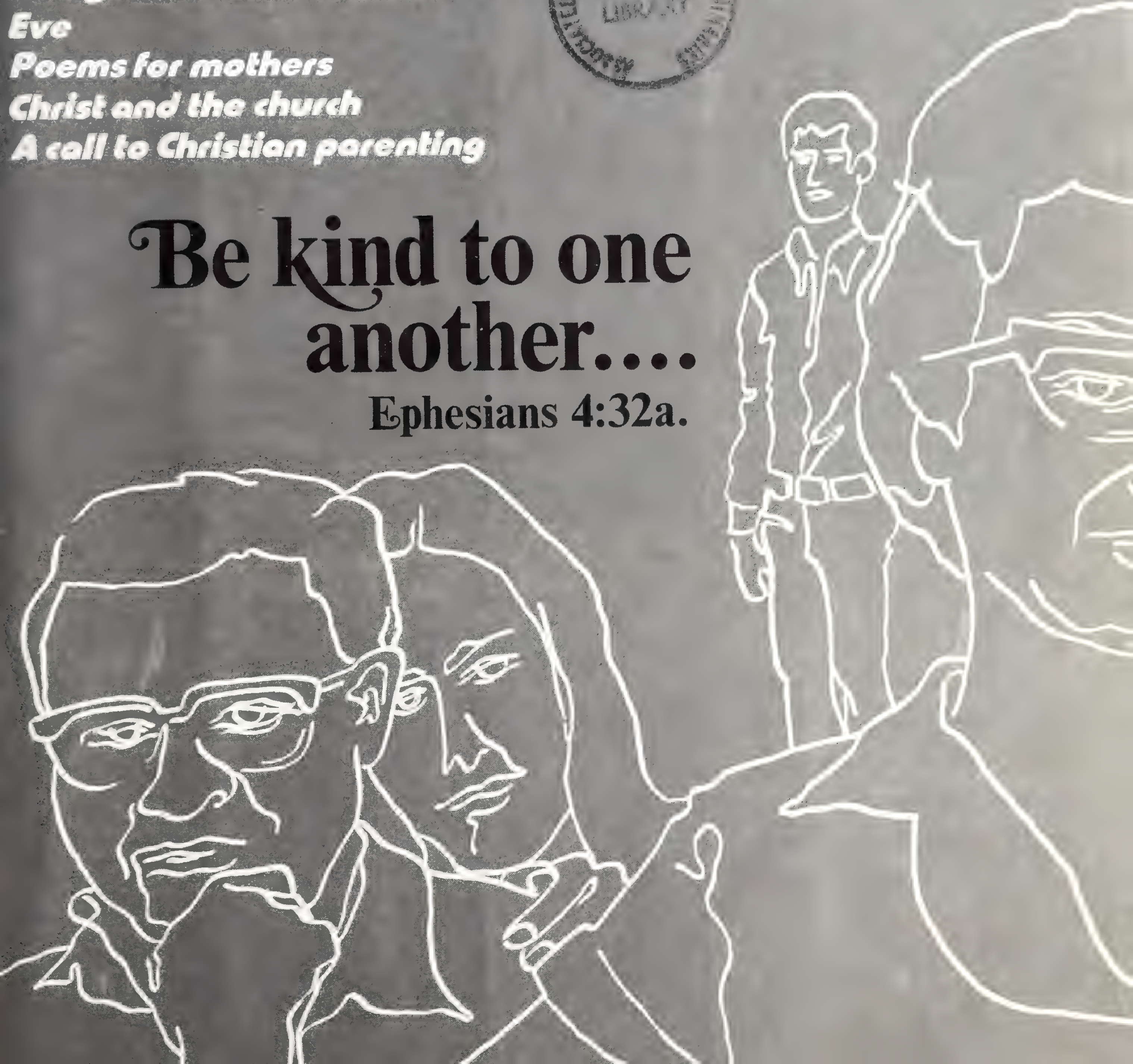
To my father (and mother)
Eve
Poems for mothers
Christ and the church
A call to Christian parenting

Be kind to one another....

Ephesians 4:32a.



To my father (and mother)

Erlene Unruh

The meadow is all sunshine, bird songs, and blue sky. I am five or six, and am happy in my perfect world. I run from hay pile to hay pile and let myself sink into its sweet sun-warmed smells. The plodding horses stop beside me and your strong arms pitch my little pile high above your head onto the hayrack. I giggle and run to the next one. I lie there and contemplate how soft the clouds look. I wonder if that bumblebee will come any closer. I hold my breath as I see a small rabbit sitting very still, almost within reach.

Then I hear you say, "That's all for this load. Hop on."

"May I hold the reins?" I ask eagerly when we reach the straight stretch of Uncle Henry's long lane.

Soon they are in my hands, those smooth well-worn leather strips with which you so easily control the huge work horses. The raw power of those mighty muscles makes me shiver a little. Then I see your large brown hand right there beside my tight little fists—a hand that is ready to let go, and let me try, experience, and discover, but a hand that stays close enough to be there if it's needed.

. . .

I am seven years old. You and I are walking side by side behind the summer kitchen on our way to the chicken house. Each of us carries a bucket of grain—you a large one, and I, my small gallon "syrup" pail.

My grandmother died last night. We talk about her. Your voice sounds funny, so I look up and see your tears and trembling chin as you say, "She was always so good."

My daddy is crying! I cry lots of times. But not my daddy! You reach down and take my small hand in yours and hold it very tight. I begin to understand that Grandma was your mother, just like you are my daddy. And she's gone. We hurt together. And I feel a very tender love for you.

. . .

My sisters and I are playing on the big dirt mound just north of the house. In time, an argument erupts. In anger, I take a handful of dirt and throw it at my sister. Some of it gets in her eyes. You have to be called, and very tenderly your large work-calloused hands pick out the little bits with the twisted corner of your red handkerchief.

And then your attention turns to me. You deal with me swiftly and firmly. Those gentle hands of a moment before, now administer a quick hard spanking. I hurt—oh, how I hurt. The spanking pain goes away, but the shame of having deserved your punishment lasts a long time. So does the awareness that losing my temper can cause serious consequences. As time goes on, I perceive that you love me enough to teach me responsibility for my actions. And real love is always big enough to forgive.

. . .

It is late September. The days have grown crisp and invigorating. It's time for Jonathan apples and baseball fever. My younger sisters and I enjoy being outdoors as long as possible after school when chores are done. And, joy of joys, today you give in to our begging and take time to play with us.

No one, surely no one could ever throw a baseball so high—way higher than our windmill. And who could hit a ball so hard and so far? With your sure and powerful hands you show us how to hold a bat just so, and how to catch a ball without dropping it. To me, you rank right up there with Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig. I am very proud of you. And you love me. That makes my world good.

. . .

Once again we are in the hay meadow. The sun has dropped just below the horizon. Sweet summer smells rise all around us in the early evening dampness. I am older now, and very proud to be your helper, pretending to be the son you never had. The old horses have been replaced by an Allis Chalmers tractor. And I'm queen on my throne as I steer it between the rows, stopping to let you pitch the hay.

Carefully you have explained my job to me, and how I must not make sharp turns at the end of the field. The hayrack is nearly full, and I forget. I turn too short. The wagon tips over and the reach breaks. So does my heart. I wanted so badly to do well and to make you proud of me. Now I messed it all up. Will you be very angry? Surely you'll never trust me to drive the tractor again.

But then I hear you saying, "Erlene, take the tractor and go home. On the workbench in the barn you'll find the tools we'll need to fix this."

I'll never forget how tall I grew in that moment. We are still partners, and we'll work this out together. Though you are tired and it is growing late, somehow you sense the

You and mother are so closely woven into my life, my faith, my personality, and my existence, that there is no way I could determine who I am apart from your influence.

importance of that moment and use it. I learn that love is big enough to cover a mistake and to trust again. I watch your skillful hands repair the wagon, and by the time we have it reloaded a big moon glows in the fading sky. My heart sings all the way home. And I hope I will be just like you when I grow up.

. . .

We are in the living room now, sitting side by side on the sofa. We have not turned on the lights, and we are talking as darkness grows around us. I am fourteen and tomorrow I will be baptized.

You take my hand in yours and tell me how important my decision is. You try to explain some of the implications of being a follower of Jesus Christ, and what it means to know in all of life's experiences that you are a child of God. You share with me the joy and strength your faith has given you. Your words are audible evidence of all that which I already know to be real in your life.

I feel very right and good about my baptism, and eager for my continued Christian experience. I feel close to God, and to you, my earthly father, through whom I've learned much about him.

I have many other memory pictures that have you in them. You and mother are so closely woven into my life, my faith, my personality, and my existence, that there is no way I could determine who I am apart from your influence. I want you to know that without money you have given me a finer inheritance than the wealthiest person could ever bestow on a daughter.

You try to explain some
of the implications of being
a follower of Jesus Christ, and what
it means to know in all of
life's experiences that
you are a child of God.

Eve

Viola Hilty

Leonard Baskin painting of the four mothers of Israel (Rachel, Leah, Rebekah, and Sarah)

It is appropriate to think of the first mother in the Bible. We don't know her as a baby or a little girl, but a mature woman. She could appreciate fully the beauty of the earth. The Bible doesn't tell as much about Eve as it does about many other women.

We are familiar with the story of the creation of heaven and earth, the skies, sea, light and darkness, plant life and every creeping thing. Then God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul (Genesis 2:7).

Man was all alone; none of the other creation was adequate for his love or hopes or friendship. So God caused a deep sleep to come over Adam (Genesis 2:21) and God took a rib from Adam and made a woman. Several commentaries say that a bone was taken from near his heart or from under his arm that his strength might protect her. Here in Genesis 2:24 marriage was instituted. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh."

We all think of Eve as a beautiful, graceful woman with no scars of sickness, toil, pain, or age. She was youthful but fully matured—a woman from paradise garden, a real helpmeet.

They had so many things to explore and interesting things to do. They lived in the most beautiful garden eyes ever beheld. They were to dress it and keep it. How long they lived in this blissful state and garden we do not know.

Then comes the sad part of the story of Eve. She met the serpent and he tempted and deceived her to eat of the fruit of the tree of good and evil. God had said they could have all else but this; they should neither eat it nor touch it, lest they die. The serpent said they would not die. Eve yielded and gave to Adam and he also ate. Their eyes were opened to good and evil and they knew they were naked. They sewed leaves to make themselves clothes. God came walking in the garden and they were afraid and hid themselves from God.

Sin and disobedience bring shame and fear to us as well as to Adam and Eve. Adam confessed that he and Eve had eaten. God had to drive them from the garden. They must now toil for their living (Genesis 3:21). The Bible says that the Lord God made coats of skins to clothe them, not only from the heat and cold, but also to cover their nakedness.

No doubt Eve shed many tears over her awful mistake and, to comfort her, God sent a sweet baby boy Cain to her. In her heart hope was born and, as time went on, a little brother Abel came to bless the family.

Then came the day when Eve's heart lay heavy as a stone inside her, because Cain killed his brother Abel. Her hope flickered like a candle in the wind. The dreams she had for her boys were gone. She had failed and the remembrance of her sin nagged at her heart and tore it to pieces. Adam comforted her as best he could.

"Something beautiful, something precious has gone out of your life." God knew her need and sent her a third son and a promise that one day a Savior would come from this son's family, a Savior who would open the gate into everlasting life for a forgiven Eve and all humankind. Today *we* have this promise. May we seek and find it, we parents and our children and humankind.

THE MENNONITE seeks to witness, teach, motivate, and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published weekly except biweekly during July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton, Kansas 67114, by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kansas 67114, and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions in United States and Canada: $9.00 one year; $17.00 two years, $24.00 three years; foreign: $9.50 per year. Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Canada R3P OM4. Business office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

To all praying mothers

Lydia Regehr

The words you have spoken,
O Mother, in prayer,
I claim as a token
To which I am heir.

A legacy, Mother,
I'm glad to call mine.
I know of none other
More truly divine.

Making and mending

Louise Dueck

I can still see my mother
with piles of mending
at her elbow,
needle darting deftly
in and out as she
repaired the tears
in our clothes.

I can still hear my mother,
faced with our unkind deeds
and willful ways,
tongue like a needle
as she mended
the tears
in our characters.

I thank God
for my mother,
who by her example
as well as her "needling,"
quietly fulfilled her calling
in making and mending us
according to God's pattern.

Hannah's son

Ivy M. Yost

In Ramah
She stitched and dreamed
Of the moment
When she would put
The little coat
On her manchild, petitioned from the Lord.
In Shiloh
A sturdy lad walked by Eli's side
And did his bidding.

The time came
For Hannah to come up
To the temple
With her husband
To offer the yearly sacrifice.
The worshipers departed
But the two remained
To see the child
They had lent to the Lord.
First the coat—
With trembling hands
She removed the faded garment
And put on him
The new.
And then—oh then
Her moment of joy—
As lovingly with hungry arms
She embraced at last
Her little boy.

The two returning home
"How our boy has grown,"
Mused Hannah.
"He is growing before the Lord,"
Added Elkanah.

In Ramah
Hannah planned a new coat,
This one larger than the other
And more beautiful.

In the temple
The boy Samuel
Ministered before the Lord
And remembered his mother.

Evangelism workshop

Put gates into those fences

"Mennonites have been good at building fences that developed into traditions that made it hard for outsiders to get in," said Donald Yoder, resource person at the "Evangelism for Our Day" workshop in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, April 5-7. "I would like to see some gates put into those fences."

If the sharing done at the workshop is any indication, some gates are already in place and beginning to open.

The workshop, sponsored by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, was held at the Mayfair Mennonite Church and drew 182 participants from across Canada, mostly from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia. They were a sampling of the diversity that makes up the conference—young or experienced pastors, farmers, homemakers, loggers, business people, professionals, and students.

Henry Gerbrandt, coordinator, set the tone for the conference in his opening statement. He said the roots of evangelism are in the Sermon on the Mount, where the people of God are declared to be "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world." Evangelism is a function of the corporate life of the congregation.

"As the congregation reflects the incarnate Christ and is the living, caring, loving, healing community of believers, it will seek to share this visible faith and give birth to more believers. This is what this workshop is all about," he said.

By telling of God's ongoing dealings with them, three of the resource persons encouraged a climate of sharing and gave hope that participants might also experience growth.

Floyd Bartel of the Commission on Home Ministries in Newton, Kansas, characterized himself as a "Mennonite of the Mennonites" who had been humbled in experiencing the reality of the grace of God. A renewal experience in his congregation thrust Lynn Leichty, a Berne (Indiana) contractor, into new experiences of friendship evangelism. Don Yoder, pastor of the new Koinonia Fellowship of Tempe, Arizona, told of being delivered from some of his "hangups" so he could relate freely to people where they were, and of receiving a new understanding of prayer and of the guidance of the Holy Spirit in his life—"Lord, I know you are up to something exciting today. . . ."

In general, the presentations at the seminar were not academic but focused on life situations. No startling new methodologies for evangelism were presented, but participants were encouraged to apply well-known truths. The stress was not so much on program as on the quality of the Christian community; not so much on isolated individual effort as on the activity of the group; not on techniques but on relationships. Failures as well as successes were discussed and responded to.

Don Yoder, fresh from a church that has grown from twenty to eighty members in the past 1½ years with a goodly number of first commitments to Christ, uses Acts as a training manual in outreach with his congregation. He emphasizes three principles: prayer, the work of the Holy Spirit, and fellowship.

"When God is going to do a work he always starts with prayer," Yoder said, "I try to lead my congregation in an understanding and experience of prayer. . . In trying to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, we find ourselves sometimes spending the first hour of a committee meeting in sharing and prayer before we look at the agenda." To provide fellowship for interested persons or new Christians he tries to pair them up with more mature Christians. Sometimes these Barnabases face problems like, "Now that I'm a Christian what do I do about my relationship to the man I live with?"

Dick Rempel contrasted *vicarious* evangelism in which others are supported to evangelize, with *vibrant* evangelism which demands personal involvement. "Both," he said, "are needed."

In looking at the familiar story of the woman at the well, Norman Bartel showed how Jesus was available, sensitive to the woman's need, unhindered by cultural prejudice, sure of the remedy, willing to begin where the woman was, and ready to involve her immediately.

Lynn Leichty shared the renewal experience that came to the Berne congregation in Indiana when laypersons from various denominations came at their own expense to spend a concentrated weekend with the church sharing what God had done for them. This Lay Witness Mission resulted in the forming of small study-prayer groups in the church and in the training and participation of about twenty-five persons in visitation evangelism.

In Floyd Bartel's workshop on spiritual gifts, he pointed out that gifts may be different from natural abilities. They are given to the church for the glory of God, for the good of the body, and for service to the world. Discerning of gifts is a corporate responsibility.

Floyd also said that ethnicity committed to Christ could be a positive help. He quoted Keith Miller, "God doesn't waste a thing." Dennis Oliver looked at cross-cultural problems in the light of Acts 15. He summed up the stance of the early church toward new Gentile Christians as, "We will let you be your kind of Christian as long as you are true to the lordship of Jesus Christ."

Oliver, a former Unitarian now committed to Christ, shared other insights from the Church Growth Movement. "Churches will not grow on sheer spirituality," he said. "They need a functional commitment to reach out. Many Canadian churches are ghettoized."

Though methodology was not stressed, small study, prayer, or fellowship groups were frequently mentioned. Natural contacts in the community took precedence over media campaigns or door-to-door visits. Lay leadership and involvement were prominent.

Are the gates opening in the Mennonite fences? Reports and testimonies indicated that there are new brothers and sisters representing a variety of heritages in the Mennonite family—Ukrainian, Cree, Mexican, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Russian among others. The new people bring with them experiences as varied as the corporate rat race, alcoholism and drug addiction, depression, prostitution, gang warfare, and even Satanism. They also bring new resources and spiritual gifts now that they are in Christ. Barnabases are needed to welcome and nurture those new to the faith.

Growth in the Mennonite church by nurture is likely to decline with greater mobility and a declining birth rate, but Floyd Bartel is optimistic that the local church is more and more reclaiming the evangelistic task. He sees Mennonites recovering the Anabaptist vision not only of a discipleship movement but also of a disciple-making movement. *Malcolm Wenger*

McNamara censures privileged minority

Declaring that past emphasis on economic growth has left millions of poor people as poor as ever, World Bank President Robert S. McNamara told the bank's board of governors that one culprit is the "privileged minority."

The existing political order, he said, is hindering development goals. This marks a change from the bank's traditionally apolitical, technocratic approach to development. Today's challenge, said McNamara, is to design a strategy for development that will both accelerate economic growth and channel more of the benefits of that growth to meeting the basic human needs of the absolute poor.

"The problem is that doing this requires changes in both developed and developing countries which may cut across the personal interests of a priviledged minority who are more affluent and more politically influential," he declared.

Assessing public services, he stated: "Wealthy urban and rural families, often constituting a very small but politically influential and elite group, have frequently managed to preempt a disproportionate share of scarce public services. It is a very old story in human affairs, and far from being an attribute of developing countries only.

"Piped water allocation, the availability of electricity, the cost of routing of public transportation, the location of schools, the accessibility of public health facilities—all of these are national and local government decisions that are critical to the living standards of the very poor, who have no margin for alternatives, and no political access to policymakers.

"Not only are essential public services often out of financial and geographical reach of the poor, but such facilities as are in place may be so inappropriately designed as to be virtually irrelevant to their needs: impressive fourlane highways, but few market roads; elaborate curative-care urban hospitals, but too few preventive-care rural clinics; prestigious institutions of higher learning, but too few village literacy programs.

"Public services that are not designed modestly and at low cost per unit will almost certainly end by serving the privileged few rather than the deprived many. To reverse this trend, governments must be prepared to make tough and politically sensitive decisions, and to reallocate scarce resources into less elaborate—but more broadly based—delivery systems that can get the services to the poor, and the poor to the services." *Reprinted from* Pan American Health, *March 1978*

"Holocaust" is a major television event

New York—The National Broadcasting Corporation's controversial four-part series about the genocide of six million Jews during World War II attracted an estimated total audience of 120 million for the four nights it was televised—April 16-19. This is only ten million under the "Roots" record of last year.

"Holocaust" is the story of two German families—the Jewish Weisses and the German Dorfs. The 9½-hour miniseries centers about their experiences. The war in Europe or Russia is a distant background alluded to in the conversation of the characters. But a spotlight is thrown on neighborhood anti-Semitism, the SS machine—particularly its leadership, and the labor-concentration-death camps.

James Warner, president of the Christian Defense League, charged that the film was "Zionist propaganda" designed to "create sympathy" for Israel in its struggle for survival against Arab foes. In responding, NBC-TV rejected the protest as "anti-Semitic" and Robert Mulholland, network president, called Warner's objections "a denial of the basic principles and precepts of Christianity."

The script for the series was written by Gerald Green; all the segments were directed by Marvin Chomsky, who directed much of "Roots." Green's novelized version of the script is already in its eighth printing with more than a million paperback copies in print. Thousands of schools and organizations utilized more than ten million study guides prepared by NBC, the National Education Association, the National Council of Churches, and other groups. NBC sold more than 140 commercial spots to close to fifty sponsors. These were generally "clustered" so that their effect on mood was minimized.

Donald McEvoy, program director of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, displays Star of David emblem that was distributed nationwide to coincide with the televising of "Holocaust." The yellow badge, once worn by Jews marking them for degradation during the Hitler era, was worn by many US Christians April 16-19 as a "symbolic declaration that Jews will never again stand alone or be victimized."

Angolans continue fight and flight

Kimpese, Zaire (MCC)—The Angolan civil war which began in 1975 is no longer in the news. But the conflict is still simmering and war refugees cross into Zaire in large numbers.

Groups of 900 to 3,000 refugees arrive in Zairean border villages. A total of 60,000 are living near the Zaire-Angola border, and more have moved further into Zaire.

A Christian hospital, Institut Medical Evangelique (IME), is located in Kimpese. Mennonite Central Committee workers Chris and Lois Leuz, a medical doctor and registered nurse, work there. Many people arrive in a deplorable state with illness, malnutrition, no food or clothing. The United Nations has been providing financial aid for hospital care and distribution of food.

Andre Ntemo, chaplain to the refugees, says, "The refugees report to us that many people die on the way, the old people and the children." Ntemo is hoping for vegetable seed to distribute among the refugees, although there has been scant rainfall for months.

Although the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) gained political control after a few months of civil war with two other groups, the other groups continue a guerrilla war from strongholds in the country. With the turmoil of three groups fighting and using pressure tactics to compete for the support of local Angolan villages, it is difficult to determine specifically what causes the refugees to flee.

"When we ask the refugees why they are running away, they reply, 'We run to save our lives.' It is a tragic situation. Keep praying for us that our leaders and all the Angolan people, both inside Angola and in exile, may understand the true love of God and the true reconciliation through Jesus Christ which lead to peace," Ntemo requests.

Statistics to think about

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—There are 321 General Conference Mennonite Church congregations in Canada and the United States.

Order them in size from the smallest to largest. They range from a miniscule nine members to a sizable 1,268. Perhaps the most arresting fact which can be gleaned from the list is that the smallest 160 churches (one-half of 321) account for only 11,086 members (18 percent) out of the total membership of 62,470. The flip side of this is that the 161 largest congregations total more than 51,000 members.

The 160 smallest churches have memberships of 133 or less. One-hundred and thirty-three is the median size. This means there are as many churches with a membership above 133 as there are below 133. But, a median is not necessarily the average. For the General Conference the average membership per congregation is a healthy 195.

Another way to analyze the list is to determine how many churches are needed to total half the membership. How many churches, starting with those nine stalwarts in the smallest congregation, need to be tallied before accumulating 31,235 believers? Two-hundred and sixty-two. The largest fifty-nine congregations (18 percent) account for the remaining 31,235 members.

These statistics take on added interest when compared to the Mennonite Church whose total membership is 106,595 in 1,204 congregations. Their average size is 89; their median size is 52. When arranged from smallest to largest the first half of total congregations (602) is composed of 11,645 members (11 percent). The second half of total congregations tally 94,950 members. The first half of total membership (53,297) requires 1,014 congregations. The second half of total membership is composed of 190 congregations (16 percent). These range in size from 161 to 846 members.

Integrate handicapped, says Williams

Manitoba (MCC)—Parents of mentally handicapped children were urged to help congregations and communities become aware of the needs of these children, when they met for a retreat April 7-9 at Camp Assiniboia, a camp near Winnipeg operated by the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba.

"We ought not as a brotherhood exclude a different child from our church schools, from our worship service, from baptism, from all of the ways in which we participate together in the life of the church community," said Nancy Williams, resource speaker for the retreat.

Williams is consultant for Mennonite Mental Health Services. She nurtured a badly deformed and mentally handicapped child who died after six months.

She told the parents they were "experts" on the mentally handicapped and had an obligation to make people aware of the needs.

Church involvement, family acceptance, sexuality, and marriage for the mentally retarded were discussed.

Highlight of the retreat, according to participant Mary Block of the Steinbach Mennonite Church, was the exchange of testimonies in which parents described their feelings about the mentally handicapped children and their spiritual growth as a result of the experience.

BC churches host higher education forums

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—Area meetings which promoted higher education were hosted in mid-April by three British Columbia churches—Eden Mennonite Church in Chilliwack, Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church in Abbotsford, and Sherbrooke Mennonite Church in Vancouver.

There were three purposes for the meetings. First, through presentations by local employment officers associated with area colleges, participants were told of the benefits of higher education, particularly in terms of job mobility and meaningful work.

A second purpose, enunciated by Eleanor Loewen of General Conference student services, was describing the spiritual and personal growth which higher education provides.

Expanded opportunities for service are another advantage of higher education, said Wally Kroeker, Mennonite Central Committee director for British Columbia. "Service is not an option, it is a requirement for a Christian," he stated.

About forty high school, college age, and career age persons attended each session. The sessions were sponsored by the Congregational Resources Board of Canadian Conference with local coordination provided by John Klassen, who is a faculty member at Trinity Western College in Langley.

Loewen reported that participants said they needed more assessment of individual abilities and how to use them.

Another area of interest was creating a willingness to risk, and questions of how to help those who want to change careers.

Festival 78 to focus on key mission issues

Bluffton, Ohio (TSFM)—An extensive festival of worldwide missions organized by twelve church denominations and church-related agencies will be held June 16-18 on the campus of Bluffton College.

"The festival," states planning committee chairperson Paul Dyck, "is for people to get together to celebrate God's acts in missions and to promote worldwide missions as an expression of the Christian faith." The festival will provide opportunities for persons to become more knowledgeable and involved in worldwide missions. Festival planners are expecting more than 1,000 persons to attend the event.

The theme for the conference is "Missions Alive." Weekend speakers include R. W. Stott, London, England, who is among the world's foremost authorities on missions. Stott is rector emeritus of All Souls Church, London. Other speakers will be Donald R. Jacobs, of the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, and W. Robert Hess, professor of philosophy and history, Malone College, Canton, Ohio. Mary Oyer, professor of music, Goshen (Indiana) College, will be festival song leader.

Seven addresses will be presented by the resource persons. Thirty-five workshops on mission-related topics, led by various mission administrators, missionaries, and others, are an integral feature of the program. Activities are being planned for young children who attend with their parents.

The workshops will consider various Christian responses to competing world ideologies, population pressures and food shortages, economics and world trade, and nationalism and struggle for power.

Persons interested in reserving lodging and other information about the festival may contact the Tri-State Festival of Missions, Box 1328, Marbeck Center, Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio 45817. The registration fee is $5.00 per person, $7.50 per couple, and $10.00 per family. Included in the sponsors are Church of the Brethren, Church of God, Friends, and Mennonite organizations.

Mission's Alive - Festival 78

Amish agriculture: A new look

Comparisons of Amish farms with their high energy-using neighbors indicates that Amish farmers can cut energy without reducing yields, depending on the location.

The increasing agricultural yields of the last half-century have been achieved largely through the utilization of steadily increasing amounts of energy. If the current concern about future scarcity of energy is justified, will there inevitably be a decline in food production?

The results of a study to determine how much less energy the Amish use than their non-Amish neighbors and what penalty they pay in reduced yields because of their methods were outlined in a recent issue of *Science* (October 28, 1977 issue), by researchers Warren Johnson, Victor Stoltzfus, and Peter Craumer.

The Amish utilize a simple technology which is constantly adjusted to the right mix of sufficient labor intensity to provide jobs for the family and sufficient profitability to buy land, pay taxes, and support the shared obligations of the Amish community to cope with such problems as medical bills and fire losses.

The researchers state that while the Amish utilize a fundamental biblical interpretation, ". . . in the modern era, many interpretations must of necessity be arbitrary when biblical wording does not apply directly to current questions. This fact, when combined with the independence of each Amish community, has led to much differentiation among them. Some Amish drive cars and are almost indistinguishable from the Mennonites. But even among the Old Order Amish, the most numerous group, there are the very conservative who permit only stationary engines to drive belts for power. Most Old Order Amish pull motorized balers behind their horses and may have a number of engines to power milking machines, refrigeration units, feed grinders, or washing machines."

The Amish are adept at labor-intensive, unirrigated agriculture and must be able to purchase enough small farms to support their community and institutions without driving land prices too high.

In this study, the energy uses of Amish and "English" farmers (as the non-Amish farmers are referred to) were compared by calculating their energy ratios, that is the amount of food energy produced per unit of energy spent to produce it. An energy ratio greater than 1.0 indicates that the process is a net producer of energy, and an energy ratio of less than 1.0 that it is a net consumer.

Three groups of Amish were studied—in central Pennsylvania, eastern Illinois, and southeastern Wisconsin—in order to obtain results from different environments. English farmers in the same areas were also interviewed.

Horses: Contemplating an increasing role in agriculture?

In central Pennsylvania the overall energy ratio of the Old Order Amish (1.009) indicates that there is virtually no net gain in energy in their dairy operations. The English farmers' energy ratio of 0.533 means that they use 83 percent more energy to produce a unit of milk than the Amish. In this case, reduced energy use does not result in reduced production.

In eastern Illinois, where the trend is to hog raising, the energy ratio of the Amish (0.974) was 25 percent higher than that of the English farms, but their yields were 38 percent lower. These results support the pessimistic hypothesis that a decline in energy available to agriculture would cause a decline in food production.

The difference between the results probably stems from the differences between the two environments. Pennsylvania, with its long narrow valleys and marginal pasture, can be used efficiently by the Amish, while the uniformly good soil of Illinois is ideal for modern agricultural technology. If energy were to become scarce in the future, changes in agriculture would likely vary with the site. In southwest Wisconsin, the Amish dairy farms showed that the energy conservation of the Amish was striking, 1.61 to 0.27 for English farms.

Researchers Johnson, Stoltzfus, and Craumer conclude that the results from the more progressive Old Order Amish in Pennsylvania, who perhaps best approximate a traditional culture taking advantage of modern science and technology, do support the optimistic thesis that high production can be maintained with reduced use of energy. But the Amish in Illinois, who are progressive in most matters, do not support the thesis. The different environments, farm size, and operation found in Illinois may explain this however.

The researchers also note that probably more than any other group in the country, the Amish could survive without the support of industrial society. Even though the results are mixed, they do suggest the potential for reintroducing human labor without major losses in production as long as key supplies such as fertilizers are available.

The Amish experience, say the researchers, should make us more confident about the future if energy should become scarcer. The Amish are a window to the past; it is also possible they may be an image of the future. *David Ortman*

Update on World Conference lodging

Lombard, Illinois (MWC)—By mid-April only a limited number of private homes were still available for delegates attending the tenth assembly of the Mennonite World Conference in Wichita.

Accommodations in hotels and motels were also filling rapidly. Space in downtown Wichita hotels is extremely limited but rooms are still available in outlying motels.

Camper and tent sites are still available, although no full hookups are left at the two closest campgrounds, Wichita KOA and Kansas Coliseum. All facilities are still available at other campgrounds.

Ample space for delegates is left in various dormitories, including the youth dorm.

No more applications will be accepted from North Americans for the international work camp.

The registration deadline has been advanced to May 25. Preregistration is strongly urged for all who plan to attend more than one day. Registration is required for all who wish to participate in the daytime sessions, Wednesday morning through Saturday noon July 25-29. Registration is not required for evening sessions and Sunday afternoon.

Registering in advance will greatly facilitate the registration process at tenth assembly. Those who arrive at Wichita without preregistration may experience delays in registering and finding lodging.

All who are preregistered will be assigned in advance to Bible study and working groups. The number of the group to which each registrant is assigned will be printed on the name tag. The registration fee includes a program book, the *International Songbook, Mennonite World Handbook,* and other materials. A part of the fee will be used for assisting travel by persons from the Third World. The registration packet and name tag will be available on arrival in Wichita.

Daily registration will be available during the conference. It is not possible to preregister for daily registration.

Programs are planned for nursery children (up to five years) and children (six to fourteen years). However, these programs are only open on a weekly registration basis. Space will not be available on a daily basis. Those who wish to have their children placed in the nursery or children's program activities should preregister on a weekly basis. Children will be accepted on arrival without preregistration, but only if space is available and on payment of the weekly registration fee.

Registration forms are available in your congregation or by writing Mennonite World Conference, 528 East Madison Street, Lombard, Illinois 60148.

Quality is essential for growth

Paulos Mar Gregorios, formerly known as Paul Verghese, spoke April 16 at Goshen (Indiana) College's commencement exercises. An alumnus of Goshen, he is now Metropolitan of Delhi and principal of the Orthodox Seminary in Kottayam, Kerala, India. He is pictured with J. Lawrence Burkholder, president of Goshen. In his address Gregorios said the lifelong search for quality is essential for growth, even though it can never result in perfection. Further, quality must be sought for others, and it cannot be achieved without conflict, suffering, and endurance. He observed that "quality of life" rather than products and services is becoming a measure of national development. Gregorios is recognized worldwide as a distinguished bishop, educator, and author.

Personnel named for civil responsibility conference

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—Participants in the General Conference Mennonite Church invitational consultation on civil responsibility have been named and the schedule outlined.

The consultation will convene June 1-4 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana.

Beginning Thursday evening, Ted Stuckey and Reg Toews, representing the business administration arms of the General Conference and Mennonite Central Committee respectively, will present information on the administrative dimensions of the war tax question.

The question, Is there a biblical case for civil disobedience? will be the focus of scholarly input Friday morning. Millard Lind, professor at AMBS, will speak from an Old Testament perspective; confirmation from the scholar asked to provide a New Testament analysis is still pending.

A more specific look at the issue of war taxes is scheduled for Friday afternoon. Is civil disobedience called for in this specific case? David Schroeder, professor at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, and Kenneth Bauman, pastor of First Mennonite Church in Berne, Indiana, will speak to the question. Erland Waltner, president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, will respond.

Corporate action and individual conscience is the theme for Saturday morning. Speaking to this are J. Lawrence Burkholder, president of Goshen (Indiana) College, and William Keeney, professor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas. Another person has yet to confirm acceptance. Peter Ediger, pastor of the Arvada Mennonite Church, will respond.

Elvin Kraybill, legal counsel for Mennonite Central Committee, will talk about legal questions related to civil disobedience. Responding to his presentation are Duane Heffelbower, a member of the Division of Administration of the General Conference, and Ruth Stoltzfus, an attorney living in Linville, Virginia.

In addition to the formal input, various church leaders and administrative staff will contribute to the consultation. These people are Heinz Janzen, general secretary of the General Conference; Harold Regier and Perry Yoder, cosecretaries of peace and social concerns of the General Conference; John Gaeddert, executive secretary of the Commission on Education; William Snyder, executive secretary of MCC; Urbane Peachey, executive secretary for MCC Peace Section; Hubert Schwartzentruber, secretary for peace and social concerns of the Mennonite Church; Ed Enns, executive secretary of the Congregational Resources Board of the Canadian Conference; Peter Janzen, pastor, representing the Canadian Conference.

Six persons will form the findings committee. They are John Sprunger, pastor, Indian Valley Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pennsylvania; Palmer Becker, executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries; Elmer Neufeld, president of the General Conference; Hugo Jantz, chairperson of MCC (Canada); John Stoner, executive secretary for MCC Peace Section (US); and Larry Kehler, pastor of the Charleswood Mennonite Church, Winnipeg. Kehler is also the writer for the study guide which is to be published by fall.

Words & deeds

"World Missions: Interpretation '78" is the theme for the annual meeting of the Northern District Conference, June 15-18, at Glendive, Montana. Among the speakers are Howard Habegger, executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission; Peter Kehler, COM secretary for Asia (elect); Henry and Sara Ens, missionaries to Mexico; Harry Martens, currently in Taiwan acting as a fund-raising consultant; and Ted Risingsun, staff person for Montana for Mennonite Indian Leaders' Council. The program will focus on changes in world missions, the philosophy, program, and personnel of General Conference missions, and the Mennonite church in Asia.

An orchestra for Mennonites is being organized in Manitoba. The orchestra, along with the senior choirs of Westgate Collegiate and Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute, both located in Winnipeg, will be heard in a concert June 4. Twenty years have elapsed since the Mennonite Symphony Orchestra existed. The revival is motivated by a need to provide more opportunity for good musicians to play at a semiprofessional level. Response has been enthusiastic. A board of directors is being set up, a secure financial base is envisioned, and it is hoped that a full-time conductor may be hired for the 1979-80 season.

Peace Caravans which would carry the peace message to local congregations were suggested during a New Call to Peacemaking conference at Camp Mack, Indiana, April 14-15. Additional suggestions included the need for developing support systems for nonconforming Christians, such as tax resisters, and not sending missionaries abroad unless they have served the poor here. The conference also said it was important to link together evangelism and peace.

Intergenerational retreats to help families focus on a Christian approach to injustice, poverty, and violence are planned for the summer. Of particular interest to Mennonites is a retreat for July 21-23 at Madrid, Iowa, which will be led by Marg and Weldon Nisly, Ron Byler, Bev and Charlie Lord. For further information contact Weldon Nisly, Families for Justice, 315 West Logan Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19144, or telephone 315-848-8620.

Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) is underwriting a three-year, $39,500 project to assist Indian settlements in Paraguay to expand tillable acreage. A large tractor will be bought for collective use, and cultivators, planters, and plows for individual use. The tractor will be used to plow the rough ground each season. Then the farmers can, with animal traction equipment, till twice the usual amount of acreage. This will allow them to improve their standard of living. Other projects approved, ranging from $5,000 to $10,000, include a cooperative savings and loan in Bolivia, a credit society in India, low-cost housing in Colombia, and several individual projects in Texas and Kenya. MEDA now has a membership of sixty-eight Canadians and 153 Americans.

Lancaster County's newest magazine, *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage,* has released its second issue. The twenty-eight-page illustrated quarterly is published by the Lancaster Mennonite Conference Historical Society, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17602. The magazine focuses on the historical background, religious thought and expression, culture, and genealogy of Mennonite-related groups in Pennsylvania. Initial response to the magazine surpassed expectations, necessitating a reprint of the first issue.

Winnipeg, Manitoba—Choice Books leaders from the Canadian provinces and the central office in Harrisonburg, Virginia, met March 31-April 1. A plan is being worked out to provide central buying for Canada. At the banquet Wednesday evening, John White, author of *The Fight, Eros,* and other books spoke about what Christian books should do. He referred to "Christian junk" available on the book market and urged the group to avoid being caught up with it. "Do not spread non-Christian garbage under a Christian guise," he said.

Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) has sent a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau outlining its views on harmony between different cultural and linguistic groups in Canada. It states that "Canada has both an obligation and an opportunity to prove to itself and to help demonstrate to the world the possibility of a large number of diverse social groups living together in creativity, peace, and harmony, each group complementary to the other." While expressing its concern for national unity, the letter states that "we hold the national state to be secondary to our allegiance to God."

The Menno-Pilots Association is establishing an active pilots' group related to Mennonite Disaster Service. Duties of the group would be volunteer flying on an as needed basis in disaster areas, including ferrying equipment, tools, and manpower. Each MDS state coordinator is starting a list. Pilots are asked to register with the coordinators, and include license, ratings, flight hours, class medical, and aircraft available.

The Mennonite Reporter had a good year in 1977. Published in Waterloo, Ontario, the inter-Mennonite biweekly newspaper finished the year with a surplus of nearly $4,000 from operations alone. Total expenditures were $78,500. A significant action at the February 4 annual meeting was to begin a book publishing service in Canada. It is intended to assist authors in producing better products and greater distribution.

A "Jesus Witness March" through the crowded main street of Neuwied, Germany, and a week of evangelistic meetings energized the Mennonite Brethren Church in that city in early March. Over 200 Christians carried banners and placards proclaiming that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. The march was a kickoff to the evangelistic meetings. The 240 members of the congregation are an international mix of Germans, Mennonite immigrants from Russia and South America, and Yugoslavians. Since the evangelistic effort was cooperative in nature, Pastor Roland Marsch said it was "a breakthrough in love and blessing between us and the participating churches which was urgently needed."

Youth groups of two Kansas churches—Grace Hill Mennonite Church in Whitewater and First Mennonite Church in Newton—are underwriting the cost to bring two Latin American Mennonite leaders to Mennonite World Conference. The Grace Hill youth are sponsoring Louis Correa of Colombia, and the First Church youth are sponsoring Alvaro Hernandez of Uruguay. Both groups will be paying the travel costs to Kansas and the living costs for the week of conference. The invitations were processed through Hector Valencia, secretary for Latin America for the Commission on Overseas Mission. The motivation for the sponsorship was to give a person a chance to come who otherwise would be unable to do so, thereby helping that person to become more aware of the larger Mennonite church.

A church work minor that includes work-study experience in a local congregation and a one semester internship off-campus will be introduced this fall at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas. The minor seeks to provide an orientation for those wanting to explore an area for possible full-time occupation. A degree program in nursing beginning in 1979 has also been approved.

Record

Workers

John and Clara Hesse of First Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, have begun a two-year voluntary service assignment in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, under Mennonite Central Committee. He is working with *The Other Side* magazine and she with Jubilee Crafts. They have managed the Heese Printing Company of Saskatoon. They previously served with MCC at Brook Lane Psychiatric Center near Hagerstown, Maryland.

John and Clara Hesse

Ministers

John Chand terminated his services at the Bethel Church, Hammon, Oklahoma, in January. Chand, a citizen of India, came to the United States to attend Winebrenner Theological Seminary in Findlay, Ohio, from which he graduated in 1970. He had been serving a three-fourths-time assignment with the Bethel congregation under the Commission on Home Ministries since September 1976.

Rosella Epp is terminating her leadership responsibilities with the Manhattan (Kansas) Fellowship effective June 1 to begin serving as director of Christian education and youth ministries at Lorraine Avenue Church, Wichita, Kansas.

Paul L. Goering has resigned as pastor of Eighth Street Church, Goshen, Indiana, effective October 1. His future plans are indefinite.

Eldon Graber, North Newton, Kansas, was licensed and installed as pastor of the Hopefield Church, Moundridge, Kansas, on April 16. Graber has served as president of Freeman Junior College, Freeman, South Dakota, 1968-72, and he and his wife, Martha, served under Mennonite Central Committee's Teachers Abroad Program in Zaria, Nigeria, 1972-77.

Ronald Krehbiel has been granted a one-year leave as pastor of the Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kansas, to serve under the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission in Lesotho, Africa, effective this summer.

John Linscheid, a student at Claremont School of Theology, will be serving in the Goessel (Kansas) Church during the summer.

Gary Martin, pastor of the Silver Street Church, Goshen, Indiana, was ordained April 16.

Weldon Schlonegar, a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, is serving as summer pastor at the First Church and West Zion Church in Moundridge, Kansas.

Robert Suderman has resigned as pastor of First Church, Halstead, Kansas, as of July 4. His future plans are indefinite.

Published

A list of a wide variety of energy stewardship resources has been released by the General Conference's energy task force. For individual copies of these materials, contact Harold Regier, Cosecretary for Peace and Social Concerns, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

Mennonites and War Taxes is a twenty-eight-page booklet by Walter Klaassen which traces the history of the war tax issue in Anabaptism, and suggests how Mennonites might relate to that history. It was first published by the Lancaster Mennonite Conference Historical Society, but in this printing the publisher is the General Conference's Commission on Education. Copies of the booklet may be ordered from Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114 for sixty cents each.

Eighteen pages of book suggestions for church libraries, congregational leaders, and church school teachers are included in a booklet titled *Mennonite History and Mennonite Writings.* Approximately 200 titles which relate to Mennonite emphases but are written by both Mennonites and non-Mennonites have been categorized under the headings of biography, children's literature (by age groups), devotions, drama, fiction, history, poetry. Copies may be ordered from Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114, for thirty-five cents each.

Calendar

June 15-18—Northern District Conference annual sessions, Dawson County High School, Glendive, Montana

June 15-18—Pacific District Conference annual sessions, Mount Elden Southwest Conference Center, Flagstaff, Arizona

July 25-30—Mennonite World Conference, Wichita, Kansas

October 5-9—National New Call to Peacemaking conference, Green Lake, Wisconsin

October 27-29—Western District Conference annual sessions, First Church, Newton, Kansas

Canadian

May 26-28—Art, music, and drama festival, First Church, Calgary, Alberta

July 5-9—Conference of Mennonites in Canada annual sessions, Gretna, Manitoba

Central

June 16-18—Tri-state Festival of Missions, Bluffton (Ohio) College

Western

October 13-15—Fall Festival, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas; theme, "People of the Land"

Rosthern Junior College, a Christian residential high school, is inviting applications for the following positions: teachers of French, physical education, Christian education; residence personnel as dean of girls and dean of boys (part-time). Apply to: Robert J. Suderman, Principal, Rosthern Junior College, Rosthern, Saskatchewan, Canada SOK 3RO; phone 306-232-4222.

Editorial assistant needed

The Mennonite requires an editorial assistant to begin work at the Newton, Kansas, office in midsummer. Duties include proofreading, pasteup, and styling for **The Mennonite** and its regional editions. The work requires skill in English usage. Applicants should write by June 1 to:

Personnel Office
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Christ and the church

Christ has loved the church
and has given himself for her
to make her holy by his word
and clean in the bath by water,
to present to himself the church resplendent
free from spot or wrinkle or any such thing
so that she may be holy and blameless.
(Ephesians 5:25-27).

Prophets witnessed to Yahweh's unshakable covenant with Israel. "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you" *Ich habe dich je und je geliebt, darum habe ich dich zu mir gezogen aus lauter Guete* (Jeremiah 31:3). "For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer . . ." (Isaiah 54:5). ". . . And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you" (Isaiah 62:5).

A new covenant is sung in Ephesians 5:25-27, one which embraces Jews and Gentiles, men and women, masters and slaves; one of forgiveness, love, and peace.

The hymn begins with the price that was paid for the bride. In the Old Testament, a woman became a man's wife and property by a cash payment or its equivalent. At the beginning of this love stands death. The bridegroom provides life for her forever by the gift of his life. He does not make the bride pay for his love; this bridegroom surrenders "himself" for his bride. The lines of Samuel Stone's hymn come to mind:

From heaven he came and sought her
to be his holy bride
With his own blood he bought her
And for her life he died.

This love is unique. The lover has the power, the will, to make the bride perfect, and he will not rest until she appears glorious and free from defect before him. The syntax of the three *hina* clauses with the futuristic subjunctives is a strong argument for a future perfection.

First, he will make her holy by his word, *rhema.* Could the pronouncement of his loving her be this word that makes her holy? He will make her clean through the bath in water. Is this not through Christ's death and spirit of God, Mark 1:8? Second, he will present to himself the church resplendent. The Messiah presents the bride to himself. This presentation is the completion of a new creation (Revelation 21). Third, she shall be holy and blameless in a moral and religious sense. The adjective "resplendent" *(endoxos),* used to describe the church, occurs only once more in the Pauline epistles, and that is in 1 Corinthians 4:10, "You are held in honor *(endoxoi),* we in disrepute."

Christ's manifestation to the world (Ephesians 2:7; 3:10) is an essential element of the doctrine of the church. Through her his majesty becomes public. She is the living proof of his faithfulness. Those who doubt his power and love will judge him according to his truthfulness toward his Chosen One. When the work is completed, he and his bride, to the applause of all the world, will rejoice in their mutual perfection.

Yet, for the present, Paul speaks of the Messiah as guiding her, preparing her, receiving her despite the spots and the wrinkles which mar her.

Tho with a scornful wonder
Men see her sore oppressed
By schisms rent asunder
By heresies distressed.

The romance of Christ and the church which is sung in this hymn is placed into a larger pericope which alludes to marriage, to the husband-wife relationship (Ephesians 5:21-24, 28-33). Here no reference is made to the sequence of creation, to sin, to special kinds of Jewish dress, but the new covenant radically dominates the picture.

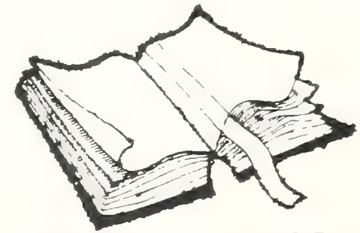
A joyful picture of marriage is given without any misgiving. The author moves freely from one to the other—husband and wife, Christ and the church. Of the eight times "church" is used in the epistles, four occur in these sections forming the frame around the Bridal Hymn. In the marriage relationship, love and subordination in love encounter one another, as do gracious election and joyful fear. Problems are solved. The outcome is peace (Ephesians 2:13-14).

Paul ends this pericope with a quotation from Genesis 2:24, ". . . and they shall be one flesh." Without the partner of the other sex, the humanity of mankind would not be complete. Together as companions they complement one another's social being. The marriage covenant is grounded solidly and finds its supreme example in the Lord's covenant with his people.

Yet, Jesus also comes individually to every person as the one great companion who redeems from disheartening loneliness. "O love that will not let me go."

Gertrude Roten, lecturer in New Testament Greek, Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana

Roten



Open your Bible

Letters

Ethnicity and the canal

Dear Editor: Recent articles by Brenda Schroeder and Delton Franz (March 28 issue) express Mennonite commonplaces which seem popular in our time and which both amuse and confuse me.

What would Schroeder have me do? Shall I change my name to Scalopini and develop a fondness for egg foo jung? As a matter of fact, I am proud of my Mennonite name and Mennonite heritage and do not believe that I am being ungodly in my position. Read Hebrews 11, or almost any portion of the Bible, to discover the pride Hebrews took in their Jewish names and Jewish food. I believe that the Creator has given us an ethnic identification as well as a broader one, and I am happy to be both a Swiss Mennonite and a human being.

Nor do I believe it likely that, if left to Jimmy Carter and Delton Franz, the Panama Canal would ever have been built. I can imagine that hypersensitive consciences would have found it impossible to disturb exotic mushrooms growing on the peaks of Darien. All of the world has been blessed by the Panama Canal. Food is cheaper and more available for the hungry people of the world and American farmers find a livelier market for their grain.

When I consider these matters, and when I note that Panamanian people have done nothing to lead me to believe that they can manage the canal efficiently, then I cannot understand those who say that they cannot "in clear conscience" vote against the treaty. My conscience sends me another message. But I suppose there can be no arguments about conscience. *Peter Hilty, 632 Bellevue, Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701* April 5

Faith makes Mennonites

Dear Editor: "What Is a Mennonite?" (March 28 issue) was a fine piece of work.

As a child, till the age of six I spoke only Spanish. Then, till age sixteen it was English; followed by German until a few years ago.

After joining church, it was sometimes amusing, embarrassing, or a real eye-opener to live in a district where common names were Miller, Yoder, and Boehr. And suddenly there was the typical "Mexican" name? Gonzales . . . hmm . . . how did that get in there?

I like zwieback, pizza, egg rolls, *and* tacos. And, like Brenda Schroeder, I feel it's our simple faith in Christ that makes us Mennonite, not our High or Low German, or our prayer caps or borscht.

I will always remember an eighty-year-old grandma trying to justify her refusal to speak English any more than what she had to, saying: "I'm satisfied with the language my Savior spoke." She was referring to a German dialect! *Fern Gonzales, Summerfield Mennonite Church, Summerfield, Illinois* April 6

Questions on church growth

Dear Editor: "The Pastor and Church Growth" (March 28 issue) raised some serious questions. I wonder if we might not be learning the wrong lessons from some of the sociological data the church growth people are feeding us.

Homogeneity has been a peculiar Mennonite plague, as reflected in Brenda Schroeder's editorial in the same issue. Now we are on the way toward making significant breakthroughs in accepting diversity, only to be told by the church growth specialists that homogeneity is inevitable anyway in the church, and that if we desire *growing* churches, we might as well work on the principle that "like attracts like" and make the most of it. They come very close to making a prescription out of the very thing we have recognized as our problem.

The theological underpinnings in the church growth emphasis are, in my opinion, woefully inadequate. The four churches represented in the line graph are compared only on the basis of growth in their membership over a ten-year period. During the racial struggles of the sixties, we witnessed the demise of some churches committed to faithfulness, and a commensurate burst of growth in some congregations who turned their backs to the gospel.

Could the dotted line showing decrease in one of the congregations be a sign of faithfulness, while the bloated membership of another congregation be a sign of apostasy? Where do we find assurance that the growth people, who seem to be so enamored with their data, have ever considered such questions? *Melvin D. Schmidt, 655 South Lorraine Avenue, Wichita, Kansas 67211* April 7

Need input from insiders

Dear Editor: I noticed in the April 4 issue that an offender ministries retreat was organized by Mennonite Central Committee. The article related how mental health was improved once Mennonites got involved. Just remember it wasn't so much Mennonites outside mental health institutions but those who worked inside that brought change.

I hope MCC seeks out Mennonite probation and parole agents for input before going too far afield. I know of a Mennonite probation and parole agent here in Wisconsin who has brought a light to offenders and agents alike. *De Honn, 430 Hillview Crescent, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53186* April 10

But, is it biblical?

Dear Editor: While it is the individual choice of parents whether they will use spanking as a means of discipline, I would like to caution against the view implied in the article "Mennonite Theology and Spankings" (April 4 issue). The implication being this, that in some way spanking and Christianity do not go together. That may be good Mennonite theology; it is not good biblical theology.

I would encourage parents who are struggling with whether to spank or not from a theological perspective to read and ponder Proverbs 13:24; 22:15; 23:13-14; and 29:15. I do not see anywhere in Scripture that God has rescinded these directives for well-adjusted children, and, I might add, children who have self-respect. *Stephen C. Strunk*

. . .

Dear Editor: I sent a letter regarding the article, "Mennonite Theology and Spanking" (April 4 issue). Since writing that letter, I have been convicted that I did not write it in love, though I desired to. I do not wish to be a negativist or defensive, and I do not wish to put others on the defensive. I confess that I allowed my emotions to get involved and I apologize.

My point was to say that I do not think that opposition to spanking, on nonviolence grounds, is really the position we wish to take. At least I do not wish to take that as Mennonite theology. Christians are not to take vengeance, either by violence or any other means.

If the author means by nonviolence the teaching of not taking vengeance, then I, too, hold to nonviolence. If nonviolence means that I cannot use physical force in any way, even to discipline my child, then I do not agree with that kind of definition. I hope that Mennonite theology does not preclude the use of spanking as inconsistent with the doctrine of not taking vengeance. *Stephen C. Strunk, 700 South 19th Street, Clinton, Oklahoma 73601* April 11

Meditation

Fig leaves and Freudian slips

Invariably his undershirt shows. Three inches of white increasingly grays until the end of the week. This morning I yanked down Jerry's pants and underwear and pulled his undershirt well over his seat.

Quickly Jerry hitched up his jeans. "What if the children in school saw me like this?" he asked self-consciously. They wouldn't, of course. But I understood my little son's embarrassment.

As a child I had recurring dreams of finding myself in class in pajamas. Later I had equally upsetting dreams of appearing in church unkempt or ill-clad.

I don't know what triggers those dreams. Perhaps they originate from an experience such as answering the phone when one is one-third dressed and discovering that one is talking to the pastor.

Recently our congregation had its annual business meeting. That night I dreamt I had attended it in my housecoat and I sat on my feet to conceal my crooked toes. I was relieved to awaken. One aspect of the dream continues to trouble me. In my dream I had wished that at least my feet could be beautiful, as though physical features would compensate for inappropriate apparel. What was exposed should at least be admired.

I have long advocated honesty and mask removal. A slipping fig leaf, I discover, is something else.

Myron C. Madden tells of a minister who dreamt he was heading toward the pulpit without a shirt and tie. Someone handed him these and he went up to deliver the best sermon he had ever preached. Like everyone else, he said, he had to be exposed before he could be clothed, to be vulnerable before he could receive grace and affirmation.

"Grace is a covering," continues Madden. "It is that which makes us adequate . . . What clothing is to the body, grace is to the spirit."

Dreams of appearing at my worst in school or church have often come true, more often than I have been aware of it. Despite all my intuitive tact and artful dodging, I have been the girl in the Freudian slip, and the exposed features have not always been beautiful.

The areas I am most careful to hide are those for which I most need God's grace and the forgiveness and acceptance of other persons.

I must awaken to the opportunity these dreams present for redemption. My need is God's opportunity for grace. Dreams remind me of the need; Charles Wesley speaks of the grace.

"Plenteous grace with thee is found," Wesley wrote. "Grace to cover all my sin."

And Isaiah said, "He will give me a robe of righteousness. He will clothe me in garments of salvation."

That's adequate covering to meet God in person. In fact, it's the only adequate covering.

LaVerna Klippenstein

Help me to wait

The day was in mid-September. Our family had moved from a city setting in Saskatchewan to a farm setting in Kansas.

Each new day had brought with it a mixture of many emotions. The constant demand of new situations and new beginnings was somewhat overwhelming.

Nature spoke to me that day. Mist is unusual in Kansas. However, that morning it was there. The clouds were all-encompassing, totally obscuring the miles and miles of prairie all around. The clock told us that the day was commencing but the fog continued to linger low. This setting seemed to portray our feelings. Then, about mid-morning, the power of the sun and the cool of the autumn breeze dispersed the clouds. What relief! From my soul flowed these words:

Mist enshrouds the prairie./Miles and miles of endless gray/moving in sullen, sad silence./Canceling all we know is there,/Creating total chaos and void,/Causing feelings of blurriness.

Within arises the instinct/to reach out,/to grope for,/to lift up./But all must wait . . . wait for the power of the sun.

O my soul!/When mist enshrouds my being,/When all I know seems canceled,/When chaos and void seem to reign,/When anxiety and feelings of fear are real./Help me to wait . . . wait on the unchangeable power of God.

Louise P. Friesen

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CONTRIBUTORS

Erlene Unruh, Route 2, Box 506A, Newton, Kansas 67114, is a free-lance writer.

Viola Hilty resides at Route 3, Box 120, Versailles, Missouri 65084.

Poets for the mothers' collage are Lydia Regehr, 6339, 34th Southwest, #413, Seattle, Washington 98126; Louise Dueck, 55 Flerimac Road, West Hill, Ontario M1E 4B1; and Ivy M. Yost, Frederick, Pennsylvania 19435.

Malcolm Wenger is serving under the Native Ministries Board of the Canadian Conference and lives in Selkirk, Manitoba.

David Ortman is a Mennonite Voluntary Service worker in Washington, D.C.

Meditation writers are LaVerna Klippenstein, 584 Berkley Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3R 1J9 and Louise P. Friesen, 910 Trotter Crescent, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7L 3R1.

CREDITS

Cover, Judy Bauer Boschmann, 219 North Pershing, Muncie, Indiana 47305; 306, 309, ACTION; 307, Robert Maust, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801; 308, 311, RNS; 313, Eva Luoma Photos, Cove Station, Weirton, West Virginia; 314, Goshen College Information Service.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

A call to Christian parenting

One calendar in my office marks May 16 as Mother's Day. The conference pocket calendar designates May 16 as Festival of the Christian Home. This disparity reflects part of the contemporary reassessment of parental roles. It is also related to the Mennonite shift from rural to urban settings.

Mennonites come out of a rural, production-oriented, role-defined heritage. I am one of twelve children and my father considered us an asset when we hoed sugar beets, pitched the bundles, and did the farm chores without using hired labor.

It was clearly understood that father managed us six brothers and taught us about farming. That was the way to become men.

Equally clear was the responsibility of mother to teach her six daughters about sewing, cooking, cleaning, milking, and household duties. That was the way to become women.

Twelve children could add considerably to a farm's production. And we didn't really cost that much extra, because we wore hand-me-downs and grew much of our own food.

Marge and I have four children in the city. How many "outside" chores can you find on a 60′ x 90′ lot? How does father (who is away a lot) manage the three sons? What makes men of our sons and a woman of our daughter?

The traditional model is awkward for city families. Mothers often become the main managers for both sons and daughters. Most of the children's jobs are ones that our parents would have considered feminine.

Even in today's situation, most mothers deserve medals for their faithfulness and ingenuity. A special day for them is appropriate.

But there is a need to emphasize the family as a unit. Absentee fathers need not (in fact must not) regard their roles as insignificant. Every child needs the interaction of male and female to help him or her discover an appropriate identity. It may be that part of today's homosexual population growth can be attributed to our failure in exposing children to adequate male and female relationships.

Children can be seen as a liability in urban families. They contribute little or nothing to the income but multiply our costs (remember the last grocery bill?). They get underfoot, in the way of mobility and careers, or cause us grief about their loud music, childish or adolescent language and behavior, and challenge our convictions concerning the biblical portrayal of Christian family life.

We come to feel guilty and compensate by being permissive and trying to become like kids ourselves. In many ways, our society is dominated by youth.

It can become confusing and frustrating. In the 1971 Canadian census, 24 percent of our families reported having no children. Many parents regret the children they have (as illustrated in the 1975 Ann Landers' survey).

Some people feel that zero population growth is a sign of faithful Christian stewardship in a world of dwindling resources. However, the pet population is mushrooming. What does it really do for resources when we substitute animals for children? And what does that say about our assessment of human life?

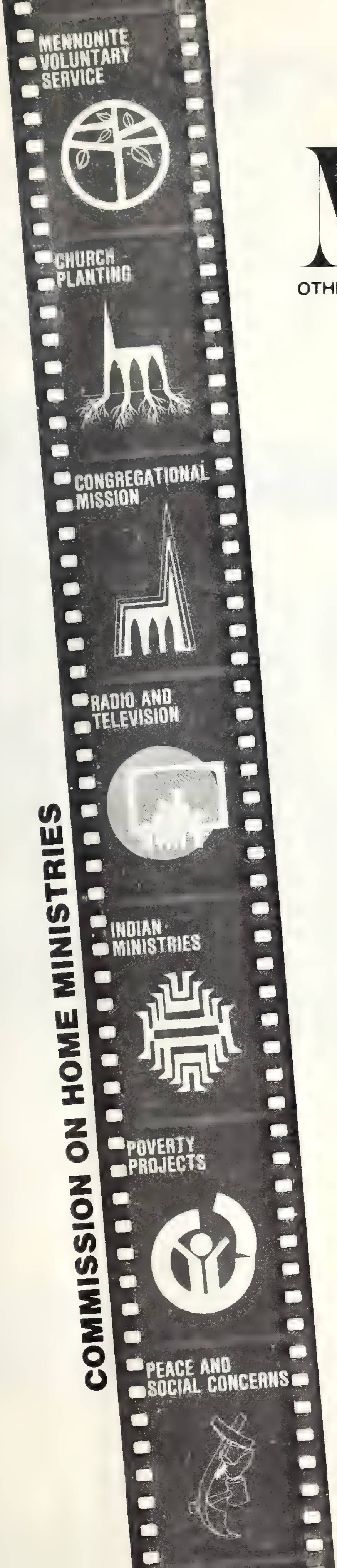
I join all those who take their hats off to mothers on May 16. This issue contains tributes to traditional mothers.

I also issue a call for all of us to celebrate the Christian home. Let's look at what it means to be Christian parents (mothers *and* fathers) in an urban, technological culture. Some of the traditional images and roles need some adjusting.

We have three sons and one daughter. The boys do many household chores—cooking, cleaning, baking—and spend much more time with mother than with father.

Yet we want our boys to become men and our daughter to become a woman. It takes extra effort. I have to *plan* for extra time with my children, *plan* to do things together, *plan* to teach them certain skills, and *plan* to have them experience the interrelationship of Marge and myself.

It seems appropriate that Mother's Day or Festival of the Christian Home falls on Pentecost Day this year. That can be a most significant clue. We need to seek again the Holy Spirit's wisdom and guidance for becoming Christian parents in a transistorized age. BW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The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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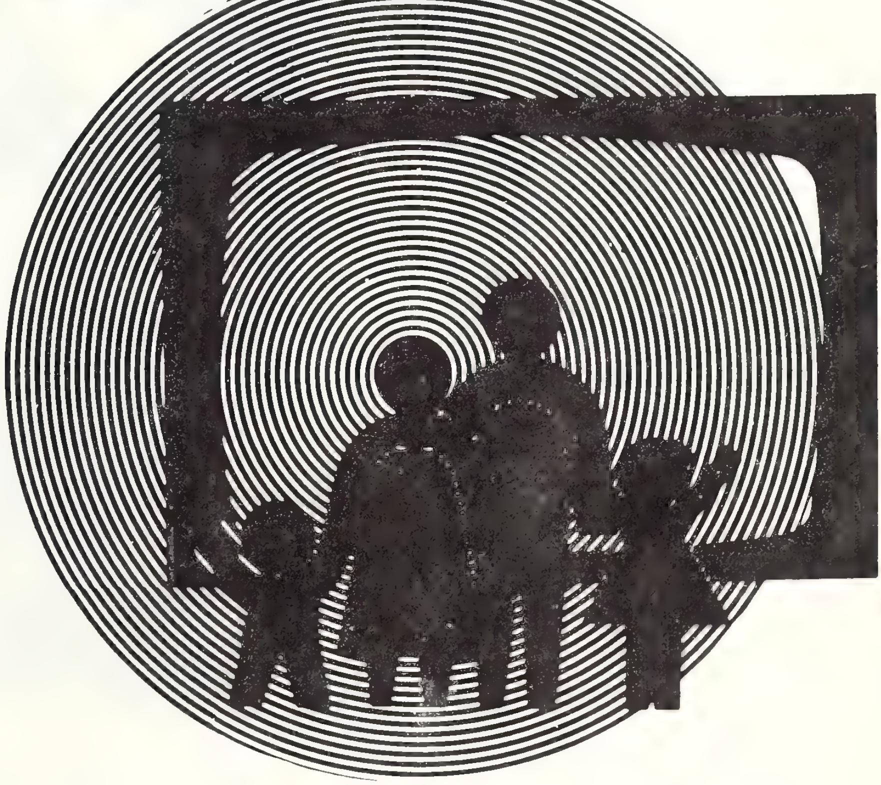


Inside:

The Bible and modern media
Choose the channel
The policeman shot my cat
Plowing the prophets into mission

THE BIBLE AND MODERN MEDIA

David Virtue

The Bible is without question the most concise model of God's communication to people. It is partial, but adequate. It was never designed to tell us all about God, for finitude can never fully grasp infinitude, but it is enough to satisfy our faith. It was never designed to satisfy our credulity.

The Bible is the clearest and most precise communication of God's redemptive purposes, and from Abraham to Jesus this message is communicated in a variety of ways, in different languages, to different cultures, by a score of people ranging from prophets and kings to peasants and shepherds.

Communicators of the good news in the first centuries used two methods. They adopted the language of the people, not the philosopher or theologian. They spoke in *koine* or common Greek, the jargon of the streets. The early Christians also pioneered the book as opposed to the scroll, a form of communication still with us today.

The question to Christians is this: Are we still pioneering new methods and techniques of communication to parallel what was achieved in the first centuries?

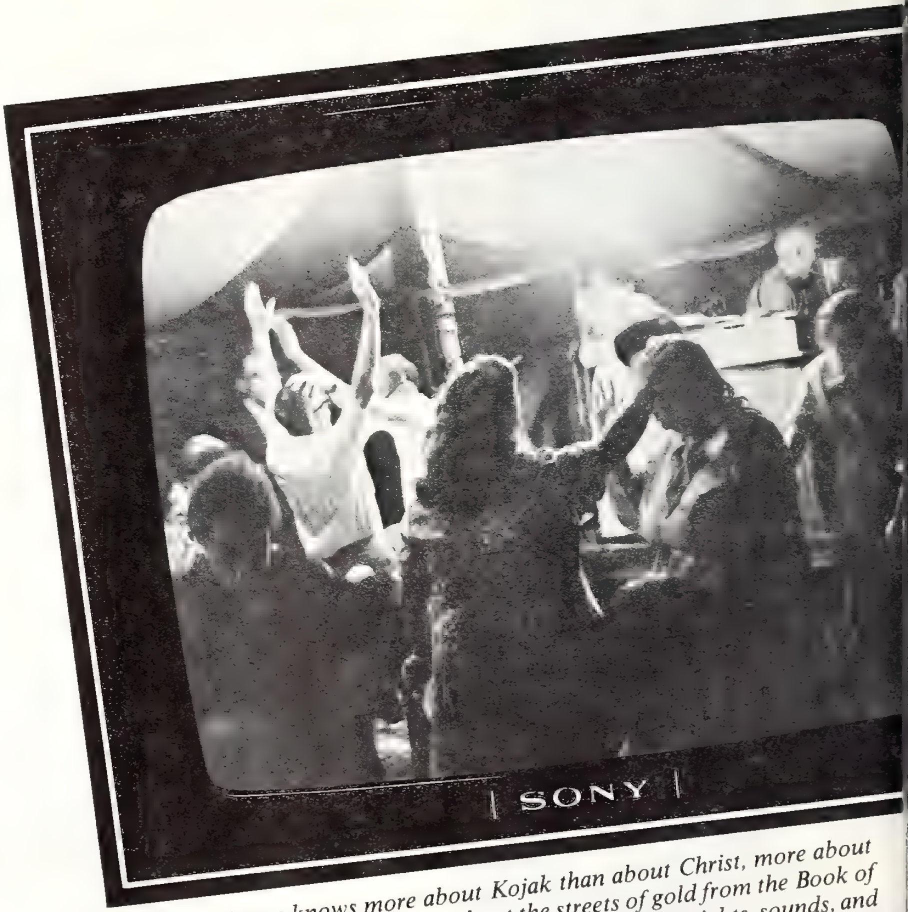
We can go to the moon, but we have failed to communicate the simple news about people's condition and about the nature of God. People don't hear us. In many cases the sounds and symbols we use wash over people without them really hearing what was said, because those symbols no longer relate to experiences in people's lives. For example, can we expect thoroughly twentieth-century people, awash in hot and cool communication, to grasp the significance of the challenge: Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? That might have sounded meaningful to a generation steeped in biblical symbols and Christian terminology. They knew what the symbols alluded to.

Such a phrase presupposes that hearers have some understanding for expiation, atonement "blood of the Lamb," Old Testament sacrifices, and Jesus' blood. The truth today is that they don't, and so the symbols become evangelical jargon.

Such phrases will have to be dropped, or explained in detail, if they are to be used for effective communication.

Today's audience, raised largely in a secular, humanistic environment, knows more about Kojak than Christ, more about the streets of San Francisco than the streets of gold from the Book of Revelation. To communicate the gospel, we must use the sights, sounds, and styles of the surrounding culture without sacrificing the truth in the gospel. That is not an easy task.

Ironically, missionaries to a foreign culture have less problems grappling with a new language and culture and relating the gospel to it than pastors to our own culture.



Today's audience knows more about Kojak than about Christ, more about the streets of San Francisco than about the streets of gold from the Book of Revelation. To communicate the gospel, we must use the sights, sounds, and styles of the surrounding culture without sacrificing the truth of the gospel.

It seems a deceptive technique for pastors to use certain symbols without definition, knowing that by their use they can provoke an automatic type of emotional response. The same goes for our hymnology. People enjoy "The Old Rugged Cross" sung with a particular melody, because they associate the words and emotions of the hymn with what they know. Sung any other way, the words do not give the same emotional "high."

Misunderstanding comes when the communicator's words and sounds do not connect with the hearer or are misinterpreted. An example of such mixed signals is afforded us by Archie Bunker in a memora-

The Bible is the clearest and most precise communication of God's redemptive purposes, and from Abraham to Jesus this message is communicated in a variety of ways, in different languages, to different cultures, by a score of people ranging from prophets and kings to peasants and shepherds.

ble confrontation with Edith in "All in the Family." He says to her in exasperation, "How come when I speak to you in English, you always answer in dingbat?"

It only dawned on me a few years ago that the reason Jesus communicated in parables is because people understood in picture language rather than in concepts. It is in some ways a sad indictment that our western system of modern education is built on an Aristotelian and later medieval system of communication, which first-century Christians would have had difficulty in understanding. Concepts must be related to real life, or they are soon forgotten.

Jesus used agricultural metaphors like wheat, tares, fields, mustard seed, lilies, sheep, and goats because they reflected the strongly rural environment where he preached and taught.

One of the great tragedies in the modern media, especially television, is the tendency to blur truth with entertainment, to confuse the truth with half-truths and exaggerations. Perhaps it's the nature of visual images that they can often convey an idea that is not necessarily meant.

How many people know that there are vast theological differences between Oral Roberts and Robert Schuller on the one hand, and Garner Ted Armstrong on the other? Most viewers, including some print media people, lump them together as evangelists.

The tragedy of television is that it fails to communicate what is really presupposed and meant. It communicates only what is seen and heard. Consequently, we give up the mystery of faith for easy believism and instant, packaged answers. We fall into the trap Dietrich Bonhoeffer called "cheap grace." We accept all too easily Bill Bright's four spiritual laws, Bill Gothard's "how to" manual for programmed living, and Hal Lindsey's wrap-up on the End Times. We don't have to think; we are given predigested packages to lull us into forgetfulness.

What is being communicated? Very little, I suggest. The slogan Something Beautiful Is Going to Happen to You Today is contentless and increasingly untrue in a world full of problems and cultural diversity.

If one is going to communicate the timeless truths of the gospel, the first ingredient required is authenticity. Christian communicators must reject selling believism without obedience, salvation without commitment, glory without suffering, joy without pain.

The second factor in communication is honesty and integrity. That means for me as a Christian communicator in the secular media, both as a writer and in television, that I must not avoid the truth about the evil and sins of Christians, even if they happen to be evangelicals. The higher the standards we set for ourselves, the more open to critical examination of ourselves we must be. Sweeping it under the carpet is no solution; it will only emerge later and make the whole matter that much worse.

The modern media are not without their own sins. Editors often delete or edit for style and space words and sentences that can change the meaning and intent of original copy. (Reporters are just as frustrated by what editors do to their copy, as readers are frustrated with what reporters allegedly write.) Television has a peculiar ability to deceive. Words can be refuted, but visual images can deceive one into believing things that are not true. On TV, fantasy can be made to appear reality, and vice versa. So much so, that often truth can be dispensed with almost completely.

The integrity of the individual is more important at this point than any other factor. If the TV evangelists we now have reflect the kind of truth-telling we can expect from that medium, then the game is lost for evangelicals as far as truth, integrity, and authenticity is concerned. Most of it is little more than evangelical entertainment, and a lot of it is not very high class. The temptation to forego real substantive content for image will leave most people in the long run feeling vacuous and empty. It is the medium becoming the message, not the content of the message reflected through the medium.

Most people are familiar with McLuhan's definitions of "hot" and "cool" communication. Radio is a hot medium; TV and the telephone are cool communication. A hot medium extends one single sense in "high definition."

The Bible is an example of hot medium. It extends a single sense throughout its pages—that of God's redemptive acts culminating in that one great act of all, the appearance of Jesus Christ.

The question we face today is this, Do we sacrifice biblical truth and integrity in communication for evangelical cliches and entertainment disguised as gospel? Or, will we sit down and do some hard thinking about how to use the media with honesty and authenticity, using the images to present that truth with clarity, without apology, and without easy believism bereft of commitment?"

If we "sell" the faith cheaply, the result can only be a generation presented in the parable of the sower. Most of the seed falls on stony ground and is unable to hold up in times of crisis.

That decision is ours.

Choose the channel

Diane Zimmerman Umble

Children will understand a prosocial message and will use its lesson to guide their own behavior.

"The Swing," a thirty-second children's spot announcement, deals with conflict resolution.

We worry about our children. We are concerned about their runny noses, the ideas they learn in school, how they spend their time, the television they watch.

Well aware of TV's negative impact, we become frustrated as we search for ways to know when positive programming is aired.

Research has demonstrated that television can teach children prosocial lessons.

An experiment was done by the United Methodists, United Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Disciples of Christ, and the Media Action Research Center, Inc. (MARC), with funding from a Lilly Endowment. Two television commercials were produced and released, aimed at helping children resolve everyday conflicts in creative ways.

One of the thirty-second "spots" shows a girl and a boy running for a swing. They reach it at the same time, lock hands on the chains, and start fighting about who will swing first. The scene freezes. An off-screen voice says, "What would you do?" The scene unfreezes and one of the children suggests taking turns so they can both get to swing. Next we see both children swinging and having fun. The voice says, "There are lots of things you can do when two people want the same thing. One is to take turns. And that's a good one."

Experiments were conducted to see if "The Swing" had any effects. Robert M. Liebert, scientific director of MARC, reported that children who had seen "The Swing" were two to three times more likely to cooperate. The research demonstrated that children will understand a prosocial message and will use its lesson to guide their own behavior.

The spot was released and aired on all three US networks during children's viewing times. It has also been shown repeatedly by hundreds of individual stations.

In addition to specific TV spots, other forms of prosocial programming are found on television. Viewers must be selective. And information is available to inform us which programs may be positive and when these programs will be aired.

Several helpful sources are available to you. *TV Guide* magazine is published weekly by Triangle Publications, 250 King of Prussia Road, Radnor, Pennsylvania 19088; and 112 Merton Street, Toronto, Ontario M4S 2Z7. Regional editions are published which carry specific day and time listings and descriptions of programs for local viewers. Special programs and movies often are described in greater detail. *TV Guide* also carries reviews, criticism, and articles on the television industry.

Newspapers carry listings of the programming on local stations. Some newspapers also run reviews and informational articles about coming TV programs.

Use of a TV listing encourages selectivity. Resist the temptation to turn on the set and flip through the channels to see if anything catches your attention. Rather, use the program listing to determine whether there is good reason to turn on the set. TV listings can alert you to positive, well-produced specials.

Education consultant Gloria Kirshner reports research which suggests that when parents participate in a child's viewing experience—providing human feedback a television machine cannot—the children will respond differently to TV's influence, no matter what the child's age.

Family counselor Eda LeShan says, ". . . No program can seriously damage a child if a loving adult shares the experience and uses it as an opportunity to talk about feelings" (Kirshner, *Positive Uses of Television: The Human Feedback Loop—Parent Participation TV*).

Several resources that provide previews of upcoming programs, along with suggested discussion questions and activities, are available to help parents in the discussion process.

The Teacher's Guide to Television lists TV programs of special educational value and provides teachers' guides for selected programs. A teacher within a congregation may already receive this publication and be willing to share it ($3.50 for two semesters; Box 564, Lenox Hill Station, New York, New York 10012).

Mass Media Newsletter (2116 North Charles Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21218) is printed twenty-two times per year. It provides advanced listings and reviews of outstanding TV programs.

Cultural Information Service is printed twenty times per year ($16; Box 92, New York, New York 10016). In addition to previews of positive programming and discussion guides, CIS also reviews new record albums, movies, and paperback books. Prior to the airing of "Holocaust," CIS provided special study and discussion guides which contained a bibliography of books and articles that could be used for background or supplemental materials.

A church library or education committee may consider providing preview and discussion information to the congregation through a bulletin board or through the church bulletin. Your local library may carry some of these publications.

Walter Neufeld, pastor of Eden Mennonite Church in Moundridge, Kansas, calls attention to positive programming through the column "Suggested TV for This Week" in his church bulletin. The list might include news and public affairs programs, specials, religious programs, or programs suitable for family viewing that are scheduled for the coming week. Members of the congregation appreciate these suggestions.

Within the family, strategies can be developed to raise the awareness of messages being communicated. Val Shearer, mother and writer for *The Foundation Series*, tells how her family deals with commercials. When a commercial appears, the family talks back, saying, "Who do you think you're kidding?"

Television provides opportunities for positive and negative learning. Learn to be selective. Capitalize on the information available to receive that which is good. As adults, take part in the child's viewing, encourage the child to express feelings and ask questions. Seize natural opportunities to express alternatives to the values presented. Take charge of your own viewing; exercise the choice that is yours to make.

THE MENNONITE seeks to witness, teach, motivate, and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published weekly except biweekly during July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton, Kansas 67114, by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kansas 67114, and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions in United States and Canada $9.00 one year; $17.00 two years, $24 00 three years; foreign: $9.50 per year. Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Canada R3P OM4. Business office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114

News

Moral force confronts the principalities

Denver, Colorado—About 6,000 persons demanded an end to bomb production at the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant northwest of this city April 29.

People from across North America traveled to the Saturday rally which also emphasized a stop to the nuclear arms race. It was the biggest demonstration ever against the plant which has previously been a target of antiwar activists.

More than 250 Mennonites attended. A group of thirty came from Goshen, Indiana. Kansas Mennonite churches were represented by more than 100 persons. Other Mennonites came from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and South Dakota, as well as Colorado. They swelled the ranks of an estimated 1,000 people who came from out-of-state, including contingents from France, Japan, Australia, and Canada.

Several Anabaptists—Cliff Kindy, Brian Shey, Roger Overbey, Jim Wallis, Peter Ediger, Brian Saner, Don Goertzen—participated in what was called an act of civil disobedience when 120 specially trained persons camped on the plant's railroad track beginning about 5 p.m. Saturday. Most left Sunday morning for services and workshops. But a group of fifteen, including Daniel Ellsberg of Pentagon Papers fame, decided to continue. The group had grown again to about thirty-five by Monday afternoon, including Ediger. The persons who left—for health factors or for personal reaons—gave their full moral support for continuation.

Although the sitdown group was prepared for arrest, their silent, uncomfortable protest (cool days and much rain) merely precipitated a wait-them-out response from the managers of the plant, Rockwell International. One official reportedly said, "They can sit as long as they want."

Although secrecy surrounds the movement of trains along the track, official US Government documents state the line is used about three times weekly for the transport of construction supplies into the plant, and for the removal of 1,000 tons of nuclear waste annually. Plant officials have stated that weapons grade plutonium is not moved into the plant by rail.

Downtown Denver was the site of a preliminary rally Saturday morning. About 1,500 protesters gathered outside the Federal Building. A blue sky and invigorating sunshine buoyed a revivalist mood. Nationally known personalities spoke. Clapping occurred frequently. A folk music ensemble led in singing activist ditties—"Go tell Rockwell, we shall not be moved; Go tell Carter . . . ," and "End the arms race, not the human race." The crowd was cheerfully attentive, clearly relaxed, yet obviously committed.

The rhetoric was serious, often biting, and sometimes emotional.

Author and peace activist Sidney Lens categorized all things nuclear as "cockeyed thinking, cockeyed planning, cockeyed morality."

Representative Pat Schroeder (Democrat-Colorado), the only prominent elected official to participate personally in the rally simplified the nuclear issue to one of jobs, and said if there were ways of converting nuclear plants to civilian uses, there would be few against conversion. She appealed for support for the Transfer Amendment which would facilitate such conversions.

A Denver Episcopalian leader, Bishop Frey, gave a biblical perspective on the nuclear issue. He concluded, "People who keep silent are in danger of perpetrating a new holocaust."

Former US civil rights leader Stokely Carmichael energized the crowd with an emotional verbal kick. He came preaching against the lunacy of nuclear weapons.

"If America was in the hands of the people," said Carmichael, "they would change the priorities. The march of today is not a new march. It is an old march. It is the march of Mohammed. It is the march of Jesus Christ. We must intensify the struggle for peace."

By noon the downtown rally wound down. The stage had been set for the afternoon protest at the plant itself, about twenty miles distant. Hundreds of vehicles moved along an interstate highway to an access road leading into Rocky Flats. The crowd swelled to an estimated 6,000.

Arrangements had been made with Rockwell authorities to hold the rally inside the barbed wire fence enclosing the site.

As the rock-strewn grassland filled with cars, it was apparent that most protesters were not middle-class Americans. It was a Volkswagen crowd. The majority were under forty. Many students and a significant number of families were present.

Afternoon speakers emphasized facts.

Helen Caldicott, a physician at Boston's Children's Medical Center and Harvard Medical School underscored the dangers of plutonium, the most toxic substance known. Every bomb has ten pounds of plutonium in it. Yet, she said, "One pound of plutonium, properly distributed would provide a lethal dose to every person on earth." Closing Rocky Flats would be preventive medicine.

"Like Anwar Sadat," she declared, "Americans must make the first move to end the arms race. We are the curators of all life on earth."

Ellsberg focused on the neutron bomb, components of which would be produced at Rocky Flats. He said the danger of the proposed bomb is that it is more likely to be used because it has fewer blast effects than conventional nuclear weapons. Ellsberg, a

The B-1 bomber program is canceled. This placard takes aim at four other nuclear weapon systems.

PEOPLE STOPPED THE B-1 BOMBER
ow
et's
op
he
Arms
ace
B-1 BOMBER
M-X MISSILE
TRIDENT SUBMARINE
CLEAR WEAPONS. SAVE OUR COMMUNITIES.

PLUTONIUM PATH CARAVAN
FROM THE SAVANNAH RIVER PLANT
NASHVILLE-MEMPHIS-WICHITA-DENVER
TO THE ROCKY FLATS PLANT
TRANSPORT ROUTE

The Plutonium connection

Frequent cross-country shipments of radioactive plutonium travel American highways to Rocky Flats from federally owned reactors throughout the country. In the event of a collision with a propane tanker a meltdown could occur, releasing the lethal substance. To publicize this concern, a mock cargo of plutonium was trucked from the Savannah River reactor in South Carolina to Rocky Flats. Meetings along the route urged citizens to seek control and monitoring of the shipments.

former Pentagon analyst, also charged the neutron bomb would be used in Vietnam-type wars, and not only against Soviet tank forces in Europe.

He claimed too that the neutron bomb had been available to the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, but they had decided against it.

During the afternoon talks, TV news helicopters made frequent passes over the gathering. Reporters from local papers and national wire services probed the crowd. People huddled under ground sheets when a chilling rain began.

After Ellsberg's speech there was a period of inspiration—singing and hand-clapping—and affirmation of the 120 people who began the sitdown on the railroad.

The crowd dissipated after this expression of support.

Just how effective the antinuclear demonstrators are is questionable. The antinuclear movement is a blend of values from environmental concerns, disarmament, and biblical justice teamed with tactics from the civil rights and the anti-Vietnam war movements. As in the former crusades, antinuclear group leaders stress that their actions must be nonviolent. Violence is seen as morally wrong and counterproductive. To ensure that protests come off smoothly, planners consult extensively beforehand with local officials. Whereas the earlier compaigns were largely coordinated by national leaders and organizations, the antinuclear movement stays consciously decentralized.

The "Rocky Flats National Action" was organized by the American Friends Service Committee, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Rocky Flats Action Group, and the Mobilization for Survival.

Peter Ediger, who is pastor of the Arvada (Colorado) Mennonite Church, said the demonstration showed that Christians should be more aggressive in speaking about the nuclear issue. "The church is not often visibly identified behind the microphone," he observed. "There ought to be many voices speaking out of a faith context."

Another Mennonite, Brian Saner of Kansas, was optimistic that the demonstration was a big step towards peace awareness in the Mennonite church. Other Mennonites said it had rekindled their spirits to engage in a long struggle for reordering society's priorities.

Late Sunday afternoon, about seventy-five Mennonites, Friends, and Brethren from twenty-nine congregations in the United States and Canada met in the Arvada Church for an evaluation session.

The group issued a statement to "our brothers and sisters in Christ." It says, in part: "We believe faithfulness to the way of Jesus demands our lives and energies in efforts for life. Faithfulness demands risk and confrontation; being silent makes us vulnerable to greater risk. We must not only be nonresistant; we must oppose actively the nuclear monster that threatens life."

The silent vigil on the tracks is continuing. A local support group is providing for their needs. They are all in good spirits because they sense the support of many people. They feel their cause is a true analysis of nuclear arms, the arms race, and energy issues. They come from thirteen states. Most are Christian, most are in their twenties and thirties. All are pacifist and antinuclear.

Thirty-five persons symbolizing a cause are waiting for the time when moral force will intersect with political authority. *Vic Reimer*

Rocky Flats update: despite arrests vigil continues

Newton, Kansas (May 8)—The thirty-five persons camping on the railroad tracks leading into the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant were arrested on Friday, May 5.

About 8 a.m. Friday, thirty officers from the Jefferson County sheriff's department gave the protestors thirty minutes to leave. Arrests followed when the order was ignored. A school bus transported the group to the Jefferson County fairgrounds for processing. All members were charged with "criminal trespass on federal property," and "obstructing a railroad."

However, all, including Peter Ediger, pastor of the Arvada (Colorado) Mennonite Church, were released on personal recognizance until May 27 when they are to appear in court.

In a telephone interview Friday afternoon, Felix Owen, information officer for Rockwell International, operators of the bomb plant, said, "We were compelled to request arrests because the protestors issued a press release Thursday stating they were going to blockade the tracks until May 27. Our schedule for work within the plant could not wait that long."

Twenty-four hours prior to their arrest, five members of the group created a news event when they disrupted a prayer breakfast being addressed by President Jimmy Carter.

Carter spent Wednesday in the Denver area listening to environmental groups, and touring solar energy projects. A request by the Rocky Flats Action Group for an audience with Carter was turned down.

Included in Carter's schedule was an interfaith prayer breakfast Thursday morning, which attracted about 1,000 religious leaders. As these guests arrived, the five protestors passed out leaflets. On them was a

(continued on page 328)

Palau's evangelistic crusade moves Uruguay

Montevideo, Uruguay (WEIS)—Evangelicals made an unprecedented impact on this small South American country of three million. Luis Palau, Latin American evangelist, preached in six Uruguayan cities from March 24 through April 16.

An estimated 101,000 people attended the meetings, 8,000 of whom made public professions of faith in Jesus Christ. Counselors estimated that close to 3,000 persons made decisions during the Montevideo crusade, despite the fact that Uruguay is considered a secular, atheistic society. A Gallup poll indicates that 30 percent of the population professes atheism.

"We discovered that the people are open," stated Palau. "Those so-called atheists are just indifferent and unchallenged."

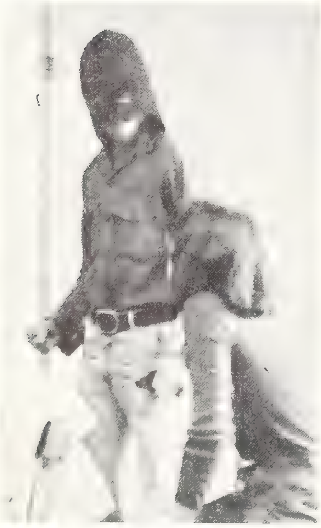
The crusade involved a total blitz strategy. In addition to the mass meetings that filled the largest indoor stadiums in each city, there were businessmen's luncheons, women's meetings, home gatherings, and blanket live coverage on one occasion by a thirty-one-station nationwide radio network. Over 100 half-hour television programs were also aired.

A Southern Baptist missionary in Montevideo, James Bartly, said the crusade made a profound impact on the public perception of evangelicals. "I believe this has really helped remove prejudice against the evangelical churches," he said.

Crusade director Edgardo Silvoso said that people would now look to the evangelicals for moral leadership. A week-long journalism school attracted ninety-seven persons, fifty of whom formed a Christian communications fellowship with specific goals for influencing the media.

The percentage of the audience that responded to the evangelist's call for commitment is considered unusually high. Usually about 3 percent of the total audience make a decision, but in the six Uruguayan cities the figure was between 10 and 13 percent. An estimated 70 percent of those who made commitments were nonchurch members. For this reason, the evangelical churches, which are a tiny minority in Uruguay, got a needed boost. The crusade's impact was felt even before the open public meetings. Through preliminary work 141 new churches were started, most of which meet in homes.

Palau is president of Overseas Crusades with offices in Santa Clara, California.



Hijacker Al Buller confronts hostage Ellen Kroeker.

Hostage talks to hijacker

Seattle, Washington—*Is There No Peace?* presents an American church family who confront the roots of violence when their eldest daughter becomes a hostage on a hijacked plane.

The drama, part of the New Call to Peacemaking effort, was written by South Seattle Mennonite Church pastor Lauren Friesen. Members of the congregation are presenting the one-act play at various conferences and in Pacific District congregations.

The play presents no easy answers, but challenges viewers to consider the meaning of peace, both within the family and in relation to the needs of Third World people.

Rocky Flats - continued from page 327.

message comparing the prophet Isaiah's ancient hope of beating swords into plowshares to the hope of converting Rocky Flats bomb production into bread and butter. It also warned that God would not listen to the prayers of those whose hands are full of blood.

The breakfast proceeded. Carter spoke about his commitment to peace. As Carter was finishing his address, and it became apparent that there would be no time for dialogue. Peter Ediger rose, and walking slowly towards the president, proclaimed, "Mr. President, I represent the interfaith truth force sitting on the railroad tracks into Rocky Flats. We feel compelled by the Spirit to speak to you. You have said many good words this morning, and we agree with you in your desire for peace. But it is time for us to put our faith and our words into action. . . ."

By this point Secret Service personnel had surrounded Ediger, taken him aside, questioned him about his intentions, and released him. In the meantime the other four members of the team continued to read the message on the leaflet. The assembly reacted negatively to these interruptions, and one reader was pulled down by one of the guests. Among the four was Frank Cordaro of the Catholic Worker House in Des Moines, Iowa.

The Denver media gave the fact of the disruption sensationalized coverage, but none, according to Marge Roberts, contact person for the protestors, presented the reason for the tactic. The tactic had been decided on by the entire group of thirty-five.

After their arrest and release on Friday the group decided to continue the campout. During the weekend about twenty set up camp near the railway line into the bomb factory, but not on the right of way. Hence, they are not on federal property, but they are on state land. Rockwell authorities and the Jefferson County sheriff department are maintaining heavy security nearby. The group intends to keep twenty persons camping, rotating as necessary, until May 27, which is not only their day in court but also the opening session of the special United Nations' assembly on disarmament.

Much of the initiative for blockading the tracks came from Daniel Ellsberg, former Pentagon official. He believes that now is the time to confront Carter and the American public on the issues of disarmament and the neutron bomb. He observes, "The president says we must disarm. But, we don't disarm by building more bombs."

Don Goertzen, member of Mennonite Voluntary Service, and active in organizing the Rocky Flats protest said, "The events of the past week have effectively dramatized Rocky Flats. Issues about disarmament, the nuclear arms race, environment, biblical justice are beginning to be in the public conscience. Locally (in Denver) we have momentum we never had before. We could become a grassroots movement."

Aggie Klassen (left) talks with Orlando Schmidt, professor of church music.

Aggie Klassen is in "for life"

Elkhart, Indiana—Aggie Klassen, the oldest volunteer in Mennonite Voluntary Service, was the recent theological center guest at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.

While on campus, Aggie shared of her life and experiences through a chapel service and forum address, "Prison Issues and Personal Involvement with Offenders." She also spent much of her week in conversation and counseling with the students and staff.

She started out in voluntary service after the death of her husband, Al, in 1973. What began as a short-term assignment has now developed into a way of life for her.

Her desire to get actively involved in the life of the church led her to join a "little black church" near her home in Newton, Kansas.

Aggie soon found herself "behind bars" to work with offenders in the local prison. Earlier in her life as a school librarian she made the acquaintance of a young black man, Major White. Imprisoned for drug and murder charges, Major's plight came to Aggie's attention and she began to visit him at the Kansas State Industrial Reformatory in Hutchinson. She soon found herself on the visiting list of three other prisoners as well.

As part of this assignment she joined the MVS unit in Hutchinson for eleven months and became interested in community living. Her pilgrimage of faith led her to join Fairview House, an intentional community in Wichita.

In her address she spoke of prison as a "loneliness that bites deep into the soul. It is not better prisons that we need," she argues, "but an alternative caring community where we are not afraid to take the risk of setting the prisoners free. Like some of her "boys" in prison she says she is in "for life," but what keeps her in is "love, not bars." *Marlin Miller*

MMHS wants shift in DD program

Winkler, Manitoba (MCC)—Mennonite Mental Health Services met at Eden Mental Health Centre April 14-15. Ethics in mental health services, and programs were discussed.

Major consideration was given to planning the future of the developmental disabilities (DD) program. In 1978 the five-year plan approved and funded by Mennonite Central Committee will end. Jack Fransen and Nancy Williams served as consultants in the program.

A change is being recommended to Mennonite Central Committee. In general terms it would entail a shift from the current educational and awareness effort to more defined services to the developmentally disabled. MMHS is suggesting the establishment of a DD council, appointment of area resource persons, and appointment of a central offices staff person to coordinate the program.

The board also heard reports from director Vernon Neufeld, developmental disabilities consultant Nancy Williams, and in absentia, a report from Edgar Epp, consultant in offender ministries. There were discussions of five recent workshops with Mennonite Disaster Services personnel, on the recent developments relating to the Canadian Mental Health Assembly, and on the international dimensions of MMHS in Paraguay and Brazil.

Also attending the meetings were representatives of the Penn Foundation, Sellersville, Pennsylvania, who are interested in a closer affiliation with MMHS. From Freeman, South Dakota, two representatives of a mental health task force attended to investigate the feasibility of providing mental health services in that community.

The MMHS board elected as its officers for the next year David Haarer, chairperson; Curtis Byer, Upland, California, vice-chairperson; Jeanette Ratzlaff, Abbottsford, British Columbia, treasurer; and Larry Yoder, Bakersfield, California, secretary. These officers also form the executive committee of MMHS. The board approved the appointment of Harold C. Loewen as administrator of Oaklawn Psychiatric Center, Elkhart, Indiana.

Two former Bluffton College presidents attended Elmer Neufeld's inauguration. From left are Robert Kreider, president 1965-72; Neufeld; Benjamin Sprunger, president 1972-77; and Richard Rosenberger, chairperson of the college board of trustees.

Neufeld installed as Bluffton president

Bluffton, Ohio (BCNS)—Inaugural services for Elmer Neufeld, the seventh president of Bluffton College, were held April 21.

In his presidential address for the occasion Neufeld reflected on the history of the college and its motto The Truth Makes Free. "Through our motto we have a commitment to honesty and serious inquiry," Neufeld told the 1,000 persons in attendance. "Our motto means it is important to have personal integrity. It also means we believe the biblical claim of ultimate truth that can set persons free," he continued.

Board chairperson Richard Rosenberger read the investiture. Harold Schultz, president of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, presented an inaugural address. He challenged the audience to hold fast to the vision of the school's founders since it can sustain Bluffton's reason for being.

Many colleges in Ohio and Indiana were represented at the inauguration, as well as representatives of various Mennonite colleges and institutions. In the evening a community celebration concert featuring more than 200 singers provided a musical finale to the day.

Neufeld succeeds Benjamin Sprunger, who is now president of the Ohio Foundation of Independent Colleges.

Words & deeds

A Christian writers' conference at St. Davids, Pennsylvania, will feature eleven authors as tutorial and workshop leaders June 18-23. Topics for the workshops include freelancing for beginners, poetry, the short story, biography and true life, and four others. Additional sessions include interviewing, storytelling, and examining of the new copyright law. For information write to Edna Mast, Route 2, Daleville Road, Cochranville, Pennsylvania 19330.

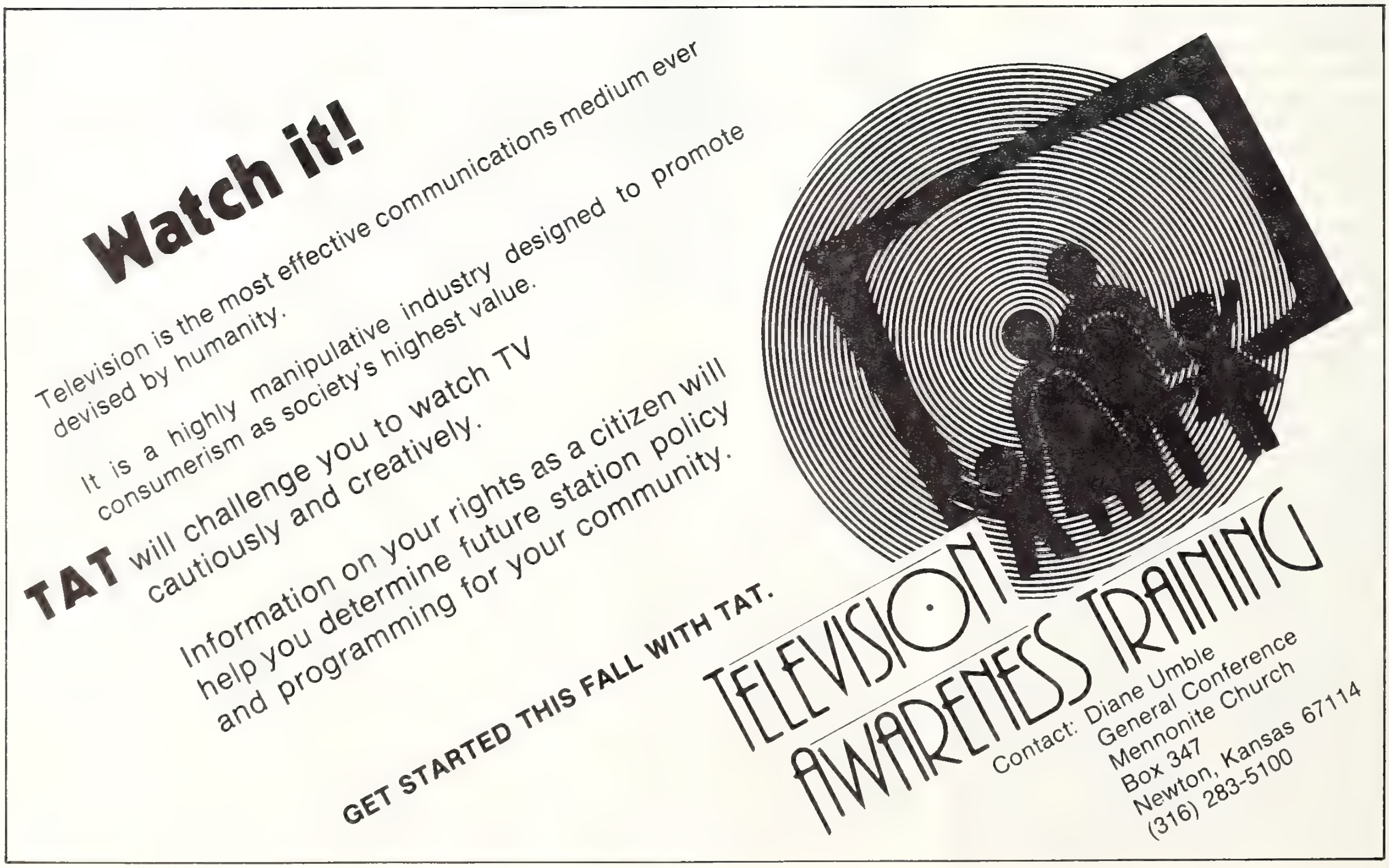
Thomashof, West Germany—About 22 percent of the monthly average of 770 *Umsiedler* entering West Germany from Russia are Mennonite. This is more than 2,000 Mennonite resettlers annually. The flow has picked up over the last six months with a particular increase in persons from Kirgizia. There is a need to expand the spiritual ministry among them. "The *Umsiedler* carry no doubts in regard to faith, being born again, trust in God, and prayer fellowship, but they would like to have more light on their background, Bible exposition, music training, and working together with other believers," report John and Helen Doerksen, Mennonite Central Committee workers at the Unna-Massen transit area. German Mennonite leaders have not been able to respond to all the invitations they receive. A second problem is the inadequacy of meeting space. Both new and existing congregations are engaged in construction. Contributions to assist the construction may be sent to MCC designated for that purpose.

Warsaw, Poland—The Polish Government's State Council for Religious Affairs has approved a preaching ministry by Billy Graham, likely during September. Graham was invited by the Baptist Union of Poland. In 1977, Graham spent one week in the Soviet bloc country of Hungary.

Special in-service training for teachers in Mennonite schools in Mexico ended in March. Sara Harder, a retired teacher from La Crete, Alberta, conducted the in-service training which began October 1977. Her activities included extended visits to each of the elementary schools, workshops for teachers, supervision and counseling of individual teachers, assistance in planning a German curriculum for the elementary schools, and short courses for Sunday school teachers. All of the activities were well attended. Sunday school courses enrolled a total of 126 persons in the four locations where the seminar was given. Harder went to Mexico under the sponsorship of the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Would it affect your life-style? First Mennonite Church in Hutchinson, Kansas, printed this account of a dream. "I dreamed the Lord took my Sunday contribution and multiplied it by ten and this became my weekly income. In no time I lost my color TV, had to give up my new car—I could not even make a house payment. What can a fellow do on ten dollars a week? Suppose the Lord took your offering and multiplied it by ten and made that your weekly income?"

The Food Bank of MCC (Canada) received sufficient contributions ($198,500) by March 31 to qualify for a $500,000 grant from the Canadian International Development Agency. Of 204,000 bushels of wheat purchased by the end of March, 22,000 have been shipped to India for use by MCC and Lutheran World Service. The remaining 182,000 bushels are in storage with the Canadian Wheat Board at Vancouver. Next year's aim is to double contributions.



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It is a highly manipulative industry designed to promote consumerism as society's highest value.

TAT will challenge you to watch TV cautiously and creatively.

Information on your rights as a citizen will help you determine future station policy and programming for your community.

GET STARTED THIS FALL WITH TAT.

TELEVISION AWARENESS TRAINING

Contact: Diane Umble
General Conference
Mennonite Church
Box 347
Newton, Kansas 67114
(316) 283-5100

European Mennonites have bought out a seventeen-day tour of North America which is to follow the Mennonite World Conference. Starting in Wichita, Kansas, the visitors will see points of general interest and visit Mennonite communities in eight states, Washington, D.C., and Ontario. Stops are planned at many Mennonite agencies and attractions. The tour is offered by TourMagination and Mennonite Your Way, both of Pennsylvania. If the tour is successful, other similar ventures may be a regular feature in future tour programs.

French Protestants number more than they thought. Statistics produced by a market research firm show that there are three million Protestants in France. The Reformed and Lutheran churches based their figures on one million Protestants, out of a population of fifty-two million.

Christian professionals were advised to creatively subvert the professions by interpreting professional jargon to the client, and by being willing to be prophets rather than props at a seminar titled "Professionalism: Faith, Ethics, and Christian Identity," in Philadelphia March 3-5. Resource person John Eby also urged professionals to develop accountability to Christian communities that include various classes, vocations, and races. He noted that one difficulty for the Christian is the professional's relationship of power to a vulnerable clientele.

Visions of buffalo, Indians, and religious faith will highlight a four-act drama scheduled for seven performances at Mennonite World Conference. "Cheyenne Jesus Buffalo Dream" dramatizes the tragedy and comedy of the meeting of two worlds, one of the Cheyenne, the other of a white Quaker with firm religious convictions. Author Robert Hostetter sees his play as examining the values in cross-cultural relations.

No further loans to South Africa will be made by Citibank, the second largest bank in the United States. Church pressure is believed to have been an important factor in Citibank's change of policy. Last November the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCCC) in the USA gave notice that it would withdraw all its funds and accounts from banks doing business with South Africa. The NCCC's five million dollar payroll is with Citibank.

Rosthern Junior College, a Christian residential high school, is inviting applications for the following positions: teachers of French, physical education, Christian education; residence personnel as dean of girls and dean of boys (part-time). Apply to: Robert J. Suderman, Principal, Rosthern Junior College, Rosthern, Saskatchewan, Canada SOK 3RO; phone 306-232-4222.

Editorial assistant needed

The Mennonite requires an editorial assistant to begin work at the Newton, Kansas, office in midsummer. Duties include proofreading, pasteup, and styling for **The Mennonite** and its regional editions. The work requires skill in English usage. Applicants should write by June 1 to:

Personnel Office
Box 347
Newton, Kansas 67114
Telephone: 316-283-5100

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Record

Workers

Stephen Dick, Grace Church, Dallas, Oregon, has arrived in Atlanta, Georgia, to begin a two-year voluntary service assignment with Mennonite Central Committee. He will be teaching at Atlanta Street Academy, an alternative school for youth who have dropped out of school. He holds a BS degree in social science and an MS degree in interdisciplinary studies from Oregon College of Education, and has taught in the high school at Madras, Oregon. Stephen is the son of John and La Vernae Dick of Dallas, Oregon.

Tim and Paula Lehman have begun serving as program directors of Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Michigan. They replace *Bonnie Hecker,* who has served as program director for two years. Tim is a graduate of Goshen (Indiana) College. He served two years of voluntary service with the Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana, as a youth worker in Portland, Oregon. He has also been a youth worker at Prairie Street Mennonite Church, Elkhart. Tim's home congregation is First Church, Berne, Indiana. He is the son of Weldon and Vern Lehman. Paula is a graduate of Bluffton (Ohio) College, where she majored in art. She is a member of St. John Church, Pandora, Ohio, and her parents are Dean and Alice Diller. Paula and Tim have attended Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart.

David Moyer, Zion Church, Souderton, Pennsylvania, has begun a two-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee doing maintenance work at a language school in Brussels, Belgium. He is the son of Leroy and Anna Moyer of Line Lexington, Pennsylvania.

Dick

Moyer

Calendar

June 5-9—Mennonite Voluntary Service orientation, Camp Colorado, Colorado

July 25-30—Mennonite World Conference, Wichita, Kansas

August 21-25—Project Teach, Bluffton (Ohio) College

Central

May 24-26—Twentieth anniversary celebration, Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana

May 27-28—May Day and commencement exercises, Bluffton (Ohio) College

Western

May 21—Commencement exercises, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas

Published

The Wanderers by Ingrid Rimland (Concordia, Saint Louis, Missouri, 1977, 323 pages, $8.95) is a novel about the Mennonite dispersion from the Soviet Union during World War II. It is available from General Conference bookstores.

Herald Press: Helping Christians serve, heal, teach

African Fables
Eudene Keidel
that teach about God
Bittersweet
Journey to Jerusalem
Marian Hostetler
Marriage in Today's World
H. Clair Amstutz, MD
Women in the Church
Dennis R. Kuhns

Marriage in Today's World

by H. Clair Amstutz, MD

In response to the sexual revolution and the infidelity in marriage today, Dr. Amstutz looks at the nature of human sexuality, marriage, and family, examines the historical record and the discoveries of science, and provides alternative suggestions for our culture today. "I heartily recommend it to all young readers who seek guidance for the important decision they face in courtship and marriage. Those who counsel youth will find in this book positive, wise counsel."—Professor Charles P. DeSanto. Paper, $4.95; C $5.45.

Divorce and the Faithful Church

by G. Edwin Bontrager

In recognizing the crucial importance of binding and loosing within the body of Christ, the author shares how the church can be an expression of forgiveness in relation to divorced persons. Marriage is viewed as permanent and the breaking of marriage as sin, but the author challenges congregations to become agents of Christ's deliverance from condemnation and guilt. Hard, $7.95; C $8.75. Paper, $4.95; C $5.45

Women in the Church

by Dennis R. Kuhns

A pastor focuses on where he thinks Scripture has always been on the subject of women. His conclusion counteracts both "women's lib" and the "total subjection" applications. Paper, $2.50; C $2.75.

Bible Prophecy: Questions and Answers

by Paul Erb

Finally, an easy-to-use guide to the many terms and phrases used to discuss biblical prophecy. "Raises questions and provides insight and understanding regardless of one's prophetic persuasion."—Myron S. Augsburger. Paper, $4.95; C $5.45.

New for Children

African Fables

by Eudene Keidel

For primary and junior-age children here are twenty authentic African stories with a spiritual truth as used by preachers and teachers in Zaire. Paper, $1.95; C $2.15.

Bittersweet Days

by Dorothy Hamilton

Mrs. Hamilton's twentieth novel is about a high school girl finding her way through peer pressures and values and seeking her personal tastes and principles. She decides to be herself and discovers others are also going through the same bittersweet days. For 9-to-14-year-olds. Hard, $3.50; C $3.85. Paper, $2.50; C $2.75.

Journey to Jerusalem

by Marian Hostetler

Miriam Nelson shares her experiences in Palestine as she discovers the conflict between Israel and Arab nations. She becomes acquainted with the problems faced by persons on both sides of the conflict. For 9-to-14-year-olds. Hard, $3.95; C $4.35. Paper, $2.95; C $3.25.

C$ = Price in Canadian dollars.

Herald Press
Scottdale, PA 15683
Kitchener, ON N2G 4M5

The policeman shot my cat

Stewart Hoover

The TV industry is not interested in its viewers except as consumers of the products it promotes.

"It concerns me when my three-year-old's cat dies and she says a policeman shot it." The young mother who scribbled this sentence on the back of a card at a workshop on the influence of TV had good reason to be worried. Her daughter has lived all her short life in a town too small to have police.

The little girl's perception of police (and of the world) can only have been gained from the most pervasive value-forming institution in America: television.

Surely the three-year-old country girl was not the target audience of many of the programs which carry strong messages of violent problem-solving. Still, she saw and learned. American commercial broadcasting is not specific about age. It doesn't search for sensitive variances of need and interest in its audience. Rather, it depends on gross measures of the entertainment preferences of mass audiences. Its rating systems rely on instruments of logic which discount audience segments as small as one million, preferring instead groups in the tens of millions. This logic naturally spawns programming which can attract the greatest number while repelling the smallest.

The result is a monolithic programming service. It is not interested in its viewers except as consumers of the products it promotes.

We are then challenged to respond to such programming, in our own way, at our own pace, rather than to be patterned to its will. Television awareness—our awareness of the messages it gives—is a way of responding.

Disturbing effects. The word *awareness* sounds rather simple and naive here. Simply by watching programs, aren't most viewers "aware" of the medium already?

They certainly are, on a certain level. But the sort of awarenesses that undergird mere viewing are much less than equal to the challenge of television as an economic, social, political, and ideological experience. Its effects at many levels on its child viewers have been well-documented, but adult viewers are not immune to its impact either.

Consider these facts. In the first years of the US medical program "Marcus Welby, MD," the producers received 250,000 letters addressed to Dr. Welby asking for medical advice. A major study of television's informational impact found that adults who are heavy viewers (around 40 percent of the American adult audience) are inclined to hold views of the world more consistent with TV's reality than their own. This study revealed some disturbing tendencies. For instance, these heavy viewers tended to be misinformed about relative numbers of people in various professions. Most disquieting of all, they believed their chances of suffering physical harm because of criminal activity and the number of police in society were much higher than justified by reality, or reported by control groups of lighter viewers.

Television does have an effect and an impact. These studies and many others show its effects on psychological, sociological, economic, and theological levels.

Christians become concerned about television particularly as a result of the medium's proven impact on values. In many ways, television stands in opposition to Christian belief and social teaching. For instance, at a time when churches (and others) are proclaiming the need to limit consumption and growth by the few at the expense of the many, television tends to illustrate and support a world view based on consumption. This is true even where television is primarily noncommercial. The effect of providing the same program content to masses of people overrides a rational response to audience needs and interests which would attract smaller and more individualized groups.

Television awareness is a natural call on the part of the churches for people to assert and test their own values and beliefs, rather than those offered by the medium. It is a radical conscientization of the power individuals can have over their own lives and thoughts.

As primary instruments of mass communication in society, television channels also come quite naturally to be instruments of the dominant social institutions. Whether corporations, universities, foundations, or governments, these institutions exert natural de facto control over content.

Church's concern violated. The church's interest is (and should be) in equipping individuals to cope with messages of mass media. For instance, the church's concern for peace and nonviolence can be violated by the television-supported crime paranoia mentioned earlier, or by children's cartoon programs which glorify mythical military figures.

One specific education program called Television Awareness Training (TAT) is having a good response in the United States and Canada. TAT is a joint project of the American Lutheran Church, the Church of the Brethren, the United Methodist Church, and Media Action Research Center, Inc., a nonprofit church- and foundation-supported research and program development agency.

TAT is a series of formal workshops run by specially trained leaders which provide participants with new information, group encounter leading to heightened awareness, development of new responses, and resolve to act on this new awareness. Trained leaders use TAT-produced books and films in workshops, which are scheduled according to demand on a local basis.

Through TAT, individuals have begun to develop some response to the influence of television. As their numbers and the general public awareness increase, we can begin to see some change in the total problem of television. Viewers can be helped to make their time in front of the small screen a more helpful, satisfying, and upbuilding experience.

CHM staff persons
Diane Zimmerman Umble and
Gerald Loewen
are accredited TAT leaders.
For a workshop in your
church or community,
contact:

Commission on Home Ministries
Box 347
Newton, Kansas 67114
(316) 283-5100

Letters

Gay rights not civil rights

Dear Editor: In Wichita there is an upcoming May vote for or against gay rights. These persons call it "preferential life-style." The dictionary definition is "sexual feeling for a person of the same sex, with an impulse towards genital expression."

Why should a class of people with self-imposed perversion feel they are entitled to hide behind or seek protection under civil rights?

Civil rights, correctly applied, are for people who, for instance, cannot help what race or color they happen to be born with. I believe in civil rights.

Someone has posed the question, "What if they (the gays) are born that way?" That must be a cop-out. Certainly we cannot ascribe to God, the creator, as imposing such a condition.

The Bible gives us a natural and creative life-style. Genesis 2:24 states that, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh." Father (male), mother (female); man (male), wife (female). Not two Adams or two Eves. This is the life-style that is underscored through the rest of the Bible. This I believe. *A. W. Ratzlaff, 702 South Lorraine, Wichita, Kansas 67211*

April 12

I experienced abortion

Dear Editor: Apologies for not writing earlier. I passively read the article "A Position on Abortion" by Duane Friesen (February 28 issue), then read the critique by Gregory M. Friesen (April 11 issue).

As a woman who has experienced childbirth through abortion, I felt a need to submit a few of my thoughts and opinions. I realize that the stance for or against abortion should be definite because we are playing with the matter of life and death, but these men have never experienced childbirth, let alone abortion, to understand that this very important and timely issue *is* an ambiguous one. As a Mennonite, I have always held a firm stance against abortion. It had to be wrong to take any life under any circumstances, even a fetus that has no *known* personality.

The timing of Duane Friesen's article was never more perfect and more to the point for me. A half-year ago, I was rushed in an ambulance to a major medical emergency room and my husband was given two choices. The doctors could save *my* life by aborting our baby or he would lose *both* of us. What harder decision is there to be made than to be put in charge of two lives? For six months, Greg Friesen, I felt that baby move and grow. It, yes *it*, was living, and each day we felt a new anticipation for *its* birth. It was no "mistake" in family planning; we wanted this baby. Then, in twenty-eight hours and thirty-six minutes, it was all over and a new pain and emptiness took over. Had we done the right thing?

Yes, we know we did the right thing, and God has been through all of it with us. Greg, if you are married, I believe you would make that same decision my husband made. I don't mean to say that I am any more special than you or anyone else, but to my husband, I am. It would have been easier, maybe, if there was no decision to be made, that we (my baby and I) would both die. But our circumstances were such that my life could be saved.

I hope there is never a case where a wife is on that hospital table in similar circumstances and her husband says to her: "Honey, I'm sorry. You're going to have to die because I don't believe in abortion, and that's the only way you can live." Morbid, yes, but that is what it boils down to.

I feel that there are many lines that can be drawn. If two people who have never wanted a baby find themselves expectant, and just "want to get rid of it (the fetus)," abortion becomes an easy way out. I feel this is definitely wrong. (But then comes the equally ambiguous issue of birth control.) In our case, I feel abortion was the only alternative.

Mr. Friesen, I don't mean to be cruel and say all men are ignorant of such things. My husband was on the other side of the table delivering those little ones long before we even knew each other. And he was beside me every second, yes, every agonizing second, experiencing that same mental trauma in the hospital room and in the confusing weeks after delivery. It's easy to have a definite "yes" or "no" stance on abortion until that decision lies on your shoulders. I have a stance now that I plan to keep and it's as ambiguous as you said Friesen's article was. There are too many personal circumstances involved in each situation concerning an abortion for any of us to make the judgment. Who are we to play God on someone's life?

In short, my hat goes off to Duane Friesen for trying to put something down on paper. I did not agree with everything he said, but I thought it was helpful.

Many times I think of our baby. She would be born and 2½ months old now. What would she be like? What color hair and eyes would she have? But when it comes to remembering the decision that had to be and was made, I thank the dear Lord that I am here and think of her in fond memories. *Nyla Friesen Huffman, 209 North Iuka, Pratt, Kansas 67124*

April 14

Live without Trident

Dear Editor: I really appreciated the editorial "More Than a Gripe" (April 4 issue). I am coming to the awareness that as a Christian I have the unique opportunity of participating in events such as Rocky Flats, April 29-30, and the May 22 Coalition (a demonstration against the Trident nuclear submarine).

I've spent six months in Mennonite Voluntary Service in Seattle and feel very fortunate to be here, especially in light of Trident. It has been a long way from the rolling hills of Pennsylvania (much more than distance). Civil disobedience? Demonstration? Leftist? Radical? Absurd—not me!

The price of one Trident nuclear submarine could educate every child in Seattle for the next seventeen years or run the University of Washington for fifteen quarters or about four years. The Navy *does not* intend to build one Trident submarine; it intends to build sixteen. Jobs will be provided, but they are short-term, and after the subs are built, the jobs are gone.

As I become involved in "Live Without Trident," it will be out of an act of worship. It is my opportunity to express praise to God, to life, and to the earth we live on.

I thank the author of the article and I want to express my affirmation to those involved in Rocky Flats. *Sharon Groff, 1309 East Olive, Seattle, Washington 98122*

April 17

We need spiritual input

Dear Editor: I continue to enjoy *The Mennonite*. But, as Ervin Siemens wrote in his letter (February 28 issue), don't concern yourselves mostly with social issues. We desperately need spiritual input to strengthen us and help us in our Christian life. *Helen Wiens, 9851 Herbert Road, Richmond, British Columbia V7A 1T6*

April 20

Review

The Plug-in Drug

The Plug-in Drug *by Marie Winn (Viking Press, New York, 1977, 231 pages) is reviewed by Naomi Wollman, Box 14, Moundridge, Kansas 67107. Naomi is the Women in Mission appointee to the Radio and Television Reference Council, and author of "What Is Television Teaching Your Family?" (available upon request from Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114).*

While most of what is written about television's effects on children looks at the program quality, *The Plug-In Drug* presents the view that the amount of time spent watching is the important factor in television's impact on young children.

Television is described as an "insidious narcotic." Many young children seem to be mesmerized by the action on the screen and spend hours in this passive activity. Parents are happy that their children are content and quiet. Marie Winn suggests that passive TV viewing inhibits a child's language development, since verbal development requires active exchange with another person. Imagination and creative ability likewise need the stimulation and interaction of people. Children spend less time playing. The question is raised whether a lack of playtime contributes to aggressive behavior in children, since playing is enjoyable and hostile feelings can be mollified through these experiences.

Noting the tremendous increase in violent crimes committed by juveniles since the beginning of the television era, the author again proposes that the number of hours spent viewing are more important than the content of the program. Six hours daily, of any programming, lessens the child's ability to respond normally to reality.

How do parents cope with this "monster" that seems to dominate every household? The author concedes that there are parents who are successful in controlling their children's television viewing. But because many parents cannot control the situation, she suggests they remove the television from the home, or, if that is too radical, keep it in a closet to be used only on special occasions.

Marie Winn bases some of her book on papers written by researchers of television and child development. However, the greater portion of the book is based on interviews with parents, children, teachers, and child specialists.

Though she alludes to the more favorable impact television can have on a child if a parent participates in viewing, she does not pursue this. No positive aspects of television are mentioned.

With television in 98 percent of American homes, one wonders how realistic it is to suggest that parents now remove their sets. Possibly suggestions on how to take advantage of positive programs and handles for controlling television viewing would be more helpful to parents.

Meditation

God created

God, are you creating in my beginning?
When my world is without form and void, are you there?
When darkness envelops me
are you saying, "let there be light!"?
When everything is changing and unsure
are you creating a firmament for me to stand on?
When the landscape of my life is barren
are you causing fruit and flowers to grow?
When I forget who I am
are you letting me see who you are so I may reflect your love?
God, are you creating in my beginning
and are you saying that it is good?

Peter J. Ediger

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CONTRIBUTORS

David Virtue, 2250 Granville Street, Vancouver, British Columbia V6H 3G2, is religion editor of The Province.

Diane Zimmerman Umble, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114, is the director of Faith and Life Radio and Television and teaches communications at Bethel College.

Stewart Hoover is media consultant for the Church of the Brethren, Elgin, Illinois 60120.

Peter J. Ediger, 5927 Miller Avenue, Arvada, Colorado 80004, is the director of Mennonite Voluntary Service.

Donald R. Steelberg, Trease Road, Wadsworth, Ohio 44281, is the chairperson of the Commission on Home Ministries and pastor of First Mennonite Church, Wadsworth.

CREDITS

322, 324, RNS; 326, 327, Vic Reimer, GCNS; 328, Peggy Newcomer; 329, Steve Fath; 329, Bluffton College Information Services.

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Plowing the prophets into mission

Donald R. Steelberg

There is a lot of giving to religious causes in our country. Consider this report of estimated receipts for 1977 (*Christian Century,* December 28, 1977): Garner Ted Armstrong, $70 million; Oral Roberts, $27 to 50 million; Billy Graham, $25 million; Rex Humbard, $18 million; Frederick "Rev. Ike" Eikerenkoetter, $6 to 15 million.

I have a concern that much of this giving has little to do with the Bible's reason for giving.

One Old Testament scholar says that the unifying theme of the Bible is the kingdom of God, even though the phrase *the kingdom of God* never appears in the Old Testament. In that kingdom, people are to take care of the poor.

The Law says so. "You shall open wide your hand to . . . the poor in the land." "You shall lend freely (that is, without interest) to the poor." The law of Jubilee said that debts should be forgiven every fifty years.

The prophets said so. They were upset with the way the law was ignored; and their insight was to interpret righteousness in terms of economics.

Jesus said so. He came preaching a permanent Jubilee of good news to the poor. And the first thing the young church did was to try to put the Jubilee into effect. Everything they had was put into a common treasury, we're told, and there was not a needy person among them. Of course, everyone knows it didn't work. So we don't discuss it. But the Apostle Paul thought it should have worked. He organized a stewardship campaign to help the church in Jerusalem, telling the Corinthians that they should give out of their abundance so that there would be equality.

All the way through the Bible, then, there is a kingdom concern for the poor. It's a practical, economic concern.

How much of that kind of concern do we see in the appeals of the religious leaders cited above?

The commission that I sit on for the General Conference seeks to administer some $600,000 for mission work in the United States and Canada. We work hard at our overseeing task and don't always agree about our accomplishments. But I can say that well over half is budgeted out of a kingdom concern for the poor.

Over $121,000 goes for Mennonite Voluntary Service programs—to stimulate them, not fund them. Churches like your church do that. Some $134,000 goes for Indian work; $42,000 to research and teach peace and social concerns; $42,000 for radio and television ministries; $29,000 for poverty projects.

Another $77,000 is used for planting and strengthening churches, and some $34,000 for administrative and communication costs. I do not consider these latter costs too high when I remember that it was the Commission on Home Ministries which revived the preaching of the Jubilee in our churches. Furthermore, our administrators are not highly paid. In a year when personal income rose 11 percent nationally, they did not get a cost of living raise because the 1977 budget was not met.

The Commission on Home Ministries is trying to take seriously the kingdom concern for the poor.

There are many calls to do more than we are doing: greatly increase our voluntary service units; consider and sharpen a thrust into ethnic ministries (Chinese churches in Canada, Spanish churches in the United States); consider the funding of a new radio ministry to the unchurched; plant more churches.

We want to do these things. Calls to do more, however, mean we need more money. I believe that there are Mennonite dollars in those figures cited above and I would like to appeal to anyone sending gifts to those religious leaders to remember the General Conference with its $3 million budget. If you have a burden for radio and television evangelism, we would like to tell you our dream for a Mennonite radio ministry.

I believe strongly in the work of the local church. We are in mission. My own experience is, though, that without the prodding of the greater body, my local church vision becomes quite provincial. We need the conference voice reminding us of the kingdom's concern for the poor.

Part of our dollar problem is that farm income—the largest source of General Conference support—is down. Farmers are plowing more of their profits back into their own needy operations.

How about the rest of us plowing the prophets back into mission?

CHM wants to do that, to challenge people to see the mission we all have. CHM wants to help the churches serve others through voluntary service; to challenge the churches to hear the Anabaptist call to simple living and the way of peace; to challenge the churches to witness to Jesus Christ over television and radio; to establish churches for those who respond; and to challenge us all to live the Jubilee.

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:21 MAY 23, 1978

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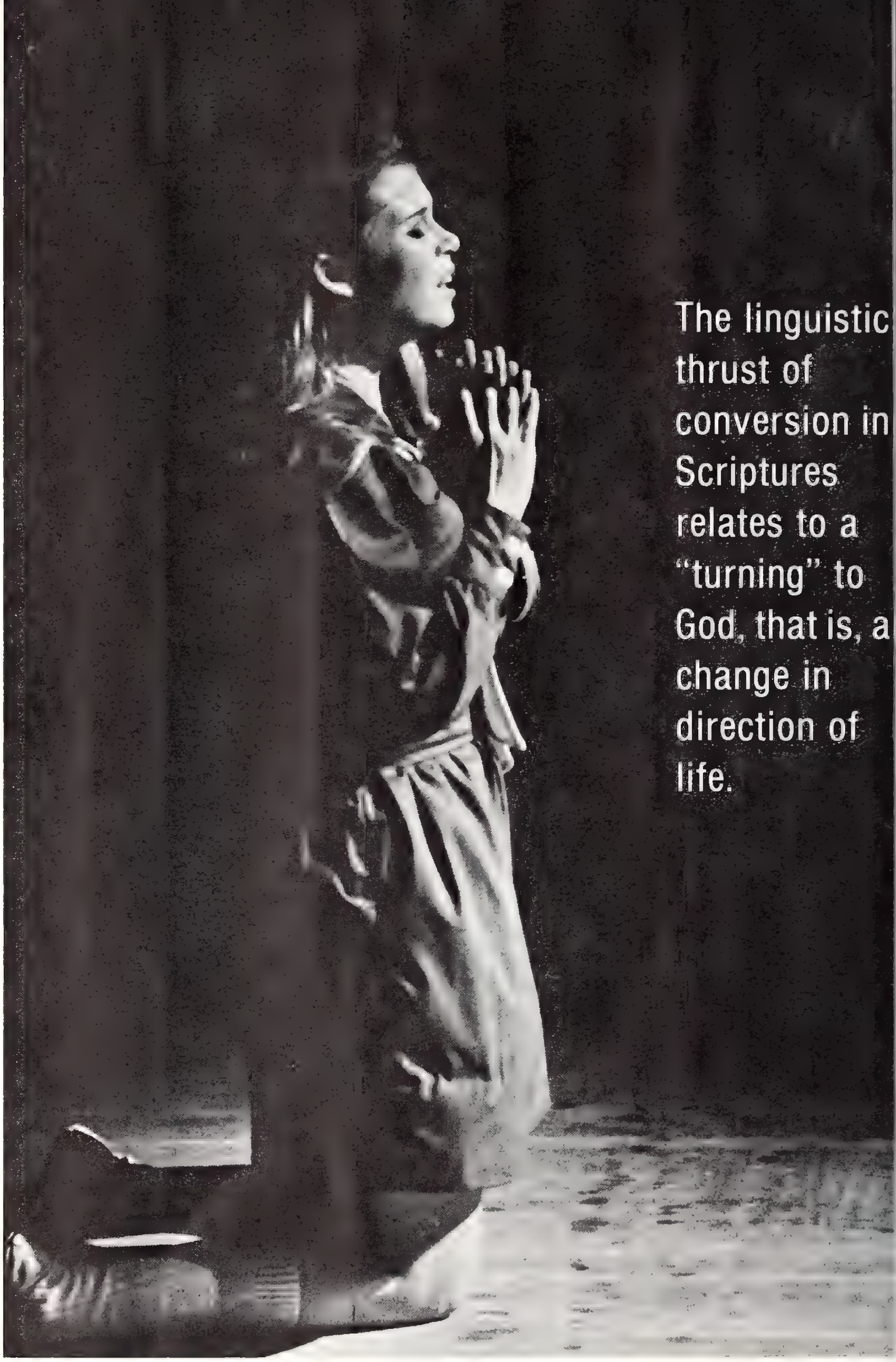
Invitation to conversion



The linguistic thrust of conversion in Scriptures relates to a "turning" to God, that is, a change in direction of life.

Key questions to persons in church membership classes relate to the conversion experience. The goal of Sunday schools is often spelled out in "conversion vocabulary." The concern of many, as the news of the passing-on of a loved one spreads, has to do with evidences of his or her conversion.

Although the definition and description of conversion may vary from one person to another and from one denomination to another, there are many in today's churches who would like their experience to have been authentic.

Conversion and context. The scene is Granville Street in Vancouver. There is a meetin' goin' on. A small group of crusaders have chosen to proclaim the gospel to passersby. There are a few whose curiosity is aroused. Two Jehovah's Witnesses girls, a knowledgeable Greek Orthodox man, a Moslem—mostly silent, and a Mennonite minister decide to "respond to the gospel."

There is contention on some aspects of the high-pitched presentation: Why are hearers asked repeatedly to repent from their sins? Unless this happens will they need to go to hell? Why does a well-meaning proclamation choose to make punishment a major theme of its Christian witness?

Many Christians witness mainly of a gospel for the individual. The danger in doing this is the failure to see individual needs of persons in their family, social, national, and racial setting.

A Sikh minister, speaking at a World Day of Religions rally, humorously commented on how people view the end of their salvation. Those who have been deprived of nourishment in their earthly existence look for an abundance of milk in the heavenlies; those who have suffered in tropical climes and under the burning sun hope for cool breezes and snow out there; and those whose lives are clouded with rainstorms and chills are anticipating a sunny bliss in the afterlife.

The Sikh reiterated a truth about relating salvation to the now *and* to the future. If conversion means turning, and to return to God, it needs to be practiced and spoken of in terms of our real environment and condition.

Conversion and religions. The scene is

> Conversion and baptism witness to a departure from other lords and allegiances; they signify that Jesus has become all-sufficient for one's personal, familial, social, national, and racial needs.

Jerusalem. Advanced in age, a man, trained and with status, comes to Jesus by night. His initial purpose seems to be to acknowledge the ministry of Jesus. Their discussion turns to new birth ideas. Nicodemus that evening is born anew. It is also worthy to note that here we have a person crossing the line from one religion to another.

The history of Christendom shows many men and women of stature who chose to leave their heritage of faith and to join those in the Christian persuasion. This is what conversion meant for Paul, and Stephen, and Cornelius, and for those in Rome, in Corinth, and Antioch—to leave a faith in which they had been nurtured as children and in which they had grown to become staunch believers.

Even though the Jewish faith has much in common with the Christian religion, it is precisely this that made it so difficult and practically impossible for many to cross the lines of faith. For those in other religions, too, it was difficult; their many mythological traits seem to be related and yet they are so foreign to a Christian understanding of God and persons.

Conversion, in order that it be in the context of biblical revelation, must consider the "religion" dimension. Communities in Canada and the United States by and large are "Christian"; our proclamation is directed to "Christian" countries.

Some say that there is a peculiar "American religion." It has been characterized under three main emphases (Marty, *The New Shape of American Religion,* pages 31-32):

1. *On relativism*—faith can hardly be seen objectively; truth is found as it applies to a specific situation; values are determined on a person-to-person basis.
2. *On pragmatism*—an extremely strong tendency to underline the practical, technical, and functional and to obscure the deeper meanings and the larger ends of life; underscore that which we can grasp; the short-term quantitative scoring high in contrast to the long-term intangible and the qualitative or eternal.
3. *On commonality of belief*—more and more traditions separate Christians from one another rather than share creeds or beliefs; loss of identity prevents believers from identifying the non-Christian traits and trends within the body; Christians become increasingly gullible to lowest common denominator church fads.

Conversion means experiencing justification (Romans 5:1), regeneration (2 Corinthians 5:17), sanctification (1 Corinthians 6:9-11), and adoption (Romans 8:15); and it also means to leave the "Americanized" faith or religion which has so subtly but pervasively been taken right from secular society into many of our churches.

Conversion and the generations. The scene is a Mennonite Sunday school convention. Some participants are eager to receive or take a definitive position on the need of converting children while in Sunday school.

There seems to be a contradiction here. Mennonites through the centuries have claimed children to be "safe" and have declined the need for infant baptism. Only when mental, emotional, and spiritual faculties became sufficiently developed was a commitment to the God of the fathers hoped for.

Children and youth have been prime objects in the history of crusade evangelism.

It is necessary to make the invitation to conversion intergenerational. There is increasing evidence that many within the precincts of the church also need to be converted to our Lord. The linguistic thrust of conversion in Scriptures relates to a "turning" to God, that is, a change in direction of life involving assessment, motivation, values, and priorities, but for many also a *returning* to God, with a similar reassessment.

The failure to emphasize the latter aspect fosters pharisaism, legalism, and formalism which may be even more dangerous than many other "isms" which the orthodox Christian usually is eager to spew out.

For Mennonites in the Anabaptist tradition, conversion occupies a key position. Not only does this become evident in sixteenth-century writings, testimonies, and confessions, but it is repeated in later representative writings (*Mennonite Encyclopedia,* volume 1, page 704).

Menno Simons speaks of the heart "renewed, converted, justified, made pious" and "Regeneration . . . is an inward change which converts man by the power of God." We must be born from above, must be changed and renewed in our hearts, transplanted from the unrighteous and evil nature of Adam into the true and good nature of Christ, or we can never be saved by any means, whether human or divine.

Nowhere is there an indication of limiting conversion to children and youth; conversion is a need for all who are not in fellowship with God or with the ideals of his kingdom.

Conversion and baptism. The scene is a Mennonite church. Once more the festival of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, Pentecost, is here. The church membership class is reaching a climax. A number have volunteered to be received into the church through baptism. A confession of faith is a prerequisite. Church boards and congregations take time to hear candidates.

Candidates for baptism need to translate their pilgrimage of faith into words. They may pinpoint it to conversion experiences which have dotted their past.

Which then is that experience which equips them to make a formal testimony to the church and to become eligible to join? Conversion and baptism witness to a departure from other lords and allegiances; they signify that Jesus has become all-sufficient for one's needs—personal, familial, social, national, and racial.

Further, they indicate that an identity with Christ's followers has been established; they are a point of reference from which loyalties to Christ or the world can be tested and from which faithfulness to him, in the days to come, can be reviewed and, if need be, renewed. Conversion and baptism belong together, as baptism and church membership belong together.

Churches usually record not the dates of conversion, but those of baptism and church membership. This may well reflect the church's concern that members be mature enough not to be "tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles" (Ephesians 4:14).

Mennonite World Conference, July 25-30

Celebrating our peoplehood

Every six years Mennonites from five continents and dozens of nations get together for the Mennonite World Conference. The last such meeting, 1972, was held in Curitiba, Brazil. This year it will be held in Wichita, Kansas. Paul Kraybill of the Mennonite Church was appointed executive secretary of the MWC in 1973. Since then he has spent much of his time planning and organizing this massive event. The following excerpts are from an interview of Kraybill with Wally Kroeker, editor of The Christian Leader.

Kroeker: What is the Mennonite World Conference and why should North American Mennonites be interested in it?

Kraybill: It's actually a fellowship. It's not an administrative organization; it's not a superchurch. It's a fellowship of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches from all over the world. We're all part of the body, and as part of the body we need to find ways to really understand each other, hear from each other, and communicate with each other. We see the Mennonite World Conference as a means of achieving that interaction and sharing on a global basis. It's a way of saying that we are a people of God, and that peoplehood involves every nation, every race, every class of people.

Kroeker: How many Mennonites, worldwide, make up this group?

Kraybill: We think in terms of something over 600,000, representing about seventy-five to eighty different Mennonite conferences,

Kroeker: Where are the heaviest concentrations?

Kraybill: Well, obviously the largest concentration is in the United States. Canada comes next and then, interestingly, the third largest is Zaire. Following that is Russia, then beyond are such countries as India, Indonesia, and the Netherlands.

Kroeker: How many persons do you expect to show up at Wichita?

Kraybill: This is difficult to answer because we have so few precedents. The last Mennonite World Conference held in the United States was thirty years ago; the last in North America, fifteen years ago. We are basing our planning on an estimated attendance of about 8,000 persons for the week, plus several thousand more coming on a daily basis. We expect a large number of local people coming for the evening sessions and the Sunday afternoon closing session, so that for Saturday evening we estimate as many as 16,000 persons.

Kroeker: How many of these will likely be from overseas countries?

Kraybill: Our estimates were 1,000, but in view of the positive response from other parts of the world we're expecting that figure to go higher. For instance, we know there will probably be fifty persons from Japan, thirty to forty from Taiwan, twenty-five from India, and thirty to forty from Argentina, not to mention other South American countries.

We anticipate 200 persons from the Third World alone, about half of whom will be assisted by a special travel fund that has been set up. The other half will come at their own expense. It is a significant and dramatic new development in the history of the Mennonite World Conference to see such a large contingent of Third World persons coming at their own personal expense.

Kroeker: What kind of program can people expect?

Kraybill: We are eager for this to be a conference at which there is a strong emphasis on fellowship, singing, personal interaction, getting acquainted, and sharing.

The daily program will include a major paper each morning which will be the input for that day's discussion. The papers will be based on the theme, "The Kingdom of God in a Changing World." They'll be written in advance, translated, and made available to all registrants. There will be responses by persons from various countries who will reflect on the meaning of that paper for them in their situations. Then participants will go to Bible study groups to reflect on the meaning of that paper for them in their context and to reflect on Scripture and its insight on the particular theme.

Afternoons we'll break into working groups, the same as the Bible study, and there will be a series of questions based on the morning's presentation. The hope is that we will come to terms with the issue for the day, apply it, and learn from each other as we reflect on our own life experiences.

In the evenings we will have a variety of presentations. One evening there will be a sermon, another evening a forum, and another evening music and drama, including a mass music festival. The closing session will be Sunday afternoon with a sermon and the Lord's Supper.

An international songbook has been prepared with songs that are used by Mennonites on five continents.

There will be numerous musical and theatrical events, including a thirty-voice women's choir from Taiwan and music groups from Jamaica, Costa Rica, and Kenya. A choir from India will present a musical program representing the rich cultural heritage of that country. Thirty persons from a Mennonite congregation in Amsterdam have prepared a musical based on the wedding at Cana. We are also anticipating a mime troupe from Switzerland who will put on a pantomime drama based on a medieval passion play. This will be the most universal thing we will be doing because it will not involve any spoken words.

Most of the sessions will be held in the Century II auditorium in downtown Wichita, where we hope to be able to seat 8,000 persons plus another 4,000 persons for the

Paul Kraybill

In the background is Century II, the Wichita convention center which will overflow with people July 25-30. In the foreground (from left) are Paul Kraybill, executive secretary of Mennonite World Conference; Marvin Hein, first vice-president of MWC; and three members of the local hosting committee, Harold Dyck, chairperson; David Wedel, vice-chairperson; and Bill Friesen, secretary.

Sunday afternoon program. The Saturday night mass music festival will be held in Cessna Stadium at Wichita State University.

Between sessions there will be a variety of things available in the Century II exhibition hall, including institutional displays, cultural exhibits, demonstrations, storytelling, and informal hospitality centers. There will be guides to interpret all this. We are also planning for an art display, with contributions by artists from all over the world, and there will be an art catalog to describe and record the various art exhibits.

Kroeker: What about those people who bring children?

Kraybill: We are planning for children's activities in the nearby First Baptist Church for children ages six to fourteen. There will be a full program of children's features including music, art, drama, field trips, and presentations on the parables. There will be a nursery program at the Metropolitan Baptist Church for all children five and under. We are making a special effort to involve youth in the program. They will have their own dormitories and there will be after-nine activities oriented to their concerns and interests.

Kroeker: How much will all this cost the participants?

Kraybill: There will be a registration fee of $35 for adults, $20 for youth, and less for smaller children. With that the participant gets a packet of materials including a program book in five languages, the *International Songbook* (which we expect will become a souvenir item), the *Mennonite Handbook,* an art catalog, and an exhibition hall guide. Also included in the fee are the proceedings, which will be mailed out after the conference. The world handbook will be a major publication which will bring together for the first time articles describing each Mennonite conference around the world, written by people representing each group.

Kroeker: What are you doing to overcome language barriers?

Kraybill: We have adopted five primary languages—English, German, French, Spanish, and Dutch. The songbook, program book, posters, and signs will be in these five languages. All the main sessions will be interpreted into those languages by simultaneous interpretation facilities. We will also provide simultaneous interpretation in Taiwanese and Japanese.

Kroeker: How does Mennonite World Conference deal with the diverse theological emphases among the various Mennonite groups?

Kraybill: It is true that we are a very diverse people. We represent many streams of history and different backgrounds and cultural orientations. Mennonite World Conference does not seek to legislate or prescribe a certain theological bias. We provide a setting, a forum, a fellowship where all come together and share our uniquenesses and convictions, and where we can listen to each other and learn from each other.

Within this diversity it is amazing how much unity we have. And that unity can no longer be identified with our Germanic heritage. It is a unity of the Spirit that grows out of a commonly held system of Christian values that is respected and accepted by almost all of us, though the application and the vocabulary and expression may vary.

Churches throughout the world, including the Third World, are reaching out for more and more points of relationship with brothers and sisters in other parts of the globe. There is an intensive search for understanding of our Anabaptist heritage. And the convictions that come out of our Anabaptist roots are becoming more and more relevant to every part of the world, particularly in those parts where political tensions, oppression, and problems of relationship to totalitarian states are affecting these churches.

I sense a whole new conviction emerging among us that we really are a people whose commonality, whose basic loyalty to Jesus Christ, is expressed best in a peoplehood that is universal. In practically every nation of the world Mennonites face uneasy relationships with nation and society. And the discomfort and unease that those relationships produce symbolize the reality of our commitment to obedience to Christ, and our involvement in the peoplehood that reaches beyond the boundaries of particular nations.

There are very few bodies for whom the average member feels as much loyalty to the whole global people as one can experience throughout the Mennonite family. It is a tremendous experience to be a part of a church that has this relationship among its members. *A meetinghouse article*

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News

Eastern District takes stand against abortion

Bedminster, Pennsylvania—A resolution that pronounces abortion opposed to the "biblical concern for human life" was overwhelmingly approved by delegates at the 180th annual session of the Eastern District Conference (EDC).

Further, the resolution states that "the church as a body, and Christians as individuals, should speak out prophetically against abortion, and have a lasting responsibility to share their homes, lives, and money with those children who will be born, and those families who will be affected by unwanted children" when abortion is not an option. Delegates supported the stance 181 votes to 33.

The action was a follow-up to an Eastern District concern voiced at the triennial sessions of the General Conference in Bluffton, Ohio, last August.

John Kulp, Springfield pastor, questioned if it was necessary to include Christian responsibility for babies born because of "Saturday night flings."

"Yes," said Deep Run pastor Charles Svendsen, "we do have responsibility to unwanted babies, regardless of how they are conceived."

The abortion resolution, and a much longer resolution on peacemaking, were the occasions for the most intense dialogue of the conference.

A four-point resolution on peacemaking called the Eastern District to: (1) serious Bible study on peace and a 1971 General Conference resolution on "The Way of Peace"; (2) involvement in disapproval (through congressional representatives) of national actions promoting war, poverty, and terror; (3) support of those who feel led to withhold portions of their taxes; and (4) a midyear assembly to promote peacemaking.

After vigorous discussion, point three was stricken from the resolution and point two was amended to include encouragement for righteous actions. The amended resolution was adopted.

With a note of deep concern, the treasurer's report reflected an income of only 79 percent of budget for the 1977-78 fiscal year. Paul Musselman, delegate from Zion Church at Souderton, explained to the conference that while they had not contributed to the 1977-78 budget, they would again contribute to the 1978-79 program. The new budget of $86,780 was adopted. The major portion of EDC budget goes toward the Crossroads Community Center at Philadelphia.

As an affirmation and a checkup of the Mennonite peace position when the country is not officially involved in any war and is not drafting people for military service, the EDC peace and service committee announced plans to contact all congregations for the purpose of filling out statements on conscientious objection. Such statements would be filed for all draft-age persons, in case of reinstitution of the draft law.

John Howard Yoder, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries professor of theology and Notre Dame University professor on nonviolence, presented four major addresses to the conference on the theme, "The Sanctity of Life: Peacemaking." Yoder said that the gospel call to peacemaking may not be a call to preach good news which is "good" in the popular sense. The gospel is "good" in the sense that it's true, but it may be received as "bad" before it's "good" to the hearer.

Peace, in its biblical sense, means much more than not going to war; it refers to a wholeness of life where the vertical and horizontal dimensions come together. Peace or wholeness is another word for salvation, said Yoder.

Yoder remarked that "American popular religion has advocated easy responses to Jesus." But Jesus never used the "marketing technique." Instead, he calls us to a lonely following, a costly discipleship.

In his final address on "The Christian's Optimism," Yoder pointed out that contemporary American society is coming to the end of the optimistic-positivistic dream. Progress is no longer assured. This challenges us to make a new choice about being disciples. Do we follow because "results" are good or do we follow because the Jesus-way is right? While it may be OK for Christians to be optimistic occasionally, we need to learn that our hope is in the cross. Even when we don't see "results," the witness of the cross is a "sign" (perhaps a pilot project) of the prophetic visions of Isaiah and Micah.

In an unusual departure from the usual coffee breaks, Art Isaak, creative therapist, led the delegates in physical exercises at their seats. One elderly woman commented, "It disrupted the sessions far less than the usual breaks; and it was probably much more healthy."

Chester Mills, outgoing president, turned the gavel over to Gary Stenson, West Swamp pastor, newly elected as president of the EDC. *Bernie Wiebe*

Creative therapy preempted the coffee breaks.

Flats protesters jailed

Newton, Kansas (May 15)—A series of arrests on May 5, 8, and 12 have not blunted the confrontation between the Rocky Flats Action Group and the management of the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant. The plant is sixteen miles northwest of Denver, Colorado.

Twenty-one antinuclear protesters were arrested Monday, May 8, when they blocked the movement of a train into the plant. For most it was the second arrest. After their first arrest on Friday, May 5, and their subsequent release, they moved back to the tracks during the weekend to continue their vigil.

Those arrested for a second time, including Daniel Ellsberg, spent Monday night in jail. They were released on Tuesday after each posted a $200 bond.

Following the Monday arrests, and throughout the week, the protesters and their supporters continued active communication of their concerns—disarmament, nuclear technology as a threat to the environment, and conversion of the Rocky Flats plant to peaceful uses. On Thursday evening Ellsberg made a major speech at a rally in Boulder, Colorado.

When fourteen protesters made a third occupation of the tracks on Friday, May 12, they were again arrested. Only four posted bond and were released. The other ten, including Ellsberg, will not be released until they have posted bonds as high as $5,000 and promise not to return to the tracks, under penalty of forfeiting their bonds.

Late Sunday afternoon twenty new protesters camped on the tracks following an ecumenical worship service which attracted about 150 people. They had not been arrested by Monday morning, May 15.

Peter Ediger, pastor of the Arvada Mennonite Church and active in antinuclear concerns, was not among those arrested during the past week. He was, however, among those arrested and released on May 5. Further, Ediger spoke during the Sunday worship service at the tracks.

"I am keeping in touch with the group," said Ediger during a telephone interview. "We really feel the time is ripe for persons of conscience, for Christians, and for the Mennonite church to act decisively and courageously on the issue of nuclear arms and disarmament."

"I believe," he continued, "people should express themselves to President Carter and to their political leadership." He also said he felt good about the firm commitment to nonviolence exhibited by the Rocky Flats protesters.

Participants in the ministers-get-acquainted seminar, standing (from left)—Marilyn Klaus, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kansas; Carl and Mary Carlisle, Faith Church, Geneva, Nebraska; Les and Anne Klassen, Mountainview Church, Burnaby, British Columbia; James and Barbara Voth, First Church, Paso Robles, California; Elvina and Vyron Schmidt, First Church, Newton, Kansas; Marie and John Zacharias, Waters Church, Lively, Ontario; Edith and C. Dwain Holsapple, Emmanuel Church, Salem, Oregon; John Nagle, Immanuel Church, Downey, California; Jacob Friesen, director of ministerial services for the General Conference; seated (from left)—Katherine and Willie Wiebe, Vauxhall (Alberta) Church; Justina and Edward Funk, Bergthaler Church, Graysville, Manitoba; and Ted Vander Ende, St. John Church, Pandora, Ohio

Seminar characterized by deep sharing

Newton, Kansas—Ministers new to the General Conference, and their spouses, were at the central offices in Newton from May 1-4. The purpose of the gathering was to provide information about General Conference commissions—education, home ministries, overseas mission; to engage in Bible studies; and to share concerns. Although there was a wide divergence of understanding and belief in the group, Jake Friesen, director of ministerial leadership, said the four days were characterized by "a deep level of sharing." One concern of the group was the pressure of the ministry on the family.

Seattle churches do conscience-raising on disarmament

Seattle, Washington—"Be prepared to do unto others what you don't want them to do unto you and they won't do it."

This wry comment by John Swomley at an interfaith conference on disarmament summed up the fact that violence is most people's god. What to do about it was the focus of a regional gathering which attracted more than 400 persons to Saint Mark's Episcopal Church in Seattle.

"We must stop thinking of ourselves as nations, but instead as one human community," Swomley continued. He is professor of social ethics at Saint Paul's Seminary in Kansas City.

A broad spectrum of persons attended the April 28-30 conference. Some were considering the seriousness of the disarmament issue for the first time. Residents of the Pacific Northwest are particularly sensitive to the dangers of armament proliferation. Huge and costly military facilities—a Boeing aircraft plant, the Trident nuclear-powered submarine base, Bremerton naval shipyards, and the largest nuclear waste dumping ground in the nation, Hanford Atomic Center—are all located in the region. Hence, the Seattle area would be a target in the event of war. Further, its economy fluctuates erratically depending on military contracts.

Although regionally directed information was presented, the conference gave extensive input on the United Nations' special session on disarmament, opening May 23. Political leaders, theologians, and peace activists described the socioeconomic costs of the arms race, and suggested responses to militarism.

Marion Anderson, author of *The Empty Pork Barrel: Unemployment and the Pentagon Budget,* asserted that the belief that military spending is good for the economy is a myth based on the business boom of World War II. "In fact," she alleged, "if that amount of money and effort had been put into any project, the Depression would have ended. Military spending provides many fewer jobs per dollar than spending in any other sector of the economy."

Conferencegoers were urged to exercise personal responsibility in contacting political representatives. "You can hardly imagine the military mentality which pervades Washington," pointed out Nancy Ramsey, legislative liaison for Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. "Every congressperson has a military representative assigned to inform him or her of bases in their area and of contracts coming up. Who presents the other side?"

Especially poignant was a presentation by activists James and Shelley Douglass of Vancouver, British Columbia. Gentle and quiet, they characterized their protests against the Trident submarine, which have resulted in numerous arrests and jail sentences, as religious experiences.

Shelley described her sense of the miracle of life. James, author of *The Nonviolent Cross,* spoke of a higher law in effect than the trespassing laws they have been accused of breaking. "If a house is burning," he explained, "and you break down the door to rescue somebody, you're not accused of breaking and entering."

Delegates quibbled over the wording of telegrams about disarmament sent to President Carter. This reminded them of how difficult negotiations are on an international scale.

Despite the difficulties of disarmament the conference did not view the weapons buildup as inevitable. "We must use our minds as vigorously to plan for peace as we have used them to plan for war," stated Addie Dunlap from Church Women United, quoting Martin Luther King. *Peggy Newcomer*

Is military spending good or bad for the economy?

The US economy—characterized by high inflation and high unemployment—is like it is because of massive and continuous military spending, says Lloyd Dumas of Columbia University, New York.

"Traditional economic theory," says Dumas, "claims there is a trade-off between unemployment and inflation. Both cannot be high at the same time. Yet, the fact is, they are. Unions," continues Dumas, "are beginning to understand that military spending is job destroying, not job creating."

Dumas is an authority on the economic conversion of military facilities to civilian activity, and is a professor in the department of industrial and management engineering at Columbia. He has been involved in authoring the Defense Economic Adjustment Act, a bill being sponsored by South Dakota Senator George McGovern. Dumas spoke to a Newton, Kansas, audience of 200 on the Bethel College campus.

Why is military spending, contrary to popular belief, bad for the economy? Dumas stated that military goods do not contribute to the present standard of living, nor to the future. Although they have no value in the consumer market, they do use resources. This is inflationary.

Military spending is also harmful to the economy because all purchases are on a cost plus basis. Even those contracts for "fixed" amounts are renegotiated to higher figures. This, he said, is a formula for inefficient production. Further, since military contractors are able to work on a cost plus basis, they can buy whatever resources they want—engineering and scientific skills and materials—which gives the civilian economy a severe inflationary jolt.

Dumas surprised his audience when he noted that the US balance of payments has been in deficit for decades. Although the balance of trade has favored the United States until recently, the surplus in the balance of trade has been less than the overseas military expenditures of the United States. Hence, in actuality there has been, and continues to be, a deficit in the balance of payments. This means imported goods become more expensive. The United States imports major items for its economy, including oil, steel, and machine tools.

Whereas the civilian economy works for performance and efficiency, the military economy is concerned only about performance. Military thinkers claim that military research produces considerable spin-off technology useful to the marketplace. An example would be Corning ware, which was originally designed as a heat shield for spacecraft. "But," asserted Dumas, "it would obviously have been much cheaper to work at designing a new kitchen ware than to build a missile underneath it."

Estimates place 50 percent of US engineers and scientists at work in military projects. Their innovative skill is locked into military improvements. Consequently, there has been a severe breakdown in US inventions and innovations. The United States is now a follower in the basic stuff of a technological society.

After his analysis of the US economy Dumas declared, "We have to move resources to economically productive uses."

How does one change the economy from one with dependency on military spending to civilian areas? Military managers, engineers, and scientists need to be reoriented to knowing that cost, as well as performance, is paramount. But there is a great deal of rigidity in the American economy and hence it is difficult to make changes.

Yet, military bases and plants periodically come up for closing. Usually this has produced severe dislocation in the community, or the facility has been kept open for political reasons. The Defense Economic Adjustment Act is intended to provide advance planning for the conversion of military facilities to civilian uses. This would include retraining of personnel and advance planning for the manufacture of consumer products. It would provide a way for senators and representatives to vote for the closing of a military facility because there would be a viable economic alternative.

Although the bill does not argue for defense cuts, Dumas said it was an essential first step in moving the US economy away from its military bias.

Inquiries about the bill may be addressed to George McGovern in the US Senate. *Vic Reimer*

From prisoner to pastor in Uruguay

This testimony is an attempt to demonstrate the reality of the infinite, immense love and power of the most high and sovereign God.

I was born in a small town some 500 kilometers north of Montevideo, Uruguay, to a humble, working family. When I was two years, my parents moved to Montevideo.

I achieved average grades in my primary studies. My parents did not have the means to provide further education for me, and I soon had to go to work to help provide for the family, working in the markets, and finally in a furniture shop. During my adolescence my heart became rebellious toward my father. One day, after he had struck me several times (because of a spat with my brother), I decided to leave my home. I was seventeen years old and felt that I was a man. I now realize that the first step downward to jail cell number thirty-eight was my rebellion toward my father.

A few months later, one cold day, August 15, 1968, at age eighteen, after holding up a drugstore with another fellow of twenty-four years who was my companion in crime, we met a surprise: the police were patrolling the area. We ran off in different directions. The owner of the store joined the pursuit. Two cars were after me. I couldn't escape.

I stopped, threw my gun to the ground, and surrendered. Then began one of the most bitter experiences of my life. After questioning and other legal procedures, I was committed to prison together with two others who had been associated with me in several previous holdups.

The prison is difficult to describe because of the cruelty of the surroundings and the pain of reliving those bitter hours. But after four years of imprisonment came the miracle that changed my life.

The prison authorities allowed some preachers from evangelical churches to visit the prisoners. I began attending the meetings in the conference room on Saturday mornings to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. To know that God, the creator of heaven and earth, loved me so much that he would have his own most beloved Son die for me was something that performed a miracle in my life.

Now I began to realize why I was alive, and why God had given me a soul and had permitted me to arrive on this earth. Each day became a continual assurance of the reality of his love for me.

Three years after my conversion to God, the great day finally came. The doors of the prison opened again for me. I was a new man, not because of my punishment, but because of the power of the love of God manifested toward me in the person of Jesus. I was given my freedom on August 14, 1975.

The following year the pastor of the church which I was attending told me that he felt that I should take his place. I enrolled in a seminary and accepted the offer. God performed the miracle of taking a man from one of the lowest parts of the world and raising him up to be his servant in a precious congregation of the Mennonite Brethren.

I am so thankful to God, and I feel that I am yet to see what more he will do for me: ". . . and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen . . ." (1 Corinthians 1:28). *Alfredo Rueda, pastor of Penarol Mennonite Brethren Church, Montevideo*

Indians provide input for MVS retreat

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—Oraibi, Arizona, in the heart of the Hopi Indian Reservation, was the site of a Mennonite Voluntary Service retreat April 21-23.

Elmer Myron, coordinator for Mennonite Indian Leaders Conference (MILC) in Arizona, gave the sixty-five MVS workers an overview of Hopi history and Mennonite church missions among them. The group visited traditional Hopi churches and hiked to the ruins of the first Mennonite church in Old Oraibi. The building was erected by missionary H. R. Voth in 1901.

Piki (Hopi bread) and *noquavi* (hominy) were culinary features during a traditional Hopi supper served by local church members Saturday evening.

The volunteers also had opportunity for interaction with students at the Hopi Mission School. Five volunteers work as staff at the school.

During a bull session, volunteers shared concerns ranging from American militarism to the needs of prisoners.

An interesting feature of the retreat was the presence of six grade-school children whose parents are in MVS.

At a one-day caucus April 24, volunteers working in Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Hopi communities heard Ric Dalke challenge them to consider if their roles were technicians or agents of change, and what this meant for self-determination of Indian people. Dalke is coordinator of Oklahoma MILC.

Volunteers attending the weekend conference came from six states—Washington, Oregon, Arizona, Colorado, Oklahoma, and Kansas.

"We can do it" applies here, too

Calgary, Alberta (MCC)—To respond to world hunger, food must be conserved.

This is one of the biblical imperatives concerning food, the causes of hunger and poverty, myths about development, Christian life-style, and models of development enunciated April 14-18 during three conferences on world hunger.

About 600 persons, including a substantial number of non-Mennonites, attended the seminars in Edmonton, Calgary, and Coaldale. Resource persons were Doris Longacre, editor of the *More-With-Less Cookbook*, and Fremont Regier, director of agriculture and international development at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

Longacre pointed out that Jesus taught and demonstrated that food can be shared, conserved, used as a medium for intimate communication, and for celebration. Longacre said diets can be more nutritious by eating less. Overconsumption, as underconsumption, can lead to malnutrition. For motivation she referred to the biblical principle of not worrying about one's physical needs.

Regier drew on his experience as a rural development worker in Zaire to conclude that the preeminent need in development is the proper distribution of power—of ownership, control, and participation. "Development," he said, "is based on faith in God's power to remake people, and must point to Christ for people to experience complete development. Development encourages people to try, to say, 'We can do it.'"

Workshops by local people focused on various development and food concerns.

The seminars were sponsored by MCC (Alberta), with assistance from the Arusha Cross-Cultural Learner Center in Calgary.

Bill Thiessen, MCC director for Alberta, noted that the speakers were well received. Both had opportunity to talk about food and development concerns on local radio and television outlets.

Churches involve mentally retarded

Goshen, Indiana (MBM)—Beachy Amish, Mennonite, and related groups in Indiana and Michigan are incorporating mentally retarded persons in their congregations.

A number of persons have been received into church membership according to reports given at a conference on developmentally disabled in the life of the congregation held April 29 at Waterford Mennonite Church. The action is the outcome of a year's work in determining the church's response to the mentally retarded.

"If mentally retarded persons request baptism, baptize them," said Nancy Williams, consultant with Mennonite Mental Health Services.

Additional work that needs to be done, the sixty-five participants said, includes developing Sunday school curriculum, enhancing congregational understanding, and establishing congregationally related residences for family members who can live away from home.

Interest in the local project grew out of a 1976 consultation on theological issues and the developmentally disabled at Goshen College. A pilot study was done, and four congregations became involved in testing the plan of action. Williams noted that the work done so far is "a model for other congregations to use."

Williams has other dreams for the developmentally disabled. These include identifying community needs for sheltered workshops, jobs, Christian foster homes, continuing education to provide training for surrogate parents and staff workers, adult residential housing, a twenty-four-hour "caring community," and elimination of barriers to incorporation of mentally retarded persons in the life of a church community.

New congregation founded by Umsiedler

Wolfsburg, Germany (MCC)—On Sunday, February 19, a new Mennonite congregation was founded here with twenty-one charter members.

The members are all *Umsiedler* (resettlers) from the Soviet Union who have made their homes and found work in and around Wolfsburg. The group belongs to the "Church Mennonite" movement.

The new Wolfsburg church was founded in a service of celebration in which three preachers participated: Jakob Tilitzky, sent by Canadian Mennonites to work in Wolfsburg for six months; Hans Niessen, director of the International Mennonite Organization-Mennonite Central Committee ministry to the *Umsiedler;* and Gerhard Hildebrandt, elder of the Goettingen church.

The history of the congregation was presented by Peter Wiebe, spokesperson for the new group. *Umsiedler* began to arrive in Wolfsburg in July 1976. They were invited to the services of the nearby Braunschweig group, but did not feel that was the right course for them.

Used to a very intense congregational life, they were not satisfied with just a Sunday worship service every few weeks.

The group, encouraged by Hans Niessen, began to think of founding a new congregation. They held their first meeting in January 1977 with Gerhard Hildebrandt preaching. Thirteen *Umsiedler* took part, and Wiebe was chosen as spokesperson.

Because Wolfsburg is an area with an open job market, the congregation can be expected to grow with the arrival of more *Umsiedler*. This summer, Erwin Cornelsen, pastor from British Columbia, is expected to arrive for two to three years of working with the *Umsiedler*.

In contrast to many other *Umsiedler* congregations, the Wolfsburg church has no plans to build. They meet at a conveniently located evangelical church, and their friendship with this established church provides a good answer to the question of space for the foreseeable future. *Peter Voth, from* Mennonitische Blaetter

Peter Vins sentenced to one year in labor camp

Keston College, England (KNS)—Peter Vins, son of Baptist pastor Georgi Vins, was sentenced to one year of imprisonment in a labor camp at a trial in Kiev on April 6.

Eyewitnesses said that the whole trial seemed to have been prearranged. It was held in a small room in the court building, not in the usual courtroom on the ground floor. Furthermore, the room was packed with fifty KGB officers so that the family had great difficulty gaining entry. When the family was admitted, a scuffle broke out and two of Peter's sisters were knocked to the ground.

Three of Peter's friends who were to appear as witnesses for him were arrested before the trial and detained for several days so that they were unable to appear. The defense lawyer made an excellent defense but he was ignored.

Peter was able to exercise his right to address the court at the conclusion of the hearing. He took the opportunity to thank his lawyer, his family, and his friends who were outside the courtroom because they could not get in. He drew attention to the threats made in October 1977 when he was told by the KGB to stop his activities or face reprisals. He saw his trial as a direct result of those threats.

In summing up he said, "My way is a special one. It is that of my grandfather, of my father, of my grandmother, and my mother."

Peter's father is presently serving a sentence of five years labor camp and five years exile for his religious activities. Peter was arrested December 8, 1977. His arrest coincided with a Soviet crackdown on Christian human rights activists, particularly members of the Helsinki Monitoring Groups in the Ukraine and Armenia. Peter Vins was an associate member of the Ukraine group.

MCC (Nigeria) launched

Jos, Nigeria (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee (Nigeria) was officially organized as a branch of Mennonite Central Committee at a meeting held in Jos April 4.

The constitution of the newly formed agency states that MCC (Nigeria) may originate and implement programs with the cooperation of Mennonite Central Committee. The constitution will be submitted to federal government offices at Lagos for legal recognition.

Once MCC (Nigeria) is incorporated as an official agency, it should aid in gaining visa approval for MCC personnel. As a registered agency MCC (Nigeria) will become eligible to own land and to build if necessary in a country where rental property is scarce and expensive.

Stated aims of the agency include providing personnel with specialized skills in the fields of education, rural development, and health to aid in the development of Nigeria.

Registered members of MCC (Nigeria) fall into two categories: subscribing members—members of a Christian church in Nigeria who subscribe to the statement of Christian faith and philosophy in the constitution; and contract members—those personnel brought into Nigeria under contract with MCC.

James and Marilyn Zylstra, teachers and country representatives with MCC in Nigeria for four years, will serve as general secretary and treasurer on the five-member executive council and will continue to manage the headquarters.

Other members of the executive council are chairperson Musa Gotom, principal of Theological College of North Nigeria; A. B. Achigili, minister in the Methodist Church Nigeria, and recording secretary Victor Musa, pastor in the Evangelical Church of West Africa.

Words & deeds

International women will be hosted at a special banquet to welcome them to the Mennonite World Conference. Women in North America are organizing the Wednesday evening, July 26 buffet for 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Talks, and consequently translation, will be kept to a minimum. Social interaction is the main purpose of the event. There will be space for 425 persons. Although advance bookings will not be taken, women will be able to sign up for the banquet when they receive their registration materials at the beginning of MWC, July 25. North American women are encouraged to bring international guests to the occasion. The cost is $4.25 per person.

Here's Life is billed as the most extensive Christian social and evangelization mission in recorded history. Its offices are located in Memphis, Tennessee. Wallace Johnson, cofounder and director of Holiday Inns, is chairperson of the international executive of Here's Life. The goal of the five-year program is to introduce basic ongoing ministries of evangelism and discipleship into every nation, to support these efforts with thousands of men and women working at their own vocations in foreign countries, and to use saturation techniques in cooperation with national churches and other Christian organizations. These concepts, Johnson said, are the creation of Campus Crusade for Christ International, headed by Bill Bright.

Evangelism strategy involving the native people of North and South America will be the focus of a proposed congress of one Christian leader from each tribe of Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts in Greenland and North, Central, and South America. Plans are still tentative, but Tom Claus, a Mohawk Indian Christian leader, is working towards the goal.

There is no significant increase of women in ministry according to a recent National Council of Churches survey. Ten major Protestant groups ordain women, but more than half of the clergywomen in these denominations are attributed to churches that have ordained women since the 1800s. The survey covered 211 church groups, seventy-six of which did ordain women. However, women comprised only 4.2 percent of the clergy in these seventy-six groups. The Salvation Army had the highest percentage of clergywomen, 29 percent.

Chinese church leaders were participants at a recent political consultation conference in Peking. The sixteen representatives of religion included Christian, Buddhist, and Muslim leaders, and Tibetan lamas. The conference met concurrently with the National People's Congress, a broadly based, largely symbolic body that is supposed to represent China's nonparty groups.

Oklahoma's full-time Choice book coordinator, Walter Regier, is working with twenty sales representatives in the state. During the past six months over 6,000 paperbacks have been sold from thirty book racks. The goal for the first year is 15,000. Topics include money, alcohol, marriage, sex, violence, and many others. For information write Walter Regier, 320 Dogwood, Enid, Oklahoma 73701.

Winnipeg, Manitoba—A program for the personal development of young people age seventeen to twenty set up by MCC (Canada) last September will continue, and be reviewed in 1980. Named Salt, the program is a response to requests for service opportunities for young people lacking the skills and maturity for MCC voluntary service. Two units were sponsored, one in Winnipeg and the other in Toronto. Service included work in nursing homes, Youth for Christ clubs, in schools, and with mentally handicapped. In addition to service, the young people worked in the sponsoring church, did some academic work and Bible study, and experienced unit life.

Record

Workers

Ronald Brunk, Hesston, Kansas, has begun work as controller in the business office at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas. A graduate of Goshen (Indiana) College, he is currently enrolled in the MBA program at Wichita State University. Brunk has most recently worked as internal auditor at Hesston Corporation.

Lorene Goering has joined the faculty of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, as assistant professor of education. She has been employed as reading diagnostician in the Santa Fe (New Mexico) schools for the past three years. Goering attended Bethel College 1958-61 and holds BS and MA degrees from George Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee. She replaces Earl Zehr in the education department.

Cynthia and David Graber

David and Cynthia Graber have begun a thirty-months voluntary service assignment in Recife, Brazil, with Mennonite Central Committee. Both attended Freeman Junior College, Freeman, South Dakota. David holds a BS degree in agriculture from South Dakota State University and will be working in agriculture extension work. Cynthia holds a BA degree in elementary education from Sioux Falls College and plans to do social work with women in the community. Cynthia is the daughter of Raymond and Rosie Hofer of Freeman, and a member of Hutterthal Church. David is a member at Salem Church and the son of Clarence and Gertrude Graber of Freeman.

Von Hardesty, associate professor of history at Bluffton (Ohio) College, has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship at the Smithsonian Institute for 1978-79. He will study and complete research in Washington, D.C., on the Soviet Union's military strategy since 1941. Hardesty holds a doctorate in Russian history and has led five study tours to the USSR since 1972.

Recently elected officers to the Bluffton (Ohio) College board of trustees are *Richard Rosenberger,* Quakertown, Pennsylvania, chairperson; *Erland Waltner,* Elkhart, Indiana, vice-chairperson; *Jackson Lehman,* Fort Wayne, Indiana, secretary; and *Ted Bauman,* Rawson, Ohio, treasurer.

Ministers

Jake Giesbrecht is serving as pastor of Grace Church, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, on a part-time basis. He will assume full-time duties after June. Jake and his wife, Dorothy, served in India under the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission from 1951 to 1977.

Yoshihira Inamine will be serving as summer assistant at Grace Church, Enid, Oklahoma. Inamine is studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, under the Overseas Churchman Service-Study Abroad program of the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission. He will be serving as a pastor in the greater Tokyo Mennonite Fellowship after he and his family return to Japan in August. The Inamines have been at AMBS for two years, cosponsored by the Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart.

Heiman Wiebe began serving as pastor of First Church, Eyebrow, Saskatchewan, on a part-time basis May 1. He holds a BTh degree from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg. Wiebe will continue his occupation as a licensed electrician on a half-time basis. He is a member of Taber (Alberta) Church.

Audiovisuals

Understanding the role of women in developing countries is the theme of a 125-slide set and taped script produced by the General Conference's Commission on Education by LaVonne Platt. What are the dimensions of life in what we call developing countries? Where do our boundaries overlap with theirs? Can we find ways to enter doors of relationships with them? The script raises these questions and provides commentary. Rental for the slide set is $3.00. Requests for *Women in Developing Countries* may be mailed to Audio Visual Library, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

Calendar

June 15-18—Northern District Conference annual sessions, Dawson County High School, Glendive, Montana

June 15-18—Pacific District Conference annual sessions, Mount Elden Southwest Conference Center, Flagstaff, Arizona

Canadian

June 23-25—Seventy-fifth anniversary, and graduation weekend at Rosthern Junior College, Rosthern, Saskatchewan

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RN with strong clinical experience and supervisory experience needed for challenging position as director of nursing at a modern, thirty-eight-bed general hospital operated by Mennonite Board of Missions. Contact: Jerry Troyer, administrator, Huerfano Mennonite Hospital, Walsenburg, Colorado 81089. Phone: 303-738-2621 collect.

Rosthern Junior College, a Christian residential high school, is inviting applications for the following positions: teachers of French, physical education, Christian education; residence personnel as dean of girls and dean of boys (part-time). Apply to: Robert J. Suderman, Principal, Rosthern Junior College, Rosthern, Saskatchewan, Canada SOK 3RO; phone 306-232-4222.

Carpenter needed

Carpenter needed to renovate and repair living units at Frontier Boys Village. Position required for approximately one year. Salary negotiable. Semiretired encouraged to apply. Write Box 158, Larkspur, Colorado 80118 or call (303) 681-3657.

Chaplaincy work desired

A chaplaincy position in a hospital or special care institution is my interest. I have pastoral experience and chaplaincy training. Contact:

Pete Peters
115-267 St. Anne's Road
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2M 3A6.
Phone: 204-257-6081.

Review

Who are the unchurched?

Joyce M. Shutt

Who Are the Unchurched, a book by J. Russell Hale, professor at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, is generating national interest. Hale has valuable things to say to Mennonites as we move into an era of church planting and outreach.

Who Are the Unchurched is a summary of Hale's findings during a six-months sabbatical in 1976. He worked in six counties in the USA with heavily unchurched populations (50 percent or more)—Orange County, California; Polk County, Oregon; Waldo County, Maine; Sarasota County, Florida; Marion County, Alabama; and Boone County, West Virginia.

Hale spent one month in each county and traveled some 30,000 miles in gathering his data. He conducted 165 in-depth interviews, did a lot of research, and talked at length with local ministers, officials, community leaders, and citizens.

Hale writes in a relaxed and readable style. His descriptions are filled with colorful word images and anecdotes which give the reader a feel for the area and its people.

I have read several books on how to grow a church, plant a church, and communicate the gospel, but this is the first book which speaks from the perspective of those who are on the outside. The others are written for those on the inside looking out, hoping to swell our numbers and to win converts to Christ. This book deals with what outsiders think, feel, need, and perceive about us.

Hale has developed a classification of the unchurched which can be a tool for others. He arrives at twelve broad categories, some subcategories, and often a lot of overlapping. He recognizes this and says, "Only rarely does a single individual fit neatly into a single classification. The categories represent recurrent themes with labels that are my own invention.

"Each category has two foci. The first is self-identification of the persons interviewed. It describes something about how a person outside the churches perceives himself or herself as a member of the 'outside world', the world of the unchurched. The second focus provides the unchurched person's perceptions of the churches, the 'inside world' of which he or she is not a part. The outsiders are then spies who convey intelligence about the churches they have known or about which they have heard rumors. When they speak of churches, they talk indiscriminately of institutions *and* people."

The anti-institutionalists see the church as being preoccupied with itself. Such people reject organizational structures as necessary for "true religion" and object to the church's emphasis on finances, buildings, and property over people needs. They often see themselves as solitary Christians who do not need a church to worship God.

The boxed-in have been church members in the past but left because they felt repressed and overly controlled. The boxed-in seem to fall into three subtypes. The constrained feel cramped by too much emphasis on ethical standards and behavioral demands. The thwarted feel the church prevents them from growing into independent and self-confident persons, by treating adults like children and telling them what to do and not to do. The independents voice a fierce individualism and see the church as a prison or straitjacket which limits their freedom in a multitude of ways.

The burned-out are the ones who gave so much of their time and energy to the church that they felt utterly destroyed from the effort. The used tend to be those who were once leaders but were so overwhelmed by the overwork, criticism, and demands that they saw leaving the church as their only solution. The light travelers affirm their past church experience but saw it as relating to that period of time when they were rearing a family. With their children gone they no longer see a need for involvement.

The cop-outs were never committed to the church, never put down roots in a church, and were only peripherally involved. What religious experiences they may have had were piggyback experiences that came as a result of going with someone else. The cop-outs tend to be either apathetic, having few deep feelings for the church one way or the other, or to be drifters who float from one congregation to another as a way of avoiding responsibility and commitment.

The happy hedonists find their fulfillment in momentary pleasures and recreational activities. These are "leisure worshipers," and while they do not reject God and may speak of conversion experiences, they simply do not have time for church. Sunday is their day to relax and have a good time.

The locked-out are the opposite of the boxed-in. These folks feel that the church does not want them because they do not measure up in some way. There are the rejected who are denied communion with the group because of divorce, using birth-control measures, or for other reasons. The neglected tend to be the poor ethnic minorities, handicapped, singles, and the aged whom the church overlooks both overtly and covertly. The discriminated against tend to be hostile and cite specific examples of ways the church has excluded them.

The nomads are wanderers in our society and span all social classes. These people have jobs which take them from city to city. Most are afraid to become involved in church because they will be moving again.

The pilgrims see themselves on an ideological pilgrimage, searching for values and meanings in life, but not wanting to limit themselves to any one "narrow" or "exclusive" view, such as Christianity.

The publicans constitute the largest group of the unchurched. They perceive most churchgoers as Pharisees who are hypocrites, phonies, and fakes. They reject

> *Opinion polls report that well over 90 percent of Americans believe in God. Hale points out that studies indicate about 80,000,000 Americans are unrelated to churches. Only eight countries in the world have a total population exceeding that number—China, the Soviet Union, India, Brazil, Japan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and the United States.*

churches which do not measure up (in their eyes) to the ideals and life-styles they preach. They cite church splits, judgmentalism, behavioral demands, and ethical lapses of leaders as examples.

The scandalized reject the church because they cannot accept or understand how each congregation, sect, group, or denomination can claim to be "the one true church" and be so rejecting of each other. They say they are waiting for the church to get its house in order before they join.

The true believers may be subdivided into smaller categories. The agnostics-atheists deny the existence of any ultimate reality as God. The deists-rationalists hold a theology based on human reason, not revelation; and the humanists-secularists believe that the worth of persons lies in their capacity for self-realization through reason without benefit of supernatural revelation or clergy.

The uncertain have no reason for their lack of church affiliation.

Hale includes excerpts from the taped interviews in which he lets the unchurched speak for themselves. Among others, there is an obviously negative image of the Mennonite community in Polk County. Unfortunately, only a few pages are devoted to reflections. This is deliberate. Hale sees his work as exploratory, not definitive, and as the beginning of a new area of research. This forces us to grapple with his data and form our own implications for action and outreach. However, he does raise some guidelines for presenting the gospel to those outside of the church:

1. Hale feels that people talked freely to him because he was there to listen to them, not to tell them something or to try to convert them. Many of the unchurched see the churched as more interested in selling a prepackaged gospel than hearing them and responding to them as persons. He insists that before we can be effective evangelists, we have to learn how to authentically listen to others. Our response will then be geared to their needs. The happy hedonist needs a different approach than the burned-out or the neglected.

2. Hale sees a pattern in the unchurched which links unchurchedness with social alienation, or lack of bonds or roots to others in the neighborhood.

3. He sees much unmined data that has not yet been explored in his interviews. Not only did his respondents talk about why they were unchurched, but they also shared their ideas on what they sought in an ideal church. Hale theorizes: "I would expect to find evidence that the unchurched, generally, seek a pilgrim-like fellowship of mutually affirming individuals who help one another grow. They would probably favor sect-like associations with simple organizational structures, unelaborate liturgies, open participation, and unrationalized theologies. An ordained clergy would be optional."

4. He suggests that we need to learn how to proclaim the gospel without offensiveness. "The Christian church, its best interpreters would say, cannot avoid the New Testament saying that the message of the cross and resurrection will always be folly, an offense, or a stumbling block to the world. This expectation, however, can easily be perverted into license to present the good news foolishly, offensively, or in ways that create barriers rather than bridges to acceptance. . .

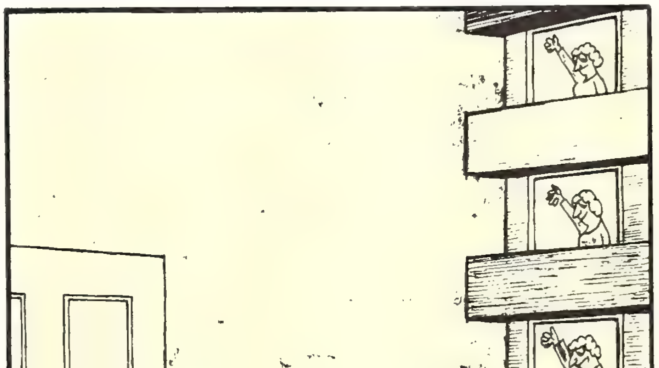
"Even the most cursory survey of the anecdotal material I have presented in this report is evidence that hosts of unchurched people have been learning more bad news than good news from the churches and pulpits they have known. . . . Many have never heard of a loving God who accepts persons while they are sinners. . . . The unchurched perceive even the more inclusive faiths as unnecessarily narrow in terms of doctrine, ethical responsibility, and emphasis on venial sinfulness. Further, the scandal of disunity among the denominations is not excused by the outsider.

"Honesty may demand that the churches be reminded of their own need for renewal. . .

"Repentance, according to the biblical record, involves not simply verbal action but a 'turning around.' The imperfect moral behavior of Christians is the chief offense the unchurched recognize among the churched. It serves as an excuse for their separation."

He goes on to say that we in the church need to ask forgiveness of others and admit our shortcomings without becoming defensive. This will not be easy.

Hale sees his work as just the beginning. He plans to continue his own research and hopes that others will help him in this major undertaking. His book is available from Glenmary Research Center, 4606 East-West Highway, Washington, D.C. 20014. Excerpts from some of the tapes are also available in cassette form and can be obtained by writing to J. Russell Hale at the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 17325.



Letters

Neutron and other bombs

Dear Editor: Indeed, even the weapons industry is becoming so environmentalist orientated that a bomb, called neutron, has been perfected to specialize in destroying only rootless life, graciously sparing all else.

Eventually, with the cooperation of the very highest level scientists from all the great powers, mankind (with the emphasis on *man*) will create a bomb that combines environmental-sparing quality with one that spares human life and injury. It could be termed the "fireworks" bomb. Its ultimate primary function would be to delight people, especially children. By international arms control agreement, this super missile would be used only for dire world crises, like special holidays. No doubt, although it is in the think tank stages, it's still years in the offing due to complicated social technicalities. *Theodore Jantzen, 8 Houston Street, Florida, New York 10921* April 20

Try cold-turkey evangelism

Dear Editor: A recent letter (April 4 issue) seems indicative of the people who look down upon sidewalk tract-pushers and mass-media evangelists. Granted, there are many hypocrites posing as evangelists, and there are also many other people who are well-meaning but overzealous and extreme. Also, there are a number of evangelistic methods that are quite questionable. However, should we feel pious because we as Mennonites are not known for being pushy evangelists? Quite the contrary: We should point accusing fingers at ourselves as well.

Mennonites are known for their love and concern for social needs; but is that truly enough? The Great Commission in Mark 16:15 is "Go into all the world and *preach* the gospel to the whole creation." We must preach the good news, share it, communicate it, verbalize it. Yes, "they will know we are Christians by our love," but they cannot learn what Christians believe by osmosis.

Biblical illiteracy is tremendous in this decade, and people do not know the why, what, and how of salvation. People cannot understand by themselves what is "a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles" (1 Corinthians 1:23).

Those sweaty TV evangelists may be an impersonal mass-media product, but at least they are honestly trying to fill the information gap between good works and gospel proclamation. Somebody has to do it—are we?

We should be more tolerant of others' efforts. After all, Christians are the body of Christ and should be concentrating on the far more important and holy tasks than arguing about each other's methods. We all need to share the good news with our friends and acquaintances.

If someone walks up to us and asks, "Are you saved?" we should not feel defensive. We all should feel ashamed that that person is trying to fill the communication need that has been left wide open by our church. We all should feel an admiration for that person's courage and commitment. (Cold-turkey evangelism is scary; try it just one time.) We all should also feel privileged to say, "Yes, I'm saved. I'm saved to have a glorious, free, creative life following the Lord and Savior of the world. Thanks to the grace of God, I am saved from a dark eternity and from facing alone the agonies and horrors of this world." *Mark D. Stucky, Templin Hall, Room 642, Lawrence, Kansas 66045* April 20

Editorial assistant needed

The Mennonite requires an editorial assistant to begin work at the Newton, Kansas, office in midsummer. Duties include proofreading, pasteup, and styling for **The Mennonite** and its regional editions. The work requires skill in English usage. Applicants should write by June 1 to:

Personnel Office
Box 347
Newton, Kansas 67114
Telephone: 316-283-5100

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Correction re thrift shops

Dear Editor: I would like to draw your attention to an error in the article "Thrift Shop Workers Exchange Ideas" (March 28 issue).

The article credits Justina Baerg with the formation of the first thrift shop in Altona in 1972. Justina Baerg has done an excellent job of administering the thrift shops; however, it was my mother, Selma Loewen, together with Sarah Stoesz, Susan Giesbrecht, Linie Friesen, and Arthur Driedger who established the first thrift shop in Altona in 1972.

Acknowledgement should be given to these persons for their work in beginning this beneficial service to Mennonite Central Committee and the community. *Bev Friesen, 4-55 University Crescent, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2N5* April 21

What is our name?

Dear Editor: In disbelief I read a recent letter to the editor (March 21 issue) which requests a change of name from *The Mennonite* to *The Christian*. The cover clearly states in small print "Other foundation can no one lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

The next question would be, What kind of Christian? Roman Catholic, Baptist, Anglican, Mennonite, Peacemaker? Can we make up buttons to wear for the World Conference which say "Mennonite," "Mennonite!" "Menno-night," "Menno-knight," or "Menno-day"? It would get people asking questions. *Siegfried Toews, 4062 Violet Street, North Vancouver, British Columbia V7G 1E3* April 24

Need reconciling attitudes

Dear Editor: I wish to express my appreciation to *The Mennonite* for continuing to address difficult issues such as divorce, abortion, and political justice despite the seemingly hostile responses of readers. The church needs to concern itself with these issues, and I believe that *The Mennonite* is one of the best forums for that purpose.

I am distressed by what Delton Franz called "the underlying tone" of many of the published responses to articles. Maintaining that "everything he (Delton) said is in fact the direct opposite"; labeling Perry Yoder's writings "misleading" and "false scientism"; calling Duane Friesen's position "vacuous" and "inept"—these statements shed no light on the complex questions involved. It seems that these statements are intended to establish the intellectual or moral superiority of the writers of the letters, rather than to explore differences of opinion and perspective. They succeed in neither respect.

Can we honestly claim to be a reconciling force in our world when this is the model of intracommunity reconciliation we present? I fear that Anna Hofer's frank admission that "personal opinions do not interest us" is all too true. Unless we can find ways to take each other sensitively as well as seriously, we shall have to be less sanguine about the potential of our external witness to peace. *Wynn M. Goering, 1414 East 59th, Chicago, Illinois 60637* April 21

Meditation

The Madison Avenue Christian

I have a friend who is successful in the advertising business. He is also a Christian. Once I pointedly asked him, "How can you call yourself a Christian in this highly competitive, dog-eat-dog business?" His reply: "This is where Christ is needed more than ever."

In a world of purely economic, generally selfish, and often crass commercialism, my friend's Christian witness is of tremendous value. He reasoned that he was doing more to advance Christ's kingdom than he would as a preacher. The world he was a part of is in crying need of Christ's influence.

My friend has manifested his faith in many concrete ways. For example, he has composed a number of fine Christian musicals which have been performed in many churches. But even if he didn't demonstrate his faith so obviously—if he stuck to plugging his clients' products through the media, and only that—his witness could still be of real Christian value.

Far be it from us to judge a person's Christianity by the company he does (or doesn't) keep. Christ himself often kept company with hated tax collectors, harlots, and thieves. Though we frequently fail to follow his example, is that not our commission? *Mike Shadick*

Broken dolls and mended faith

Slowly I dragged my body upstairs. Today had been as heavy as my feet now felt. My mind seemed overcrowded with jostling worries. Throughout the day I had mentioned some of them to the Lord. Tonight, tired and depressed, I found myself back where I had started, my problems all about me.

I entered the bedroom and switched on the light. On the bed lay a half-mended doll waiting for me to finish the seam up her back.

She was an important doll. Normally we find her snuggled next to Kathleen at night, pinned under an outstretched arm. During the day she sleeps wrapped in a soft pink blanket.

Tonight she lay on my bed. Kathleen had left her there and gone off to her own bed trustingly. Right now she slept peacefully in the confidence that I would mend her doll and slip her into bed later on. Kathleen had only asked me once.

Needle in hand, I thought about my daughter. I could learn much from her in the area of faith.

God is my Father and he cares about my needs. I can leave my worries with him and find peace myself.

I smoothed a Band-Aid over the stitches in the doll's back. A small touch, guaranteed to delight. I slid the doll next to Kathleen and pulled the blanket up.

"Even so, Lord," I thought, shutting the door silently, "you answer our prayers above what we ask."

The stillness in the house was like a benediction. *Diane Dadian*

A secret bridge

In North Carolina there is a secret bridge. It is so well disguised that we were driving over it before someone in the car exclaimed. "Oh, look, we're going over a bridge."

My eyes quickly glanced up from the magazine I was reading to see the bridge. The highway curved, allowing us to go over a temporary bridge. To the right of us was an old, deteriorated, cement bridge which workmen were tearing down. Across the ravine workmen were simultaneously constructing a new bridge. What we saw beside us were portions of an old and a new bridge with a huge gap in between. The smooth, temporary bridge on the highway was not noticed until someone saw the work being done beside us.

Sometimes I wonder how God can bridge the gap between our old sinful nature to our new nature in Christ. The space in between the two natures seems as far as the gap between the old and new bridge along the highway. Ezekiel 36:26 describes this transformation. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh."

As I rode over that temporary bridge in North Carolina and saw the smooth connection of the road, I could believe the words of Jesus, ". . . All things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23). *Donna Lehman*

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CONTRIBUTORS

Bruno Epp, 3034 Tims Street, Clearbrook, British Columbia V2T 4G8, is the pastor of the Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church, Abbotsford.

Peggy Newcomer, 1119 Northwest 58th, No. 1, Seattle, Washington, is a member of the Dayspring Community, a Mennonite Voluntary Service unit.

Joyce M. Shutt, Route 1, Orrtanna, Pennsylvania 17353, is a free-lance writer. J. Russell Hale has been assisting with services at the Fairview Mennonite Church where Joyce is a member.

Our meditation writers are Mike Shadick, Box 525, St. Paul, Minnesota 55108; Diane Dadian, 272 Hastings Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4L 2M1; and Donna Lehman, 3211 Ponema Court, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46815.

Leighton Ford, 5 Riverhead Drive, Rexdale, Ontario M9W 4G3, is an associate evangelist with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

CREDITS

Cover, Judy Bauer Boschmann, 219 North Pershing, Muncie, Indiana 47305; 338, David Hiebert, Box 301, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 341, Mennonite Weekly Review; 342, Marjorie Geissinger, Zionsville, Pennsylvania 18092; 343, Vic Reimer, GCNS.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Close encounter of the God-kind

Leighton Ford

The movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* is one of the latest box office smashes. *Close Encounters* is the fictionalized account of a UFO—an unidentified flying object—which communicates with human beings by a series of musical tones.

The advertising for the movie explains there are three kinds of encounters with so-called UFOs. The first kind involves simply seeing one of these mysterious objects. The second kind of encounter means feeling the effect of it. But a close encounter of the third kind, is a personal firsthand experience with a UFO.

Christianity involves a personal close encounter with the true and living God.

In John 17:3 Jesus describes his mission in the world as that of bringing to people eternal life and he explains: "And this is eternal life, that they know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

Some people say: "This is life," with a shrug. Others say: "This is life?" with a question mark. For many, life is a frustrating search that never ends.

For some, life is an "I-It" relationship. It's summed up in acquiring things. But they forget about the rich man in Jesus' parable who acquired for himself lands, barns, crops, money, and securities. God spoke to him and said, "You fool. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesses." People who live in an "I-It" relationship end up hollow. They shrink themselves to the scale of the things they worship.

For others, life is an "I-I" relationship—the worship of self—the belief that we create ourselves by the act of choosing. But the problem with "I-I" living is that it leads to isolation and loneliness. Paul Vitz, associate professor of psychology at New York University, says the worship of self makes it impossible to have long-term relationships which involve love and sacrifice.

We can move beyond life as an "I-It" or "I-I" existence. We can see life as an "I-You" relationship. This is a step in the right direction—in a biblical direction. Thoughtful people realize that life must consist of more than acquiring things or worshiping self. We must move beyond ourselves and learn to love others.

This "I-You" relationship is an improvement, but still not the final answer. Worship things, you shrink yourself. Worship self, you isolate yourself. Worship others, you doom yourself to disappointment—for no human being is big enough to be worshiped. No matter who we love, they will eventually fail, get sick, and die.

If you are looking for a dimension of living beyond what you have known to date, listen to what Jesus has to say about a close encounter of the God-kind.

Life, says Jesus, can be a fulfilling discovery in a close encounter with God: "This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." Notice that Jesus says, "This is life eternal," present tense. Eternal life isn't merely something that happens after we die. It's a new quality, a new dimension of life that can begin now.

Life eternal, says Jesus, is a matter of an "I-Thou" relationship with the only true God. Knowing God involves a close encounter. It means more than believing in far-off power. It means more than knowing *about* God. It means a personal relationship *with* God.

We human beings are so small and God is so big. We are so rebellious and God is so good. How can rebels like us know a great and good God?

It would be unthinkable, unless God takes the first step. That's what Jesus meant when he said: "This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." At a specific point in space, time, and history, Almighty God visited the human race. The baby born at Bethlehem was God—the invisible God made visible in human terms, God revealing himself in a close encounter.

God became man to lead us away from death into eternal life. He came not only to warn us about the danger of separation from God, but actually to take our separation upon him. In perfect obedience he carried out the Father's will. On the cross he took our death and guilt that in exchange he might give to us the eternal life of God himself.

But Jesus Christ is more than ancient history. Life begins when you discover the dimension of a present, personal relationship with him as Savior and Lord.

Perhaps all of your life you have been looking. Perhaps all of your life you have been saying: "This is life?" You want to say: "*This* is life!"

God planned for each one of us to realize that a close encounter of the God-kind can happen and make life worth the living for time and all eternity.

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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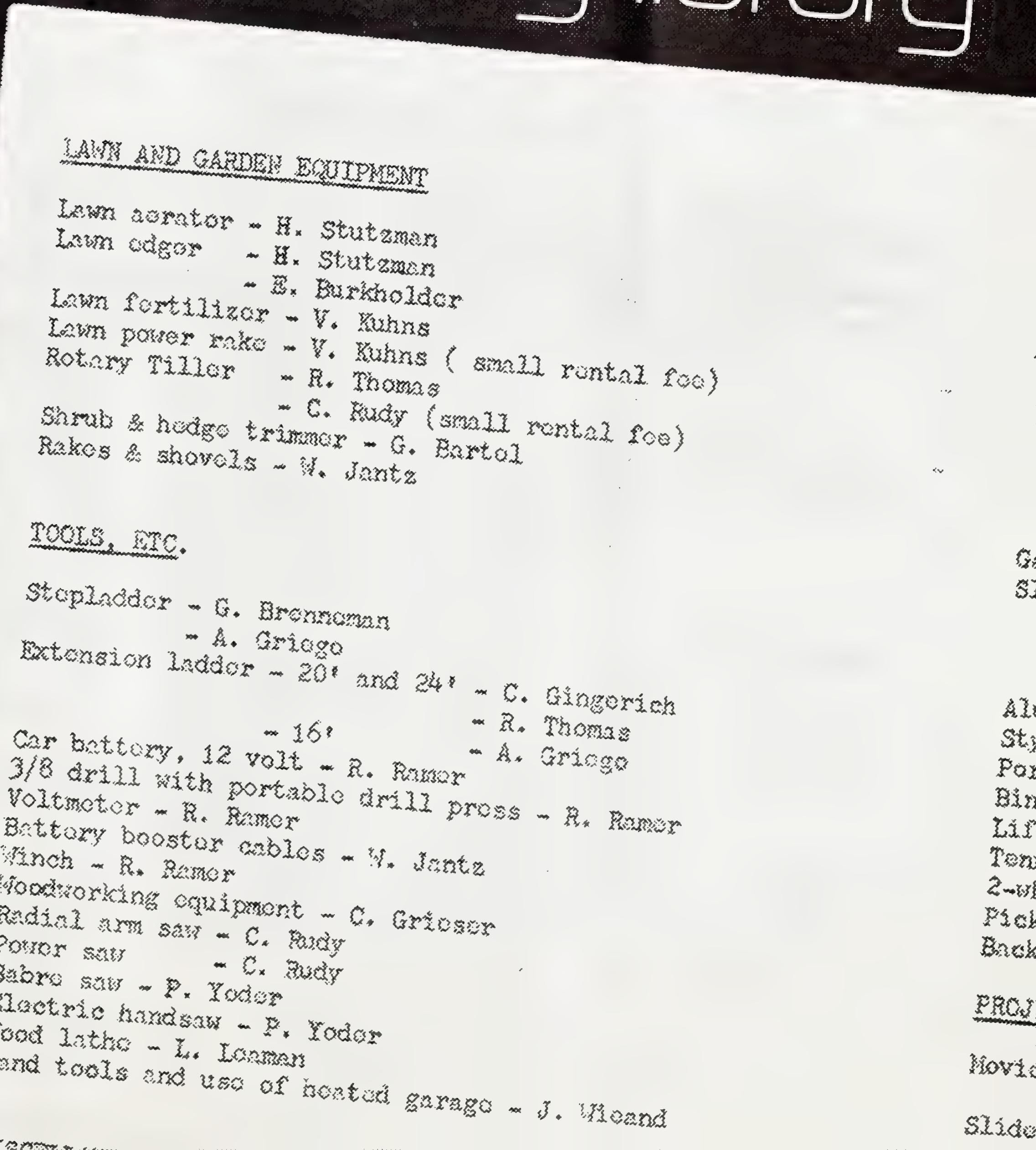
Church lending library

Living the love of Jesus



LAWN AND GARDEN EQUIPMENT

Lawn aerator - H. Stutzman
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Living the love of Jesus

Community doesn't
just happen.
It needs opportunities.

Lois Franz Bartel

I sat there filling out forms. Being new in town, one of the first steps was to enroll our sons in school. I looked a long time at one of the items: "Relative or friend to call in case of illness or emergency." Loneliness flashed through me. We had no relatives here and I couldn't impose on new people we'd met. I left the space blank.

That was seven years ago. During Christmas last year, when surgery challenged our family, my husband wasn't alone. We felt people's concern in many ways. Church members brought in or invited the family for evening meals for over two weeks. A substitute mother baked a birthday cake for our eldest son. Many "goodie" plates were brought in over the holidays. My mother and family were 1,400 miles away, but they felt assured that all was well.

What happened? What made the difference? We had become part of a caring church family.

Our experience of being alone isn't unusual. Citizens in the United States and Canada average twelve moves a lifetime (according to the US Census Bureau). About 18.6 percent of the population changes residence each year.

These moves take us away from family and friends.

The church is challenged to meet a unique need in this age—that of providing opportunities for relationships among people, no matter how mobile. We need to feel that we truly belong. When adversity strikes, no one should be alone.

Jesus stressed relationships. He ministered to crowds but he had his closest relations with his twelve disciples. He went with them frequently. It is significant that Christ introduced the sacrament of the Lord's Supper while with his closest friends. When he was preparing for the crucifixion, he turned to them and asked them to wait in the garden while he prayed. They failed that test of friendship, but later, after Jesus arose, they came back. Jesus' tomb wasn't found by a lone mourner. A couple of women, bound together by their sorrow, came to the tomb.

It is because of Jesus' love for us—his life, death, and resurrection—that deep, agape-type relationships are possible today. People in the early church recognized the importance of fellowship. They cultivated it. Following Pentecost, they even lived together and pooled incomes and needs (according to Acts 2). Their love for Jesus filled them with love for one another.

Today we belong to Christ by belonging to each other. Anabaptist faith stresses this. We believe we cannot separate our relationship with Christ from relationships with brothers and sisters. The church is the focal point for these associations.

A loving, caring church relationship isn't automatic. *Community doesn't just happen. It needs opportunities.* Our church is small. Most members have no kin nearby. Holidays in town, we soon discovered, offer opportunities for close fellowship with others whose families are also far away. Potlucks provide chances to visit and eat together. Small children move from lap to lap sharing "aunts" and "uncles" and "grandparents." The women's group brings old and young together in informal work and worship sessions. It is here that meals and other forms of need are volunteered. Sharing of concerns between Sundays is important and possible with an organized calling tree named the Emmanuel Alert. This is especially valuable now while we're without a minister.

Our children receive instruction from people we know and respect. People notice when they are pictured in the local paper in activities. They bring the clippings to those pictured. The junior and senior high people, with good sponsors and teachers, feel a closeness through activities and studies. Big high school boys stoop to talk to and play

The church is the focal point for beautiful Christ-brother-sister relationships. It is taught in the Bible and Anabaptist faith stresses this.

with sponsors' infants. Sponsors attend school events. These relationships make it easier for the students and for us as parents to face problems of public school attendance and preparation for the future.

Small groups at Emmanuel meet informally and families get to know each other. Some of our deepest friendships today developed in our first group experience. A "grandma" makes doughnuts and calls boys to bike over and get a sackful. They go enthusiastically. We're fortunate to have a voluntary service unit in town to work with and be models for our youth and to refresh us all with their idealism and vision.

Robert Raines in *Secular Congregation* says, "We do not know, and thus cannot chart, all the ways whereby the Holy Spirit is weaving our lives together in the congregation. But we do know that in Sunday morning worship there are times when we know that we belong to each other."

Sunday morning worship is a highlight of each week. Sharing time during the service keeps us up to date on our church family, their needs, joys, and activities. One couple is changing jobs and requests our support. The youth group announces rolls and coffee for sale between services. Lay people share their life pilgrimages during the sermon. A Sunday school class is currently studying parenting. Family members are missed when they aren't at the service.

Little things count and influence the growth of community. A concern our congregation has been dealing with is stewardship of our possessions. Today a waffle iron makes rounds to three homes, a token example of our desire to give and to receive. (Besides, the owner doesn't have to find storage space for it!) But people in our small group realized that even this wasn't easy. We tend to have the feeling we should be self-sufficient. If we borrow something we should pay back with something else. We take pride in being independent and not needing others. We discussed this a great deal before we felt free to call and ask for help with transportation, child care, etc. As a group we struggle with the desire to share versus the problem of pride.

Another exciting outgrowth of our congregation's general concern about stewardship and sharing is the Lending Library, whose holdings are listed in the back of our church directory. Four pages list items people are willing to loan to each other. Rather than owning a slide projector for use two or three times a year, we borrow one from the Grieser, Brenneman, or Hartzler families. Our camping gear stays on the shelf in winter and part of the summer. Others are welcome to it. The Griego, Thomas, and Yoder families have camping equipment available also. If we have guests needing a crib, we can call Stutzman or Thomas. If we should ever need a pressure canner, Sisnroy's have one to loan. And on the list goes. A pattern file is available to those who sew, organized according to men's, women's, and children's sizing. When we make items available to the congregation, we realize there are risks, but it reminds us that relationships are more important than material goods.

There are cautions in relating to a caring church community. It can't be all "give and no take" or all "take and no give." Carl Sandburg once said, "Who would want to go to a picnic all the time and eat of other people's baskets?" It is our obligation as members of one church or another to give ourselves to it. This doesn't only apply to potlucks and picnics. Giving ourselves takes time and energy and careful arrangement of priorities.

Another caution is that the church fellowship doesn't become a closed fellowship or only a shelter in the time of storm. Roger Shinn in *Tangled World* says: "The church can distort its faith, offer protection rather than exposure to the world, pleasant fellowship rather than enlistment in a daring cause."

Action shouldn't be found only at 5th and Harriet. A church fellowship must reach out into the larger community and all the world. Like blood coming to our heart and then going out to all parts of the body, we come together for nourishment, but we must also go out and take Christ's love to all areas. Such a church will find that their membership list includes names other than the German and Russian ones of the past centuries.

Locally, as a Christmas project the women's group had a silent auction. We brought crafts and baked goods and bid on them. Some of the money went to a needy family. The rest went to former members of our church now at the seminary. Boxes of Christmas cookies were packed and sent to our college students. A potluck was served to new Job Corps students enrolling at the local college. Several families have received help—washing and cleaning—following home fires.

A member's boxing club for boys received a contribution from the church. When Meals-on-Wheels, a program helping the elderly with meals, was floundering financially, the church budgeted money for it. A member serves on its board. A compassion fund helps meet clothing and medical needs. For example, a vaporizer was recently purchased for a sick woman.

Area churches help with a receiving home. They have sponsored two Mennonite Central Committee sales in our valley. Carloads of teens and adults helped in the Big Thompson Canyon flood cleanup through Mennonite Disaster Service. These are educational tools, as well as service projects. A Sunday school class will be studying the injustices in South Africa and MCC's involvement in southern Africa in connection with our peace heritage.

As long as someone is hurting, our job isn't done.

Wider contacts broaden one's vision for service opportunities. Church members need to be in frequent dialogue over the mission of the church in today's world. Just before the last meal that Jesus had with the disciples, he gave his frequently quoted message about being visited in prison, being clothed when naked, receiving a drink when thirsty, being cared for when sick, etc. When did this happen? Jesus said, "When you did it for any of my brothers you did it for me."

In our mobile, complex society Jesus' teachings about community become ever more crucial to our well-being. Whether we stay in one location, or employment or health takes us away from our own extended families and friends, we needn't be lonely. Our church family can help fill our needs and be an avenue for receiving and sharing God's love near and far. Community becomes a reality as we live out the love of Jesus.

One of the great confessions used by Hebrew parents to teach their children about the past was: ". . . A wandering Aramean was my father; and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there, few in number; and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous. And the Egyptians treated us harshly, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage. Then we cried to the Lord the God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our voice, and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror, with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey" (Deuteronomy 26:5b-9).

In Esther's time, the Hebrews were a problem to the king, something like the Mennonites have been to numerous sovereigns. "Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, 'There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from those of every other people, and they do not keep the king's laws, so that it is not for the king's profit to tolerate them" (Esther 3:8).

Hebrew Christians died searching for a better home; so have many Mennonite Christians. "These all died in faith, not having received what was promised, but having seen it and greeted it from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth" (Hebrews 11:13).

The challenge of Peter's letter to the Christians in exile remains so to us today. "Beloved, I beseech you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh that wage against your soul. Maintain good conduct among the Gentiles, so that in case they speak against you as wrongdoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation" (1 Peter 2:11-12).

To create the proper perspective, we need to put these biblical texts squarely against today.

Marriage today offers wide and crowded exit ramps. Four out of ten US marriages now lead to divorce—often before age thirty, and from couples who are pursuing dual careers. Canada's divorce graphs are up 388 percent in the decade 1967-77. Single-parent families in Canada are growing at triple the rate for dual-parent units.

Grandparents are consigned to obsolescence in retirement villages. Fathers are so preoccupied with success that they spend (one recent study shows) an average of twenty minutes per day with their one-year-old children. Mothers in dramatic numbers are going back to work, leaving children in the care of babysitters, schools, peers, and television.

Since 1960, Canada's suicide rate in the fifteen- to nineteen-year age-group has almost quadrupled. In the United States juvenile crime is up 245 percent in the last ten years and an estimated 1.3 million schoolchildren are confirmed alcoholics. Venereal disease has reached epidemic proportions in both Canada and the United States.

"All of this is not so much evidence of familial decay as it is of the family's ability to adapt to social change. In this century, it has already endured the loss of the family farm, migration to the cities, the impact of television. It has survived plague, famine, and two world wars. Its forms have changed, some of the names have even changed, but the family still provides succor from the common understanding that modern life is difficult at best.

"Twenty years ago, American anthropologist Ralph Linton wrote: 'The ancient trinity of father, mother, and child has survived more vicissitudes than any other human relationship. In the *Gotterdammerung*, which over-wise science and over-foolish statesmen are preparing for us, the last man will spend his last hours searching for wife and child'" ("Marriage on the Rocks," *Maclean's*, May 16, 1977).

The phenomenon of dispersion. Biblical references tell us that there was a widespread settlement of Jews outside Palestine from the exile right through the Greek and Roman periods. Many Jews, especially the Zionists, still use the term *dispersed Jews* for those who live outside the state of Israel today.

According to the *Interpreter's Bible Dictionary* (IBD), the two principal causes for the Jewish dispersion were commerce

Bernie Wiebe

Mennonite family in dispersion-1

and war. Under the united monarchy of David and Solomon, Jews went to other countries as government colonists, administrators, and private tradesmen. But the greatest impetus to dispersion was the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles.

Philo Judeaus (20 BC to AD 40) reports in *Legatio Ad Caium 36* that Jews were to be found in "all the satropies which contain fruitful land" (Esther 3:8; IBD, page 855).

Mennonites, too, have been a wandering people. There is no land called Menno. We have moved for mixed reasons, sometimes in a search for more land, other times because of our stand on war.

Jewish history can help us understand the great early missionary journeys. Paul often followed his own people. He began ministry in the synagogues.

It can also help us to feel better about our own missions in North American cities, in Mexico, in the Honduras, South America, and now to Europe. These are also people in dispersion.

Webster's New World Dictionary (1966) defines dispersion as "breaking up and scattering in all directions," and as "breaking up light into its component colored rays, as by a prism." In this latter definition is the hope of the dispersion. Dispersion may actually be providing our latest and possibly greatest opportunity to demonstrate a holistic approach to discipleship.

Historical perspective on the Mennonite family. There is a scarcity of literature on the Mennonite family. Few researchers have studied it seriously. The writing that has been done is mostly speculation.

Cal Redekop in 1957 stated that the history of the Mennonite family could be summarized in three cycles—community of believers, community of relatives, and community of individuals.

Community of believers. The Anabaptist-Mennonite movement began as a spiritual family in the sixteenth century. These people made life-and-death commitments to Jesus Christ and to each other. The *Martyrs' Mirror* and other records show how this family stood firm and grew in spirit and number.

Some people say they were biblicists, fatalists, and too other-worldly. But whatever else we can say, they were people with purpose. When they migrated, it was because they felt an uncompromising call to be true to that purpose. They had Christ and each other; that was community to them.

Community of relatives. It probably first became obvious in Holland, but has now haunted and followed us for four centuries. Mennonites became a peculiar people, tolerated by various cultures because of a reputation for agrarian ingenuity and for being harmless (*Stillen im Lande*). Our people adopted peculiar clothes, language, villages, and customs. We carried these with us wherever we went. These peculiarities isolated and insulated us from the "world," although we were still known to be hard workers and a value-oriented people.

We could not find a home and kept on migrating. It now becomes a question whether the moves like those from Canada to South America, Mexico, and the Honduras were simply attempts to be true to our peculiarities. Our people still had each other; their relatives became their community.

Community of individuals. There were those Mennonites who stopped moving around. We liked Europe, the USA, and Canada.

Some settled down because they realized the fallacy of moving *only* to maintain cultural peculiarities. Among them were those who began to seriously search for a rediscovery of the Anabaptist vision. Schools, missions, and evangelism flourished. (My own conversion came in 1946 as an eleven-year-old boy because special evangelistic meetings ignited a spiritual fire in several of our tradition-oriented southern Manitoba villages.) New evidence of God's spiritual family sprang forth.

Some dropped their peculiarities and became totally acculturated. They joined the military and regarded their heritage as a liability. These Mennonites were ready to join a majority which was embarking upon a major new thrust into scientific research and technological development. A new emphasis arose to get more leisure time, to "grab the gusto," and to acquire things.

Urbanization hit the Mennonites like the rest of the industrialized world. Ill prepared

The problem with the media is not the violence on TV, the noise on radio, or the pornography in print, it is their contributing to making us passive consumers as though there is no end to the philosophy of "the more we get, the happier we'll be."

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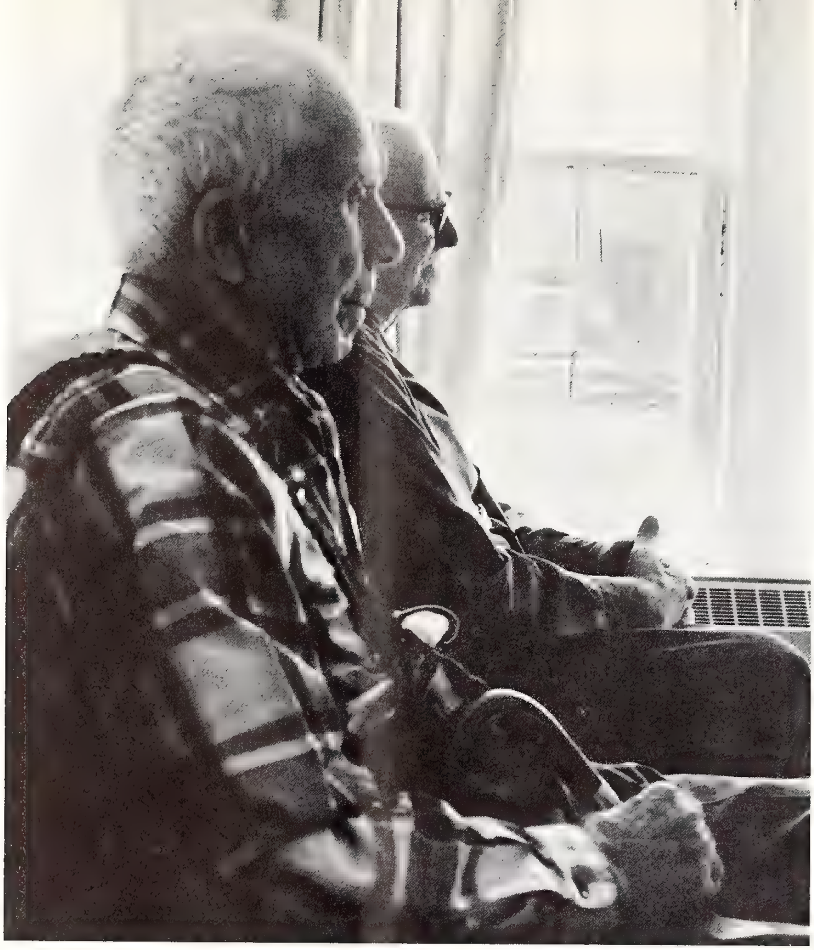


Grandparents are consigned to obsolence in retirement villages.

for city life, Mennonites tried to make the family into a last bastion for retreat and community. Marriage counselors agree that even today Mennonite families display a stubborn tenacity of togetherness. We don't separate or divorce easily.

But the nuclear family fuses became overloaded. We expected too much from single-family units. Today from ministers' families to business and farm families problems abound, and few have escaped from the severe wounds of contemporary family stress. Many of our people are still dazed as a result. We don't know what hit us.

We have not escaped the individualistic, atomistic emphases so current in secular society. Your community is yourself; therefore look after number one because no one else will.

Contemporary culture does not know the meaning of commitment and a spiritual community. Technocracy is based on competition, not cooperation. Technology thrives on consumption, not conservation. Progress cannot tolerate families with kinspeople; they become too settled and too hard to move. The nuclear family is easily transportable and can be readily moved to the newest frontier of expanding industries. Children then become a liability; they only make it difficult to accept promotions which keep us from establishing any roots. We can't let spouses interfere with the much-publicized and idolized "ladder of success." If the latest promotion doesn't please the spouse, then maybe the spouse is expendable, too.

The common philosophy is that change is good; it adds variety and that is the "spice of life." It leads to affluent indulgence with the slogan If It Feels Good, Do It. The latest hedonism cult has crept among Mennonites, too.

Public media reinforce and affirm those who put all their eggs into this materialistic basket. The commercials blatantly tell us to buy or fly now, pay later. The problem with the media is not the violence on TV or the pornography in print; it is their contributing to making us passive consumers as though there is no end to the philosophy of "the more we get, the happier we'll be."

It has taken the permissive sixties and the energy crises of the seventies to focus our attention upon the realities. Alvin Toffler in *Future Shock* warns us that change is life itself, but change rampant, change unguided, change unrestrained and accelerated, overwhelming not only our physical defenses but the decisional process, such change is the enemy of life.

The greatest problem of today is not wealth. The problem begins when our perception of values comes out of focus as we join the affluent. Too often affluence leads us to ignore the quality of life.

Kenneth Galbraith in *The Affluent Society* writes that it is one thing to furnish a house adequately. But many become so greedy that they pile in furniture until the floors break through. This is a moral issue, a matter of values. Mennonites, too, have joined this society.

Materialism finally becomes like alcoholism. The things that we consume ultimately take over and consume us.

E. F. Schumacher in *Small Is Beautiful—A Study of Economics as if People Mattered* says that you can prove anything immoral, ugly, soul-consuming, and a peril to the world, but if you can't prove it uneconomic, it will continue as before (for example, the arms race, pornography, competitiveness among young children).

That is why sex education has been ineffective. Since the exploitation of sex to sell things has proven so economically profitable, despite its harmful effects on understanding sex roles and achieving sexual identity, constructive sex education will not be effective until the commercial use of sex is ended.

The opposite is even more alarming. You can prove that something is essential for human existence, but if you can't show it as practical or economical, it won't catch on (honesty, no oaths, conflict resolution by pacifist strategy).

Today's ultimate insult is the neutron bomb. It kills people but doesn't destroy property! For any Christian, the evidence is clear that the dominant culture is ignoring God's sacred purpose for all creation. We as Christians need to demonstrate a new connection. *First of two articles*

News

Homosexuality forum develops understanding

"The church is the hope for the homosexual. The church needs to speak out for this minority group," asserted Central District pastor Raymond Yoder at a Kansas City workshop May 8-10.

The workshop, held at the Rainbow Boulevard Mennonite Church, provided a forum to develop understandings about homosexuality. The exchanges were open, friendly, loving, and nonjudgmental.

Twenty-five people participated. The group consisted of men and women, black and white, married and single, gay and straight, Mennonite and non-Mennonite, young and old. Only a few were ordained; most were white-collar workers. Of the homosexuals, some were openly so; others were in various stages of "coming out of the closet."

Frank Ward, pastor of the Rainbow Boulevard Church, organized and coordinated the event. Other speakers included James Yoder, counseling psychologist at the University of Missouri in Kansas City, and James Glyer, pastor of the largely homosexual Metropolitan Community Church in Kansas City. Yoder also led in desensitization encounters, and was instrumental in highlighting the feelings gays have about their interaction with society.

From the church comes the judgment that homosexual activity is sin, and from society that it is a menace. One homosexual, Mennonite and female, said, "My pastor tells me, 'I love you. God loves you. But you're all messed up.' " Her partner declared, "The church has to accept my relationship to God. I am not going to hell."

A Catholic homosexual, male, a skilled professional, shared deeply of his life. He reflected: "My life is compartmentalized. I deal in rounds of people and they never cross. I am betraying myself by staying in the closet. After the airing of "Holocaust" a colleague at work said it was OK to put homosexuals to death. I passed over the comment. My fear takes precedence over my anger at myself for not having enough courage to come out, and for the hate and bigotry of straight society in judging who I am. There is also anger over why I am what I am. Why am I different? There is no answer to that."

The question of identity received repeated emphasis. The homosexual persons said they were not deficient; each was as much a person as anyone. But fulfillment of that identity was difficult, and often impossible in society.

One homosexual woman related how she had come through marriage, two teenage daughters, and a recent divorce before she accepted her sexual identity. "The Methodist church," she reflected, "was the focal point of my life. I participated in lay witness weekends. Yet, there was no support as I struggled with what I thought God was saying to me, and what society said God was saying to me. Now (with her partner) I know what love is. It involves my whole identity—emotionally, spiritually, socially, physically." She is now a deacon in the Metropolitan Community Church.

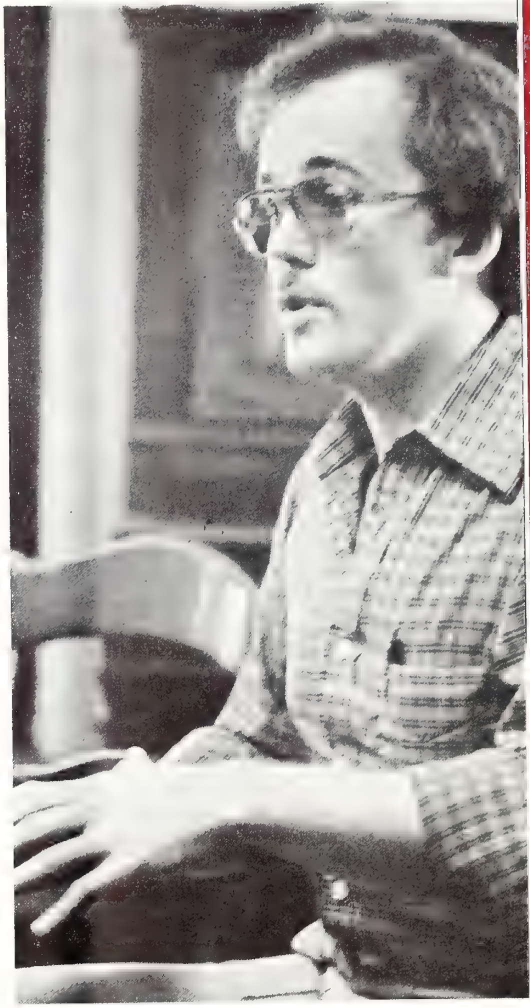
The gays at the workshop reacted vigorously to the stereotypes straight society has of homosexuals. They said they do not identify at all with the limp-wristed, gaudy, effeminate image of male homosexuals, nor with the "butch" image of females. They said they had much more in common with the values of the straight community than in the fringe elements in the gay community who receive TV coverage.

The speakers and the homosexuals at the conference seemed agreed on these facts, based on their own observation and the studies of researchers.

- Gay people are in all walks of life. There are homosexual physicians, lawyers, teachers, nurses, clergy, farmers, mechanics, clerks, etc.
- Most research on homosexuality is psychoanalytically based. This approach views homosexuality as an illness. Hence, those homosexuals who do seek counsel receive it from a negative frame of reference.
- A significant number of married people are homosexual.
- About 5 to 10 percent of society is homosexual. Homosexuality is more common among men than among women.
- Gender identity, whether heterosexual or homosexual, is rarely a matter of choice. It is a given.

Frank Ward presented a paper on "The Bible and Homosexuality." He referred to Scripture references in Deuteronomy, Genesis, Leviticus, and Romans. He noted that some of the passages could be interpreted in noncondemnatory ways, but that there were also clear biblical injunctions on the subject. He did, however, conclude that neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament give

(*continued on page 360*)



Mennonite and gay

"If homosexuality is a sin,
that is between God and me.
That is the clay
I have to work with.
It is better to be dead than queer.
You become a pariah
to home, family, church.
You are completely alone."
—Ron Lentz

(**forum**—*continued from page 359*)

evidence of understanding the homosexual orientation of an individual. For example, in the Old Testament, women are never prohibited from homosexual practices, although men are.

Ward also concluded that homosexuals should not be denied their basic human rights, and further, that the church should openly integrate the homosexual person into the church community.

James Glyer, the gay pastor of the Kansas City Metropolitan Community Church, pointedly asserted, "Gay persons exist in your congregations. Metropolitan Community churches are ghetto congregations of homosexuals. Do you want to hand all your Mennonite gays over to us? How do you create a climate in your congregation so that a gay person can come out of the closet? What do you do with gays who come out of the married situation? What are you going to do as a parent if your son or daughter is gay?"

VOTE
REPEAL

Wichita repeals homosexual law—*Ron Adrian, Baptist minister of Wichita, Kansas, and president of the city's Concerned Citizens for Community Standards, led a successful drive to repeal a local ordinance prohibiting discrimination against homosexuals. An election on the same issue is scheduled shortly in Eugene, Oregon.*

Glyer spent twenty-five years as a Presbyterian minister before acknowledging his homosexuality. He said fifteen years of psychotherapy did not change his sexual orientation. "Only recently, when I accepted my sexuality, did I become an integrated individual. We cannot change," he declared.

These major points evolved after the three-day workshop:

- Homosexuals want to live, work, and love with the same freedom that characterizes the heterosexual community in our society. They also covet the model of fidelity for themselves.
- Society and the church have placed enormous obstacles in the path of integrating homosexuals into normal society.
- Society looks to Christianity for moral sanctions. The issue of how religion affects civil law and rights needs to be handled carefully.
- The primary problem is with human sexuality, not just homosexuality.
- The issue of homosexuality is desensitized by meeting gay people. Both the homosexuals and the heterosexuals observed that they had been ministered to by the other group. *Vic Reimer*

Urban church challenged to work hard

Chicago, Illinois—"I would rather die than leave the city," was the opening statement to 500 persons during an urban ministries consultation at Chicago Temple Methodist Church, May 5-6.

Speaker Raymond Bakke, Chicago pastor and active in Spanish ministries, took the above quote from early Anabaptist leader George Blaurock.

Fifty Mennonites were at the congress. They came from coast to coast, and from Canada south to Texas and Florida. Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, and five other seminaries sponsored the event together with various Chicago area churches, and the staff of the Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE). SCUPE is the permanent urban ministries education program of the six seminaries.

About thirty workshops and plenary sessions featured nationally known religious leaders and urban specialists.

Bakke, during the first plenary session, lamented, "Today it has not taken a rapture to have the church up and leave the 'evil' city. She has done it gladly, quoting Scripture all the way." He called churches to "let the gospel be good news instead of good advice."

James White, urban sociologist and former pastor, pointed out that 75 percent of North America's population lives in fifteen metropolitan areas. He emphasized leadership needs in urban churches, particularly among blacks in predominantly white denominations. "Development of leaders is always dependent on the challenges and aspirations that confront a group," he observed. He said concrete positions and programs would call forth leadership.

God's people are called to be righteous by doing justice, declared Lynn Buzzard, professor at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Lombard, Illinois. He led a workshop in law, justice, and urban life. "If you want to see how a given society works, look at the part of society that has no power to insist on justice," he observed. "Do they get it? If not, the society is wrong. Amos 5:23-24 indicates the pursuit of justice for the oppressed is an act of worship."

This theme was also emphasized in an address by John Perkins, director of the "Voice of Calvary." He said the church must identify with the urban poor. But, he also counseled, "If you want to understand urban needs you first need to look at rural problems, since people flooding into cities come from rural areas."

A cry for change came from Anthony Campolo, professor of sociology at Eastern College in St. Davids, Pennsylvania. He declared, "We communicate that Christianity is a religion for winners while the Bible declares that it is really for losers." He stated that the principalities and powers mentioned by Paul are in our day the political structures that humiliate and oppress the helpless.

The gathering was designed to equip, challenge, and encourage those in the evangelical community who are involved in urban ministry.

Workshops presented case studies of various city ministries such as methods of evangelization, particularly in multi-ethnic communities; Christian education, art, drama, and music; ministries to youth, victims, and minorities; and issues such as urban life-styles, unemployment, and energy systems for urban churches. *David Whitermore*

Hieberts stress need for emergency aid to Laos

Newton, Kansas—For the first time ever the United States may not respond to a direct diplomatic appeal from another country for emergency humanitarian aid.

Laos has appealed to the international community for 113,000 tons of rice and other foodstuffs, the minimum needed to counter a serious food shortage.

"The emergency is real," state Linda and Murray Hiebert who left the Laotian capital Vientiane in January after five years of voluntary service with Mennonite Central Committee.

They are now doing interpretation work with government officials, relief organizations, and the Mennonite constituency. They were in Newton May 10-12.

Since February the Hieberts have met several times with Carter administration officials and with various congresspersons to underscore the need.

"Concrete action from the Carter administration is difficult to get, although the reception is friendly," observed Murray. "There appears to be no leadership, and what there is is based entirely on political expediency. They don't want food aid to Laos to become a political issue."

Earlier in the year momentum for the shipments was building. In January, eighteen US senators, led by the late Hubert Humphrey, strongly urged President Carter to "share some of the substantial US surpluses of wheat and rice with Vietnam and Laos." In March Senator Edward Kennedy renewed the pressure.

Unlike aid to Vietnam, current American law does not prohibit food assistance to Laos through programs such as PL-480 "Food for Peace" shipments.

However, US embassy officials in Vientiane destroyed whatever momentum had been generated in the US Congress to give food when they said it wasn't needed anymore.

The Hieberts say this is not true. "Although 94,000 tons of foodstuffs have been pledged by non-US donors, to prevent famine the last 20,000 tons of the minimum requirement are as important as the first 20,000 pledged," observed Linda.

They assert that there is no padding in the figure. It is an absolute minimal figure needed to give twelve kilograms of rice per person per month. They point out that during the Sahel disaster relief operation consumption based on fifteen kilograms of foodstuffs per person per month proved insufficient. Laos' neighbor to the west, Thailand, consumes an average of twenty-one kilograms of rice per person per month.

Drought and live American ordnance in Lao fields are the two main factors affecting the food supply.

During the Vietnam War a decade of secret bombing cratered the highly productive Plain of Jars. The bombing destroyed drainage and irrigation systems. Many of the bombs remain unexploded. They pose an incessant danger as efforts are made to return 92,500 hectares (230,000 acres) of land in the Plain of Jars to agricultural production.

Particularly lethal are the guava bombs, lemon-sized terror weapons. Due to their small size they are often buried. When struck by a hoe they explode, spewing shrapnel and plastic pellets. (Plastic was used so the pellets could not be detected by X rays.)

During two years of land reclamation, 267 farmers have died from the explosions, and another 343 have been seriously injured. The Pentagon will not provide technical information on how to handle the munitions.

Mennonite Central Committee and the American Friends Service Committee are the only private American agencies to maintain staff in Laos.

Linda and Murray also noted that their contacts helped reconciliation efforts. For most Lao they were the first nonmilitary Americans the Lao had ever met. They also maintained relationships with the Christian church. The socialist revolution following the end of the Vietnam conflict placed considerable stress on the church. Many Christians left for Thailand. However, those who stayed see new opportunities in Laos for the church, report the Hieberts. *Vic Reimer*

Linda and Murray Hiebert want the US government to help the Lao people in their efforts to reclaim land littered with unexploded bombs. The guava bomb (inset) continues to maim and kill.

MCC ponders US ministries

Atlanta, Georgia (MCC)—Relationships between MCC units and local Mennonite churches, voluntarism, and ministries to minority groups were the main topics at a meeting of the MCC (US ministries) board April 20-22.

The meetings were hosted by the MCC Atlanta unit to provide the board with a firsthand experience about the programs which they advise. Much of one day was spent becoming familiar with the current service program in Atlanta, and learning about its history. MCC volunteers in this city have started two credit unions, organized a day-care center, begun a small moving business, and formed a community development group. As projects have become secure the volunteers have moved on to new neighborhoods.

One area of discussion was the relationship between MCC units and the local Mennonite churches. It was noted that a goal of the board is to have volunteers active in the local church, leaving a Christian witness as they work to meet human needs in the community yet not usurping the leadership of a local congregation.

Lengthy discussion centered on how US ministries can be helpful to all church voluntary service agencies by promoting voluntarism. The time to change the perception of voluntary service as alternate service is long overdue, board members indicated. Education and publicity will be done on this.

How to minister to native Americans continued to be a central issue for the board. An initial draft of principles was discussed.

The board also heard its first report from the new Mennonite Hispanic Immigration Service. Consultant Karen Ventura emphasized that the service provides information, interprets immigration laws, and provides support for Mennonite Hispanics who face difficult decisions involving immigration. One of the concerns raised was how to stress equal treatment for both ethnic and nonethnic Mennonites in the area of immigration laws.

Need money? Mutual Aid gives

Mennonite Mutual Aid Association of Goshen, Indiana, annually gives thousands of dollars to constituent conferences and congregations to extend its caring and sharing ministry.

Congregations may apply through their conference officers for funds to carry out special projects in their communities. MMAA has special interest in funding programs of mutual aid education and stewardship, strengthening the diaconate ministry, building family relationships, improving quality of life, improving inter-Mennonite relationships, and supporting efforts in reconciliation, research, and leadership development.

The funds, however, are not intended to replace resources normally available through regular conference and congregational channels.

Last year the General Conference constituency received grants for Hopi Mission School in Oraibi, Arizona; for a family seminar at First Mennonite Church in Aberdeen, Idaho; for an inter-Mennonite editors' meeting; and for a Cheyenne-Arapho legal aid project.

Application forms are available from Heinz Janzen, General Secretary, General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Applications are due by July 1.

Starving refugees demand new home

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—In March 50,000 India refugees began a mass exodus from the hills of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh into Hasnabed in West Bengal, seventy kilometers north of Calcutta.

They have encamped along the railroad tracks and in the railroad stations.

These refugees, first displaced from the Bangladesh area during the partition struggle of the late 1940s, lived for nearly twenty years in subhuman conditions in the streets of Calcutta and in transit camps, writes Charles Edwin of the MCC India staff. During the 1960s the government arranged to send thousands of the displaced to be "resettled" in the hot and dry hills of Dandakaranya.

The government wants to order them out of Hasnabed back to their rehabilitation site in the hill country but the refugees are determined not to go.

They never liked their assigned area, calling the land rocky and infertile and the occupants hostile. They had been raised close to rivers and sea, fish was a main part of their diet, and the new place had not even adequate water for drinking or washing or for crops.

MCC India representative A. C. Lobe writes, "It is not easy to plan for involvement in this work. The government does not want the refugees moving into West Bengal. Economically it would be difficult for West Bengal to help rehabilitate and settle them. At this point the government is requesting voluntary agencies to assist.

A Hindu charitable organization has been giving them rice and bread and distributing dhoties and sarees, reports Edwin, but its priests are asking, "How long can we keep this up?"

In April MCC authorized an initial grant to be sent immediately for the purchase of food for the refugee community. MCC will be cooperating with several other organizations, including Lutheran World Service, to respond with donations of food and medicine to the distressed area. Edwin will visit the area each week along with MCC field worker Akramul Hugue to evaluate and recommend new directions for MCC involvement.

Rosthern school plans celebration

A seventy-fifth anniversary celebration is being planned for Rosthern (Saskatchewan) Junior College June 23-25.

RJC is a senior high school funded by the General Conference churches of Alberta and Saskatchewan. Approximately 160 students are enrolled in grades ten through twelve.

Interest in founding the school was first formalized on January 24, 1903, at a meeting of Rosthern area Mennonites. A special committee—Vic Krahn, Henry Goerzen, Sue Froese, and Marvin Regier—is organizing events for the celebration.

Among these are displays of photography, art, crafts, cooking, and quilting. Various kinds of entertainment will be featured, including drama, sports, and music.

Particularly noteworthy is a seminar on the history of Rosthern Junior College led by historian Frank H. Epp. Epp authored the book *Education with a Plus,* which tells the history of RJC.

The musical *The Blowing and the Bending,* by J. Harold Moyer and James Juhnke, music and history professors from Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, will be presented. Although the musical is set in Kansas, its theme of conscientious objection to the military draft of World War I sets it close to the period when RJC was founded.

Another feature of the weekend will be a mass choir, to be directed by George Wiebe of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, which will include RJC students, alumni, and local church choirs. Selections from Mendelssohn's *St. Paul,* Haydn's *Creation,* and David Paetkau's *Liederalbum* will be sung.

New churches formed

Langley, British Columbia—Group Bible studies in the home of John and Mary Rempel have evolved into the Langley Mennonite Church.

The Bible studies began about a year ago, and attracted people from various surrounding churches. Regular Sunday morning activities began in February.

The group has called Jake Tilitzky, coordinator of the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia, to serve the church as a part-time pastor. He began his leadership in April.

At a recent business meeting the congregation elected a council: Peter Rempel is chairperson, Norm Driedger is vice-chairperson, Sherry Regier is secretary, and the treasurer is Henry Martens.

During the organizational meeting members shared their appreciation for the small size of the group because it provided opportunity for greater involvement in church work. The group meets Sundays at 10:30 a.m. in Douglas Hall in Langley.

Newton, Kansas—Fourteen persons meeting Sunday, May 14, spoke their affirmation to a covenant and agreed on a name, the Jubilee Mennonite Church, for their house church which has been meeting here since September 1977.

Their covenant speaks of a collective commitment to follow Jesus rather than other gods—some of which are nation, security, status, wealth; to live simply; to joyfully accept diversity because diversity leads to growth; and to recognize that each person is equal in God's sight, each one a servant. The group also committed itself to be active in mission through groups small enough to foster openness, trust, and mutual counsel.

The new house church—composed of Newton, North Newton, and Hesston residents and students at Bethel College—intends to seek affiliation with the South Central Conference of the Mennonite Church, and the Western District of the General Conference.

Meetings have been held regularly in the home of Perry and Elizabeth Yoder, North Newton.

The name "Jubilee" is derived from the Old Testament ideal of liberation and restitution which Jesus proclaims in Luke 4:18-19.

Words & deeds

The average price of a typical American home could reach the almost incredible level of $78,000 within five years. This startling information was released in a March 1977 report by the Joint Center for Urban Studies of Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The price of housing in the past few years has jumped twice as fast as family incomes. Not only home building, but home buying has gone from a mass market to a luxury market. The report charges that "despite half a century of government support to help American families realize the traditional dream of home ownership, families of average income are now less able to afford a home than ten or even five years ago." In 1976 less than 30 percent of American families could afford median-priced ($44,200) new homes.

Want to be an editor? Applicants are being sought for the position of *forum* editor to begin in August 1979. Published jointly by the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church student services, *forum* is a magazine of exploration, dialogue, and information for Mennonite students and young adults. The editor will be based at Mennonite offices in Elkhart, Indiana, and may serve up to one-half time. Application deadline is August 1, 1978. To request an application write Eleanor Loewen, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

Elaine Rich, mission partner with the Commission on Overseas Mission in Tokyo, Japan, recently completed an intensive ten-week training course for volunteers who share in a telephone counseling ministry in Tokyo. Two telephone counseling organizations (one in Japanese and one in English) serve in the city of over eleven million with confidential aid to those who want help with their problems.

Christian drama for the church will be explored in a June 12-16 workshop at Evangel College, Springfield, Missouri. The emphasis is on mechanics of directing, acting, mime, interpretation, and playwriting. For more information contact Nonna Dalan, Evangel College, Springfield, Missouri 65802, or telephone 417-865-2811.

The Bluffton (Ohio) College nursing department has been awarded a three-year grant from the US Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW). The 1978-79 appropriation is $104,499. Bluffton inaugurated a bachelor degree nursing program in the 1977-78 school year for nurses who have graduated from either a diploma or an associate degree nursing program. It is intended to provide more knowledge and clinical competency to registered nurses, with an emphasis on decision-making, leadership, change process, and research, so that they will be prepared to deliver primary health care in a variety of settings.

Chicago peace churches—Brethren, Mennonite, and Quaker—met April 30 to ponder forms of peacemaking, and to share each group's history of peace witness, theology, and peace and service programs. Future meetings are planned to look at specifics such as military recruitment in local high schools, help for people being evicted from their homes, a ministry to battered wives and children, and taxation that is hurting the elderly and the sick.

Chicago Mennonites gathered April 21-23 for the second installment of the 1978 Seminary Without Walls program. During the weekend, Lupe DeLeon, secretary for the home missions of the Mennonite Board of Missions, directed spirited sessions on the topic of church growth. He challenged the group of sixty to find ways to facilitate the church's witness to the saving power of God. He also emphasized the necessity of continuous evaluation of programs. Ten Chicago churches and three voluntary service units participated in the weekend school.

An appreciation dinner for the volunteers who staff the MCC Et cetera Shop in Newton, Kansas, was held April 29. In the photo below Lois Kreider (right), manager of the shop, is receiving a plaque in appreciation for her leadership from Grace Toews (left), assistant manager. Mary Esther Loganbill (center) presided at the program, which included a style show using clothing from the shop. Since the store opened in 1976 as a combination thrift and Self-Help shop, more than $91,000 has been sent to MCC. Presently 135 volunteers from nearly twenty churches are serving at the shop. During the past year, persons from the Newton store have assisted in opening Et cetera Shops in Hillsboro and Liberal, Kansas, and Weatherford, Oklahoma.

Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, graduated 110 students May 21. One hundred of the students were four-year degree candidates, and ten earned the two-year associate in arts degree. This was Bethel's eighty-fifth annual commencement.

Alumni of Mennonite Central Committee are invited to reunions during the week of Mennonite World Conference July 25-30 in Wichita, Kansas. Six reunions, one for each of the six continental areas served by MCC, are planned. The overseas secretary from each area will coordinate the meeting. Alumni who have served in Africa, North America, or Asia will meet Thursday, July 27, at 4:15 p.m. Persons who served in Latin America, the Middle East, Europe, or North Africa will gather Friday, July 28, at 4:15 p.m. The meetings are open to anyone wishing to attend them. Locale for the meetings will be announced at the conference.

Worldwide distribution of Scripture in 1977 broke all previous records, reports the American Bible Society. Four-hundred and ten million Scriptures—nine million Bibles, eleven million New Testaments, and 390 million portions—were distributed, a gain of eighty million copies over 1976. Of this number, 114 million were distributed in the United States. Nevertheless, the report notes that one of the most significant recent developments is the increase of Bible distribution in areas of political and internal strife, particularly in Angola, Ethiopia, and Uganda. In the Asia-Pacific region, where 60 percent of the world's people reside, Scripture distribution increased by fifty million copies to a total of 170 million.

"Being Born Again in America" was the topic for a four-lecture series by Donovan E. Smucker at Fresno (California) Pacific College, May 9-12. Smucker is vice-president of the General Conference, and professor of social science at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ontario. His lectures were part of the Staley Distinguished Christian Scholar Series which brings scholars to college and university campuses.

LOIS KREIDER

Record

Workers

Kathy Friesen, Coaldale (Alberta) Church, began four months of voluntary service in May with the Crossroads Community Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Her four-months assignment with Mennonite Voluntary Service will provide tutoring services at the center. She has attended Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Her parents are Peter and Mary Friesen of Coaldale.

Michelle Gettle, Denver, Pennsylvania, began six months with Mennonite Voluntary Service in March working in day-care services in Hutchinson, Kansas. She is a graduate of Garden Spot High School and has worked as a nurses' aide and waitress. She is a member of Pine Grove Mennonite Church. Her parents are Warren and Shirley Gettle of Denver.

Ron and Cynthia Krehbiel, Goessel, Kansas, will leave in July on a one-year assignment in Lesotho, southern Africa, under the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission. Ron has been granted a one-year sabbatical by the Alexanderwohl Church in Goessel to work with the Maseru United Church in pastoral ministry. Ron is a graduate of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, and has had pastorates with Mennonite churches in Markham, Illinois; Bedminster, Pennsylvania; Mountain Lake, Minnesota; and in Goessel. The Krehbiels will be taking their son Jamie with them. A commissioning service is scheduled for June 25 at the Alexanderwohl Church.

C. Krehbiel

R. Krehbiel

Miller

Regier

Jack Miller, Goessel (Kansas) Church, began a two-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service in March. He is working with youth activities in Seattle, Washington. He has attended Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas, and has worked as a salesperson and welder. His parents are John and Maxine Miller of Newton, Kansas.

Lorna Regier, United Mennonite (North) Church, Leamington, Ontario, will leave in August for a two-year term in Hualien, Taiwan. The Commission on Overseas Mission has appointed her to teach grades five through eight in Hualien Christian School. Her educational background includes a BA degree from the University of Waterloo and the BEd degree from the University of Windsor. Currently, she is teaching in the Leamington public school system. During 1976-77 she participated in the inter-Menno training program.

Deaths

Cornelius Dueck, president of the social and evangelization committee of the Mennonite Church in Paraguay is dead. On May 12 a telegram announcing his death was received by Hector Valencia, secretary for Latin America of the Commission on Overseas Mission. No details, including the date of death, were given. Dueck was to have been a delegate to the Mennonite World Conference, meeting in Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30. He lived in the Fernheim colony and was active in work with Indian settlements near the colony. Dueck was about forty-five years of age. He belonged to the Evangelical Mennonite Church, and had served as president of the social action and evangelization committee for several years.

Calendar

June 5-9—Mennonite Voluntary Service orientation, Camp Colorado, Colorado

June 15-18—Northern District Conference annual sessions, Dawson County High School, Glendive, Montana

June 15-18—Pacific District Conference annual sessions, Mount Elden Southwest Conference Center, Flagstaff, Arizona

July 25-30—Mennonite World Conference, Wichita, Kansas

August 21-25—Project Teach, Bluffton (Ohio) College

Canadian

June 2-4—College and career retreat of Alberta Mennonite Youth Organization, Camp Valaqua; speaker, Menno Epp

July 5-9—Conference of Mennonites in Canada annual sessions, Gretna, Manitoba

Manager wanted

The Herbert Senior Citizens' Home, a facility owned by the Mennonite Brethren Church, requires a manager. The position requires someone conversant in English and German. Experience is desirable but not essential. Duties to commence September 1. Send applications to:

Jacob J. Dyck, manager
Box 10
Herbert, Saskatchewan SOH 2AO
Phone: 306-784-2613

RN with strong clinical experience and supervisory experience needed for challenging position as director of nursing at a modern, thirty-eight-bed general hospital operated by Mennonite Board of Missions. Contact: Jerry Troyer, administrator, Huerfano Mennonite Hospital, Walsenburg, Colorado 81089. Phone: 303-738-2621 collect.

RJC 75

**COME AND CELEBRATE
YOUR HERITAGE**
June 23-25
on the
**ROSTHERN JUNIOR
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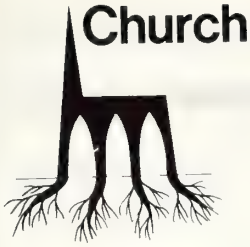

Church of the Servant

"In what part of Wichita is your church?" asked an acquaintance who wanted to find out more about the Mennonite Church of the Servant.

"We live all over the city and meet in each other's homes," I told her.

"Can we help you build a building?" came an offer from another central Kansas Mennonite.

"No, thank you," we said. "We've decided we don't want a building."

The Mennonite Church of the Servant, officially organized in April 1977, doesn't fit all the categories to which church people have been accustomed.

On a particular Sunday, one might find the whole church meeting together for worship or an "agape meal" (the way we usually celebrate communion, around a simple meal). Or one might find the two house churches within the Church of the Servant meeting separately—one on Sunday morning and the other on Sunday evening.

The congregation divided into two house churches in October in an effort to preserve the close relationships and sharing which we had experienced as a small church, yet allow us to make new people feel welcome. We wanted each house church to be living-room size—twelve to twenty people.

Also, our style of leadership doesn't fit the standard mold. The Western District Conference home missions committee employed David Habegger to come to Wichita in August 1976 to start another Mennonite church in the city. But he has not been our only leader.

We are moving toward multiple leadership. Each of the two house churches now has two "shepherds" who are to be responsible for pastoral care of members and friends of the fellowship. David's role is being an "apostle," reaching out to new people and following up the people who are referred to him. These five people plus a coordinator, who conducts church decision-making meetings, make up the church council.

Sunday school for children, that century-old tradition now taken for granted in most churches, takes place for us on Saturdays in a home setting, where a cluster of parents and children can learn and play together.

In essence, the forms of the church which we are using are not new. The first-century church met in homes, ate together, and shared spiritually and economically. Our Anabaptist forebears in the faith worshiped in homes or caves.

We, like them, have discovered that the small worshiping group is not just a stage one has to go through before becoming a "real" church with its own meetinghouse. The smallness of our house churches gives us the chance to learn to know each other on a deeper level. Prayer is not the activity of one person on behalf of the listeners, but an experience in which all can share their hurts, their joys, or their concerns about a friend or relative who is hurting.

One Sunday in December my house church asked each person to bring a song, a poem, or a teaching. The sharing of faith, of doubts, of mutual encouragement was a moving experience.

We come from many different church and ethnic backgrounds. We do not always think alike. But we are on a common search to become the body of Christ in the world. We are willing to test our discoveries with each other and to care about each other.

Like many other new urban churches, we are members of both the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. Some people of Mennonite Brethren background have also participated in our fellowship. We see no reason to perpetuate past Mennonite divisions.

A city church need not be a transplanted rural church. The differing needs and the environment of city people may require new forms for the church. Where people are separated from other church members during the week, opportunities need to be provided to get to know each other through an afternoon of cookie baking or an evening of discussion. Where people live hundreds of miles from relatives and work with others who have vastly different values, the church family can provide emotional or financial support. When many people in the church have leadership skills, they need a role in which to use them. Where diverse theologies and ideologies abound, there needs to be a place where they can be listened to and sorted out in a spirit of love.

I value our smallness and our sense of family; I also value our ability so far to reach out to new people. Our cellular division (small house churches within a larger church body) is our attempt to combine the closeness of the small group with the openness of Christ's invitation to everyone.
Lois Barrett

Review

Mennonite Bibliography, 1631-1961

Mennonite Bibliography, 1631-1961, *by Nelson P. Springer and A. J. Klassen (Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and Kitchener, Ontario, 1977, two volumes, 531 pages and 634 pages) is reviewed by J. C. Wenger, professor of historical theology, Goshen Biblical Seminary, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana 46515.*

Harold S. Bender will long be remembered for his brilliant address, "The Anabaptist Vision," for being the chief founder of Goshen Biblical Seminary, for serving as the editor-in-chief of the *Mennonite Encyclopedia,* for his untiring service with the Mennonite Central Committee, and for his leadership as president of Mennonite World Conference. And now another fruit of his devotion to Anabaptist-Mennonite scholarship has rolled from the press: the two-volume *Mennonite Bibliography*.

In 1962, the year of Bender's death, Hans J. Hillerbrand's splendid *Bibliography of Anabaptism* was published. And long before its appearance, Bender had one of his students, A. J. Klassen, preparing its successor, which has finally been published as two stately volumes. Much of Nelson P. Springer's time in recent years has been devoted to the enormous task of making the *Mennonite Bibliography* as complete as possible—the task begun by Mennonite Brethren scholar A. J. Klassen.

Herald Press saw to it that the best possible printing and binding skills were utilized in the production of this masterpiece of research and compilation. It is indeed fortunate that the marketing manager is the able Jack C. Scott, for it will not be easy to sell large numbers of a set which sells for over a hundred dollars.

And yet there will be many scholars and many libraries which will immediately recognize the tremendous value of both the *Bibliography of Anabaptism* (1962) and its two-volume twin, the *Mennonite Bibliography* (1977). Along with the *Mennonite Encyclopedia,* these bibliographies are "must" tools which the researcher simply cannot do without.

Letters

What's in a name?

Dear Editor: In reference to the April 11 issue which contains the account of our Central District Conference, I assure you that I am "Loyal" but first of all I count myself to be "Lotus." No hard feelings but I feel I've had my share of nicknames without taking on another one. *Lotus E. Troyer, 108 8th Street, Gridley, Illinois 61744* April 27

Mennonitism is secondary

Dear Editor: This letter is in response to the article, "What Is a Mennonite?" (March 28 issue). I agree that Mennonites have developed into ethnic groups with certain definite characteristics which they attribute to themselves. However, I do not believe that being a Mennonite can or ever should be anything else. I agree that the preservation of the ethnic Mennonite community should not take precedence over that of the Christian faith. However, if we forsake our Mennonite characteristics and adopt those of other cultures and ethnic groups, then being a Mennonite no longer has any significance, if it has any significance at all.

Brenda Schroeder says, "I believe that many young people only see the externals and, not knowing the history, they don't understand the faith." Which faith? She uses the term, *Mennonite faith.* The only faith that amounts to anything is our faith in Jesus Christ. Weren't the convictions of Menno and the Anabaptists based on their faith in Jesus Christ? As it is, I am convinced that some of the beliefs that distinguished the Anabaptists from other Protestant and Catholic faiths were based on a misinterpretation of the teachings of Christ and the Apostles.

It is a good thing to teach our young people the history of our Mennonite forefathers. However, if we are going to retrace our spiritual roots, then we had better trace them right back to the beginning, which is Jesus Christ, not Menno Simons. Did Menno die for our sins? Heaven forbid!

To say that being a Mennonite means to have a definite personal Christian experience almost sounds as though every one who has ever had such an experience is a Mennonite. How absurd. What about the millions of Christians who lived before Menno Simons was ever born? What about the millions of believers who know nothing of Anabaptism?

The General Conference has as its motto, "Other foundation can no one lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11). If Jesus Christ is the foundation of the church, then what are we doing building on the faith of Menno and his Anabaptist followers? Are not they mere building blocks in the vast network of the universal church building?

Brenda Schroeder talks about our Mennonite missions and the growth of the African Mennonites. It makes me wonder what our missionaries are doing. Are they out there persuading people to become Mennonites, or are they persuading them to become born-again believers in Jesus Christ? I don't understand why these people, who have no Mennonite heritage as such, would even want to be called by that name if their faith is based on the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is far more important that Mennonites become first-generation Christians rather than becoming first-generation Mennonites. Whereas it is possible to be born a Mennonite, to become a disciple of Christ is possible only through rebirth.

If Mennonites want to drop their ethnic characteristics and integrate them with those of other cultures, this is fine. However I do not think that this is necessary unless these things hinder the growth of the church. The world is made up of a great diversity of races, creeds, colors, languages, and ethnic groups. In fact these differences account for most of the hatred, prejudice, and animosity in the world. However, when people's lives become centered in Jesus Christ, then these differences become secondary.

Paul said in Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." This doesn't mean that these differences disappear or become completely integrated. It simply means that these differences become insignificant as people focus their attention on Christ.

I am a Mennonite because I speak Low German, because my parents were born in Russia, and because my name is Dyck. I am a Mennonite because I like to eat *plautz* and *pluma moos,* among other things. I am a Mennonite because I chose to become a member of a Mennonite congregation. However, being a Mennonite to me is secondary. Of primary importance is the fact that I am a born-again believer in Jesus Christ. If I should decide to cease being a Mennonite, this would not alter my relationship to Jesus Christ. On the other hand, my being an "ethnic" Mennonite does not hinder me in relating to people of other ethnic groups, cultures, or Christian denominations. *Fernando Dyck, Box 164, Rosemary, Alberta T0J 2W0* April 27

Please use more caution

Dear Editor: I need to refer to the March 7 issue in which you reported recent developments at the Columbia Bible Institute.

Most of us are agreed that there have been disturbing and sometimes painful things happening in this cooperative effort, but the lurid details and the tone in the article published will not help matters here at all. It is very regrettable that the reporting appeared as it did. I am sure that it will help in keeping cooperation between the two conferences on a rocky road.

Could I request greater editorial caution for the sake of the Lord's cause? *H. C. Born, 32840 Janzen Avenue, Mission, British Columbia V2V 2T4* April 28

Girls discriminated against

Dear Editor: Girls are being discriminated against. I'm talking about Camp Mennoscah's day camps. (Editor's note: Camp Mennoscah, Murdock, Kansas, is operated by the Western District.] There is one for men and their boys; there is one for women; but where do girls go?

They don't!

I have heard that the reason for these day camps is for women to get away from their kids, and for the men to get together with their kids. If men are supposed to get together with the kids, why not bring us girls? Are the men supposed to favor their boys more than their girls or what?

My father doesn't happen to have any sons; but he goes every year, and isn't even there for the purpose of the day camp.

Whoever organized those day camps must have something against us girls, or why are we being left out of the fun?

Girls love the great outdoors, too!

Girls aren't the sweet, innocent, helpless little creatures some people stereotype us to be. See you at the "men's retreat" next year. *Johanna M. Schmidt, 116 South Belmont, Wichita, Kansas 67217* April 28

About letters: To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Brevity is encouraged. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations. Editor

Meditation

The mystery of suffering

A mother stands at the bedside of an only child stricken with polio and asks, "Why?"

A husband watches his wife grow weaker day by day from the ravages of cancer and asks, "Why?"

A young father dies of a heart attack, leaving behind two small children, and the widow asks, "Why?"

Wars bring unmeasured suffering, and humanity asks, "Why?"

Jesus knew well this word. It was his word amid the darkness, the pain, and the anguish of Calvary. Our Lord suffered on the cross. The eastern sun beat down and burning fever sapped his strength until the darkness fell. The mocking crowd surged at his feet and hurled insult after insult at him. His friends had forsaken, denied, and even betrayed him. Out of the indescribable agony and loneliness, Jesus lifted his face to the heavens and flung his "why" against the darkness: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

This was not a piece of play acting. It was the cry of a tortured soul who, in one terrible moment, experienced the concentrated sorrow and despair of all humanity.

The cry of Jesus matched the darkness that hung over the earth during the crucifixion. It was the cry of a lonely, heartbroken man passing through the black, purifying night of suffering. In all the Scriptures there is no verse more difficult to explain than this one. But our Master was never closer to the suffering heart of humanity than when he uttered this cry.

Suffering is inescapable. Never mind, for the moment, why it is so. It is the fact of it that we need openly and honestly to face. "Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7). "In the world you have tribulation," said Jesus (John 16:33). "Beloved, do not be surprised," wrote Peter, "at the fiery ordeal which comes upon you to prove you" (1 Peter 4:12).

Suffering can destroy us or it can bring to us the riches of eternity. It can embitter us or it can sweeten us. It can drive us to desperation or it can draw us to God.

He who trusts in the goodness of God, whose faith is anchored to the divine promises and rests in the wise care of a heavenly Father, cannot be driven to despair by the wounding thrusts of life's cruel experiences.

The worst thing that can happen is to sink into self-pity. Self-pity makes suffering a tragedy; it breeds bitterness and resentment; it poisons faith and strangles hope. As the years go by, the person who yields to self-pity becomes antisocial, filled with frustration, hostility, and misery.

Both Lord Byron and Sir Walter Scott were lame. Byron, embittered by his handicap, brooded over it until he hated it, and he lamented his fate to his dying day. He became cynical, sour, and ill-tempered. He lost the zest and joy of life and went to an early grave.

Scott, on the other hand, never complained or spoke a bitter word about his disability. He accepted his lameness as something with which he had to live, and he rose above it to become a radiant person. He received a letter from Byron that contained this sentence: "Ah, Scott, I would give all my fame to have your happiness." He was older than Byron but outlived him by many years.

Someone has said, "Paul, with a thorn in the flesh, was a far more gracious character than Saul of Tarsus, untouched by irritation." It is written of Jesus, "Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and being made perfect he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him" (Hebrews 5:8, 9).

Cooperate with God. Let suffering have its perfect work. Your suffering has not come to you for his pleasure but for your good. You are his son or daughter, indeed. Your trouble rightly borne will yield the "peaceable fruit of righteousness. . . ."

"Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees" (Hebrews 12:12). Our God reigns. He does all things well.

With patient mind by course of duty run;
God nothing does or suffers to be done
But thou would'st do thyself, if thou could'st see
The end of all events as well as he.

This kind of trust builds Christian character. Leave all things in God's hands and do not fret because you cannot understand. He knows what is best. Isn't that enough?

Morris Chalfant

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CONTRIBUTORS

Lois Franz Bartel, 910 Belleview, LaJunta, Colorado 81050, is a junior high school language arts teacher, mother of two teenagers, and a writer for The Foundation Series.

Lois Barrett, 1505 Fairview, Wichita, Kansas 67203, former associate editor of *The Mennonite*, is a member of the Mennonite Church of the Servant.

David Whitermore, 500 Washington Boulevard, Apartment 204, Oak Park, Illinois 60302, is the coordinator for fifteen Chicago area Mennonite churches.

Meditation writer Morris Chalfant lives at 4245 Forest Avenue, Norwood, Ohio 45212.

Donald E. Yoder, 1920 East Colgate Drive, Tempe, Arizona 85283, is the pastor of Koinonia Fellowship.

CREDITS

355, 360, RNS; 357, David Hiebert, Box 301, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 358, Strix Pix, Newville, Pennsylvania 17241; 359, 361, Vic Reimer, GCNS; 363, MCC.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Prayer changes people

Don Yoder

Ruth Graham once said, "If there are any tears shed in heaven, they are shed over the fact that we pray so little." Few of us question the value of prayer. Many of us, though, tend to be caught up in the busyness of our work and daily activities and do not take time to pray.

Too often we read about prayer, teach about prayer, and may even encourage people to pray, but we do not have time to pray because there is "too much work" to be done in building the kingdom. I am of the conviction that individuals are going to be as alive in Christ as they are alive in prayer, and that the strength of a congregation is dependent upon the vitality of its prayer life. A study of the Gospels and the Book of Acts clearly indicates that the ministries of both Jesus and the early church were sustained by prayer. Prayer is also a necessary ingredient in the life of the church today if it is to be the body of Christ.

Prayer is essential if we are to be properly related to God. When our relationship with God is not what it should be, it is very difficult to pray. We can preach with flaming oratory, we can hold offices in the church, we can do a lot of things without being in right relationship with God. But we cannot pray the prayer which is "powerful and effective" (James 5:16 NIV).

Through prayer we not only discern the will of God for our lives, but the power of God is released in our lives. We live in a world that is filled with gadgets, machines, programs, and plans. Too often we develop a dependence on these even in the ministry of the church, rather than on the power of God released through a praying congregation. It is in prayer that we are most open to God and we will discover the power of God released in and through us. Whenever the power of God is released in the life of an individual or a congregation, it is for the purpose of strengthening those who believe and for reaching out to those who do not.

Prayer is also essential if we are to be in a right relationship with other people. Prayer not only enables us to clarify our relationship with God, but it also enables us to get a better perspective on life and our relationships with others. Each day we are faced with making many decisions which involve our relationships with others. We are aware of the blessings of right decisions as well as the consequences of wrong decisions in regard to these relationships. Prayer will help us in the decision times of life, especially as the decisions relate to other people.

Prayer enables us to grow in love, sensitivity, and awareness. Too often in our busy world we lose the ability to really care and be sensitive to people. Love is too often missing in our personal relationships. Through prayer we come into the very presence of love. The Apostle John reminds us that "God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him" (1 John 4:16 NIV). Through prayer we can bathe in his love, and having prayed we can rise up to go into the world to share the love of God. Our praying must be a time when our motives are examined and evaluated in the light of God's love. This will bring us to a point of love and concern for others.

Prayer also enables us to be properly related to ourselves. In order to relate to others properly we must have a correct understanding of ourselves and a self-acceptance. Too many Christians are self-depreciating, unforgiving, and unaccepting of themselves. Through prayer we become aware of the accepting, forgiving love of God. God's love enables us to forgive ourselves and accept his forgiveness. Much healing takes place when we experience being loved by God.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Christians at Ephesus, "I pray that you being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:17-19 NIV).

Prayer is not so much asking God for what we want but talking with someone who loves us deeply. As we become more closely related to God through prayer, the important relationships in life—with God, with others, and with ourselves—become more meaningful. Prayer enriches these relationships.

It is interesting to note that Christ's disciples did not ask their Master to teach them to preach, to witness, or even to evangelize, but rather they asked Jesus to teach them to pray. There was something about the prayer life of Jesus that caused them to ask him to teach them to pray. We must learn to pray, and we must pray to learn to pray.

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:23 JUNE 6, 1978

Also in this issue:

A Christian approach to homosexuality

A letter from two lesbians

God loves gays, too

Mennonite family in dispersion - 2

Mennonite family in dispersion-2

Bernie Wiebe

The New Connection. There are those among us who would like to go back to the community of believers as it was in the sixteenth century. Our fathers had a simple answer to divorce. And Jesus said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another, commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery" (Mark 10:11-12). While we do have the Matthew 5:32 exception for unchastity, that was too difficult to handle. In those days the case was closed: *The Anabaptist-Mennonite church allowed no divorce.*

Today we have more and more who also read the Old Testament and they believe that Jesus came not to abolish it but to fulfill or complement it. "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it comes to pass that she finds no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her, then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house" (Deuteronomy 24:1 KJV).

This is not to say that the Bible advocates divorce; it does not. It suggests that we cannot solve difficult family problems by a simplistic prooftexting. Usually that is done by looking for some special verse or verses which fit our own viewpoint.

We need a *new* connection to our God and to each other. We need a new and improved set of perceptions and values which reveal that those things which help to make us caring and familial are more important than our preoccupation with profits and the payoff on the bottom line.

The Western world says, "Time is money." God's Word says, "Time is people."

For too long community has first been regarded as a commercial, social, political, and geographical enterprise. This loose use of community needs to be corrected. Community, in the true sense, begins and ends where personal and familial needs receive top priority.

The gross national product (GNP) measures our life by steel produced, automobiles sold, and incomes earned. The New Connection would measure life by intimacy, caring, sharing, creative experiences, and worthwhile creations.

Such a New Connection comes hard. Karl Barth once said that no one can truly repent or be truly honest about personal shortcomings and sins unless one is first absolutely convinced of the security and permanence of God's love. Any repentance and confession before this is just play-acting (*Christianity Today,* February 18, 1977, page 17).

Translate that to marriage and it says that a commitment to lifelong marriage in a disposable, obsolescence-oriented society is almost inconceivable. It is like Nicodemus' disbelief when Jesus called him to be born again. To Nicodemus it was an inconceivable thought that a grown person could be born anew. But millions down through the ages have experienced this miracle—and it does defy popular notions. Similarly, even today, lifelong marriages—the miracle of such a fidelity, trust, and love—are possible. But like the new birth for Nicodemus, this kind of marriage happens only by faith in the overarching purpose of God. And each time it happens, another wonder is celebrated in heaven.

The New Connection is based on values. Our Western world has produced a breed of skeptics who challenge everything from a to z. It is easy to raise questions, but it is difficult even for Christians to make statements about their beliefs and commitments.

The time is here for us to declare ourselves human *or* animal. Human beings must make choices. We can effectively deny one belief only by choosing another in its place. Freedom is a choice among alternatives. Not to choose is to give up.

We can travel with hope. Robert Louis Stevenson said, "To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labor." Many today are pessimistic about the future of the family. The statistics can be frightening and paralyzing.

People want to know: How can we stop divorce? How do we stop premarital sex? How do we deal with permissiveness? How can we handle juvenile delinquency? What about abortion?

The answers may not be immediately comforting. God's plan for humankind is diversity. Into each of us is built the need for new and creative experiences. God does not want to press all of us into one mold.

God wants to set us truly free in Jesus Christ (John 8:36; 10:10). The gospel is first of all good news. And there is good news for us today.

Mennonites need not be so afraid of today's new roles for women. The old *Steinbach Post* (*EMC Messenger,* April 29, 1977, page 14) tells how in 1875 the Steinbach community experienced crop failure. A chance was given for people to move on to Mountain Lake, Minnesota. The

> As dispersed Mennonites, we do need to learn anew to be familial. Our congregations must acquire more traits of being spiritual families.
>
> Bernie Wiebe

majority voted to move right away. Up stood Grandma Reimer (a woman, over 100 years ago) and pleaded that she felt the Lord wanted them to stay one more year. K. J. B. Reimer says, "The clan gave heed to these wise words. . . ." They stayed.

Mennonites need not be so scared that the family is disintegrating. The latest statistical research, now quite a few years old, shows a 2 percent divorce rate among us. And even though that might well be 10 percent today, we have a familial heritage that has lasted and has the potential to last in the future. Many of our young people show their positive feeling for familial life by joining intentional communities even as singles. And the national climate is moving away from its individualistic emphases and calling for a new sense of familial community.

As dispersed Mennonites, we do need to learn anew to be familial. Our congregations must acquire more traits of being spiritual families.

A year ago I had a bout of severe depression. I, who have counseled others for the past fifteen years, suddenly found myself needing others to help me. It was then that I discovered that I, too, had become part of the community of individuals. So busy with speaking, writing, counseling, and teaching, my intimate caring community had been neglected. I could not think of one person to turn to. I felt all alone, easily angered, and isolated. Nobody could care or understand. The pain was almost too much to bear. Even God seemed not to care—I couldn't get through to him.

Then I found one person to confide in. He understood me and stood by me. And suddenly the light came on in the tunnel. And walking beside me was a brother in Christ. God had once again become incarnate, and this time to me personally.

Since then I have heard from others. A pastor wrote and said that his greatest fear in the pastoral ministry is loneliness. A housewife, who had lost a loved one, told me she suddenly felt all alone because she had no one to share her grief. A friend called and told me of a family tragedy, and she couldn't think of one other person to hear her problem.

My guess is that almost all of us have now or have had such times. But who of us have had the kind of familial connections at home or at church to be able to share freely? That connection is desperately needed among us.

Our communities of individuals will be difficult to change. They fit our selfish egos too well.

A group of retreat center directors met in 1973 and made a commitment to what they call The Shakertown Pledge (*The Messenger,* Church of the Brethren publication, November 1976). It seems like a move toward the New Connection. Perhaps it is something you, your family, and your congregation might consider a handle for being God's spiritual family even in disperson.

Here is a short form of the pledge:

—I declare myself to be a world citizen.

—I commit myself to lead an ecologically sound life.

—I commit myself to lead a life of creative simplicity and to share my personal wealth with the world's poor.

—I commit myself to join with others in reshaping institutions in order to bring about a more just global society in which persons have full access to the needed resources for their physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual growth.

—I commit myself to occupational accountability, and in so doing I will seek to avoid the creation of products which cause harm to others.

—I affirm the gift of my body and commit myself to its proper nourishment and physical well-being.

—I commit myself to examine continually my relations with others and to attempt to relate honestly, morally, and lovingly to those around me.

—I commit myself to personal renewal through prayer, meditation, and study.

—I commit myself to responsible participation in a community of faith.

(If you'd like to have the full text and learn more about how they are following up this pledge, write to Shakertown Pledge Group, West 44th Street at York Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 44510.)

The Mennonite family in dispersion can travel with hope, especially if we can adopt a New Connection life-style. It will give us new roots and a new source of power and affirmation. And, surprisingly, just when we get worried about losing our Anabaptist-Mennonite orientation in the dispersion, we'll find that those qualities which built the sixteenth-century community of believers are the same ones that will do it today. That is so because in losing ourselves as we now are, we will find again our true selves—a truism that Jesus spoke for us and for all times.

John W. Miller

A Christian approach

When a young man, already well into his professional career, confessed to me some twenty years ago that he had had a homosexual affair with a college friend, and that he was still troubled by homosexual fantasies, I was not at all sure how to respond. Although I was then thirty years old, had completed a graduate program in theology and taught several years in a seminary, I had never in all that time heard anyone talk candidly or in depth about the real nature or causes of homosexuality.

As everyone knows, this has changed, and drastically so. Today homosexuality has become a number one subject of discussion in the popular media.

Several years ago I described homosexuality as "the sexual plague of a monogamous society gone promiscuous" (*A Christian Approach to Sexuality,* page 73). "Those societies," I added, "that sow the winds of heterosexual freedom, ironically, reap the whirlwind of homosexual perversion." I continue to feel this way, for reasons that will in part come out in the following discussion. I must emphasize, however, that this subject is far too complex to be dealt with adequately in a short article. The question of what approach to take to this matter will not be solved in a day or a month. This and related issues having to do with male and female roles and relations will be controversial agenda items for Christian churches into the next decades.

Over the years, since the initial conversation mentioned above, my wife and I have counseled with both men and women for whom homosexuality to one degree or another was a disturbing facet of their lives.

During this time I have also tried to learn as much as I could from what others have discovered about this condition. Of course, as a Christian and a student of the Bible, I have sought light from this source as well. Taking all this into consideration, here are a few of the things I now believe must be kept in mind in a Christian approach to this problem.

1. First of all, I do view it as a problem. I am sympathetic with those who have tried to come to terms with their homosexuality by accepting it and arguing that it is every bit as normal for them to engage in homosexual relations as for heterosexuals to have marriage. I realize full well that their homosexual orientation is not one they have deliberately chosen, but is the result of experiences in early childhood over which they had little control. I also know that for them to change their disposition and find their way to meaningful heterosexual emotions will, in many instances, be an arduous undertaking. Nevertheless, to characterize their homosexuality as normal, in my opinion, is a dangerous evasion.

2. What is the source of this abnormality? Any truly helpful, and thereby truly Christian approach to homosexuality, I am convinced, must begin with the answer to this question. This seems to be Paul's line of reasoning as well in Romans 1:25 ff—the only real discussion of homosexuality in the Bible. There Paul recognizes the point made above (and confirmed by virtually all modern students of this problem), namely, that homosexuality is by no means a freely chosen condition.

The individual homosexual dare not,

> “This and related issues having to do with male and female roles and relations will be controversial agenda items for Christian churches into the next decades.” John W. Miller

to homosexuality

therefore, be judged as sinful in the sense of being himself/herself *willfully* perverse, at least not so far as his/her emotions are concerned. It is more like a bondage, Paul writes, and one that seems to be related somehow to the failure in paganism to glorify God as creator (Romans 1:25).

Modern psychology amply supports and fills out the broad outlines of this interesting analysis. The evidence is by now overwhelming that the root cause of homosexuality in both men and women, in the great majority of instances, is an emotional disturbance in parent-child relations, especially during the formative years between three and ten. Typically during these years children “fall in love” with the parent of the opposite sex and feel tensions with the parent of the same sex. For their future well-being it is crucial that this “family romance” be terminated in favor of the child's identification with the parent of the same sex. It is therefore crucial that boys at this age already begin to detach themselves from their mothers and learn to “honor” their fathers (“glorify God as creator”). Girls likewise must detach from their fathers and learn to love and respect their mothers.

3. A better understanding of the causes of homosexuality has gradually led, over the past several decades, to a far more hopeful attitude toward what to do about it. Steps can be taken to prevent homosexuality in the first place. Fathers, for example, must be told, and clearly so, that if they do not succeed in fashioning a bond of trust and respect between their sons and themselves in those early years from three or four onward, they are failing in one of the most crucial tasks of parenthood. Likewise they should be warned against exploiting the romantic feelings of their daughters. Mothers likewise should know that to hold on to sons, or to create an alliance with them against their fathers, can have a crippling effect on their masculine identity from which they may never recover.

For those already wounded emotionally through having grown up in a home where parental relations were so askew that homosexuality resulted, there is also today a much more hopeful prospect. When I first encountered this problem twenty years ago, I had no idea whether anything could be done about it. The literature at that time was generally pessimistic.

I now know from personal experience in counseling and from the research of others (see especially *Changing Homosexuality in the Male* by Lawrence J. Hatterer) that change is possible, although I am also aware of the difficulties involved. For male homosexuals it is crucial that they allow themselves to be guided and helped by a mature “father figure” with whom some of the tensions in their attitudes toward male authority, and ultimately toward God as Father, can be worked through. For a homosexual woman, the counselor of preference is a married woman or a husband-wife team who can help her through the confusion of her feelings toward the father into a warmer identification with the mother and femininity generally.

4. As intimated at the beginning, this topic has wide ramifications and calls for alertness in the entire gamut of male-female relations. In a real sense, outright homosexuality is only the tip of the iceberg. Latent and transitional states are pervasive, especially today in the wake of the rapid shift in our society from more defined male-female roles to unisex, and now an ascendent emphasis on the role of women.

This is already registering its effects on the institution of marriage, where far too many men are either outrightly abandoning their families, or backing off in more subtle ways from their marital responsibilities in the face of their now increasingly autonomous wives. Wives, on their part, even while competing with their husbands, secretly long for stronger men to love and care for them. In the church itself we are witnessing a slow drift toward matriarchy. Historical experience has shown that when the delicate balance between male and female in a society tips too far to the feminine side, the men become lethargic and irresponsible.

But it is not too late to do something about all this. We can yet decide to what extent we will go along with these unisexual and homosexual trends. We can encourage men to take a greater role as husbands in loving their wives and relating to their children, and women to find happiness as wives and women. Those who are tempted can be warned, and those who have already fallen victim to these trends and developments can be helped to find their feet again.

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Believers' church seeks identity in Canada

Winnipeg, Manitoba—A four-day study conference, May 15-18, on the believers' church in Canada highlighted biblical authority.

The believers' church tradition has had a low profile, and an even lower self-awareness. Some believers' church leaders, mainly Baptist and Mennonite, want to change this.

There is a new openness among believers' church people, who previously have not identified themselves with the radical Anabaptist wing of the Reformation, to discover their heritage. It may be the beginning of a helpful Baptist-Anabaptist dialogue.

The weakness of the believers' church tradition in Canada was symbolized by the fact that two of the opening speakers, John Howard Yoder and C. J. Dyck, came from the United States. This US resource presence was obvious throughout. That the self-consciousness is low was reflected in the main afternoon addresses about the past, present, and future of this tradition in Canada.

From left: C. J. Dyck and John Howard Yoder of Elkhart, Indiana, converse with Jerald K. Zeman, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, and Walter Klaassen, Waterloo, Ontario. Zeman and Klaassen were members of the steering committee for the conference.

Speakers were not agreed on who all should be included. Participants also voiced this concern in the discussion. Mennonites and Baptists were "in"—but what about the Pentecostals, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Nazarenes, Free Methodists, Hutterites?

J. K. Zeman, chairperson of the conference, said, "It was of great disappointment for me to see so few groups willing to come to this conference. I hope that will change by next time." Mainly Mennonites (of the Mennonite Central Committee constituency) and Baptists (of the Baptist Federation of Canada) attended. There were few other groups represented in the 150 registrants.

The seminar on biblical authority filled its room, while some others had to be canceled. Clark Pinnock called for a return to the *sola scriptura* of the Anabaptists. However, when seminar participants quoted some of his earlier dogmatic statements on inerrancy and infallibility, he asked to be allowed to grow in his understanding about diversity in the Bible and in the church. He warned against "bibliology" as a shift away from Christology which has been occurring among conservative Christians. Pinnock also called for a "reformed historical critical" approach to the Bible.

This seminar presented the longest statement at the end of the conference, calling for a continuing central importance of biblical authority. Several attempts were made to discuss the statement and arrive at consensus, but it was finally referred to the ongoing task force.

Mennonites and Baptists have often been regarded as "country cousins," but seldom have they demonstrated much commonness. In the evaluation session a common testimony was that the experience was "great" and more such meetings must take place soon. J. K. Zeman said, "The balance of age, geography, Mennonite-Baptist, and vocational distribution is an assurance of God's blessing for this conference."

John Howard Yoder in his closing comments said, "I believe that history will declare this a landmark of the believers' church story in Canada. We have reinforced elements of what we once believed. In some areas we didn't make too much progress, but we identified some things on which we differ. We have shown a common concern to be true to the biblical call for faithfulness."

An unresolved issue was how to assess faithful evangelism and church growth. Some voiced concern of playing a "numbers game." Roy Bell, president of the Baptist Federation of Canada, said that the lack of believers' church growth may be because of our unwillingness to accept the "radical" nature of the gospel. "We have become too comfortably middle-class, elitist, right-wing, and anti-labor union."

Believers' church conferences happen when enough concerned people call them. One was held in the United States in 1967; this was the first in Canada.

As a participant observer, it felt like I was party to a new chapter being born in the story of Mennonite-Baptist-Anabaptist-early church growth. Nobody seemed to parade "hobby horses." There was earnest passion to become Christ's church in today's world. It was at this point that I sensed a little too rigid academic orientation. Schedules were tightly packed. The spontaneity of God's Holy Spirit broke out in spurts, but those were frequent and obvious.

The conference agreed as part of its message to Christians and churches in Canada: "We repent of our disobedience" (to follow Christ). We want to "seek a clearer understanding of God's truth, obey his will more fully, pray for the renewal of our churches by the power of his Holy Spirit, and share more effectively in his mission to the greater glory of Jesus Christ, the only Savior and Lord." *An interpretive report by Bernie Wiebe*

Corporate farms devastate Third World diet

Akron, Pennsylvania—Although recent research suggests that the world can feed itself, the struggle to do so is becoming increasingly complicated. Millions languish in hunger as big corporations use more land in food-deficient countries to grow export crops for well-fed countries.

In Mexico, Haiti, Honduras, Colombia, and the Philippines, much of the best land is controlled by US corporations to produce exports of carnations, pineapples, bananas, sugar, coffee, tea, strawberries, or beef. Profits go to the big landholders and corporation stockholders while the local workers, earning minimal wages, are deprived of both land and food.

Half of the cultivated land in Central and South America and the Philippines produces crops for export. In 1977 the United States imported $13.5 billion worth of food, up from $11 billion in 1976. Seventy percent of our agricultural imports come from developing countries. Three-fourths of these are defined by the Department of Agriculture as "supplementary imports" or crops that can be produced in the United States. However, production has gradually shifted to poorer countries where labor is cheap.

In a new book on world hunger, *The Famine Business,* Colin Tudge proposes that our present system of food production is like a "world farm." Corporations decide which crops to grow in which countries and where to market them. Decisions are based on prices and not on nutritional needs. The world farm was initiated in the colonial era to benefit the industrial development of rich countries and has been streamlined today by corporate agriculture.

Tudge gives three reasons why the world farm idea is not working: it depends on energy for transportation and this energy is becoming more expensive; small developing countries, increasingly vulnerable to the whims of western markets, suffer continuous malnutrition and periodic starvation; and finally, by concentrating vast areas on a single crop, the world farm makes poor use of land. The resulting monoculture is bad for the soil, increases danger of disease, and is less productive in the long run with its massive use of chemicals.

Some people believe it is to the developing country's advantage to export bananas, pineapples, and coffee, arguing that exports generate foreign exchange for economic development and jobs. But a rising GNP (gross national product) does not insure that a developing country's human needs are being met. Brazil's economic minister said in 1972, after five years of rapid economic growth, that only 5 percent of the people were better off than before, 50 percent were at the same level, and the condition of 45 percent had deteriorated.

An article by Alan Riding in the March 6, 1967, *New York Times* suggests a connection between food exports and malnutrition and unemployment in Mexico. By placing priority on food for export and industrial processing, food for the local market is the last concern. "While winter vegetables, strawberries, tomatoes, and coffee are being produced for export, for example, the government must import corn and beans," the author states. "The poor people, finding food prices rising faster than income, have been forced to reduce consumption."

Sixty percent of all fresh vegetables consumed in the United States between December and May are imported from Mexico. In 1977, 785 million pounds of tomatoes were imported from Mexico, double the amount imported ten years ago. Tomatoes and winter vegetables are the primary exports of two Mexican states, Sonora and Sinaloa. But the expansion of vegetable acreage in Mexico has done little to benefit the people. Land ownership is in the hands of a few Mexican growers and marketing is monopolized by large US supermarket chains and agribusiness firms.

Sugar is a primary export for many Third World economies. With the best land growing sugar cane for corporations, peasants eke out their existence on marginal hilly terrain. Gulf and Western, the largest landholder in the Dominican Republic, controls 33 percent of the country's sugar production.

Typical of countries that rely on a plantation economy instead of small-scale agriculture, unemployment in the Dominican Republic ranges from 30 to 40 percent, and 75 percent of the population receives well below the recommended daily minimum of calories and protein. A cane cutter earns three to five dollars daily.

North America plays a major role in influencing the agricultural production patterns in many developing nations. As the leading importer of their products and major investor, North America has shared in forestalling land reform, increasing food dependence, and retarding domestic food production.

Christians are caught in the dilemma of benefiting from a system that we know causes injustice, yet changing it seems beyond the power of the individual. Boycotting bananas or coffee does not redistribute land to poor peasants—corporations merely switch crops as demands change.

Both rich and poor countries must work toward more self-reliance in meeting their own food needs.

Shifting production of fruits and vegetables back to North America by gardening, canning, and freezing would help the poor in the Third World. Diets could also be adjusted to locally grown crops. *Jon Jantzen, MCC food and hunger concerns*

Witness continues at Rocky Flats

Newton, Kansas (GCNS-May 26)—More than eighty persons face prosecution by authorities in Golden, Colorado, following a series of blockades of the railway leading into the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant.

The most recent arrests occurred Wednesday, May 24. Arvada (Colorado) Mennonite Church pastor Peter Ediger; Bob Hill, a member of the congregation; and Roger Overbey, former Mennonite Voluntary Service worker, were among nine people arrested Wednesday for attempting to post a sign at the rail gate to the plant. Other arrests were made in confrontations on May 5, 8, and 12.

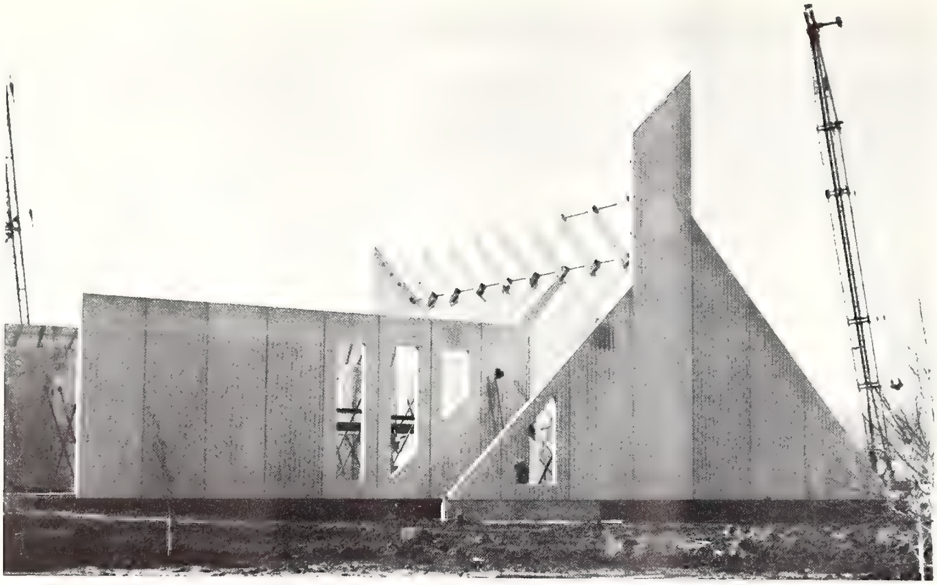
In bold letters the sign proclaimed, "Christian Churches Speak." Below this proclamation were statements about disarmament and nuclear weapons from eight different denominational groups. Below these official statements was the pointed message "Convert Rocky Flats."

Wednesday afternoon the company of nine, including Jean Zimmerman of the Church of the Brethren and Anna Koop and Jacquee Dickey of the Catholic church, were prohibited from walking the tracks to the gate.

During the arrest an officer remarked, "We are trained to deal with terrorists, but we don't know what to do with you people."

The nine were taken to the Golden jail. After processing, including a body search, they appeared before Judge Goldberg in the county court, who released them on personal recognizance.

Ediger says that the persistent witness by religious groups against nuclear arms production at Rocky Flats, coupled with the message of disarmament, is definitely creating an awareness locally of the nuclear menace.



Heritage Center nears completion

Winnipeg, Manitoba—The new Mennonite Heritage Center is expected to be ready in mid-August. It is being built on the Canadian Mennonite Bible College campus. Prominent in this front view is the clock tower which reaches a height of fifty-seven feet. The two-story stack section (left) will house the Conference of Mennonites in Canada archives on the main floor, and the CMBC library on the lower floor. A tunnel connects the library to the classroom wing of the college. The A-framed area is designed for displays and meetings. Construction of the center was made possible by a gift from the P. W. Enns Family Foundation of Winkler, Manitoba. It is designed to serve all Mennonites, and archives for several inter-Mennonite activities will become a part of the facility.

Camp leaders inspire each other

Waterloo, Ontario (MCA)—Ninety Mennonite camp leaders from Canada and the United States met at Conrad Grebel College, April 28-30, for consultation and mutual inspiration.

Resource person Lily Loewen inspired the group with her enthusiasm for observing nature and incorporating spiritual dimensions in the activity. Other highlights included learning games which develop group togetherness and an analysis of campers' growth and spirituality by John Miller.

Workshops were conducted on a variety of topics. These included dramatized Bible studies, programming for the developmentally handicapped, Christian life-style alternatives in camping, a review of the recently released book by Faith and Life Press, *God, Man, and Land,* and adventure programming.

In the workshop on life-style, Virgil Brenneman gave examples of life-styles he termed tragic in the outdoor perspective. One of these, he said, was a week at camp which features religious experiences entirely dissociated from real life or from the outdoor setting. "The way of Christ should be the starting point for defining alternatives to the consumptive society seen even in the backwoods," he asserted. Avenues include the raising of consciousness about a brother's needs, and wise stewardship.

Canadian Conference meets in July

Winnipeg, Manitoba (CMC)—Delegates to the seventy-sixth annual sessions of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada will encounter a variety of issues and papers. The conference will take place July 5-9 in Gretna, Manitoba.

The theme for the conference is "You Are Called for This Time" (Esther 4:14). Larry Kehler, pastor of the Charleswood Mennonite Church (Winnipeg) and former editor of *The Mennonite,* will lead delegates in devotional studies.

A special feature of the conference will be a memorial service at Hochstadt, the site of the first Canadian conference in 1903. A special commemorative booklet has been prepared for the event.

The theme of the special youth sessions is "Youth Encounters of the Close Kind."

No danger to Mennonite missionaries in Zaire

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—Attacks by former Katangese gendarmes into Zaire's copper-rich Shaba Province have not endangered Mennonite missionaries.

Howard Habegger, executive secretary for the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference, in commenting on the invasion said, "There are no Mennonite churches or missionaries in the area. The center of our work is in Tshikapa, about 500 miles north."

However, Mennonite Central Committee teachers David Kraybill and Mary Hershberger were evacuated May 17 from Mulungwishi, about seventy-five miles southeast of Kolwezi, which was taken by rebel troops. The Hershberger-Kraybill couple was in no physical danger, but left at the advice of the local Zairian Methodist bishop.

Friends urge immigration hearings

Washington, D.C. (AFSC)—Two Quaker organizations have called for congressional hearings in the borderlands between the United States and Mexico, and urged that a Senate subcommittee focus on the people who are affected by immigration policies and practices.

"What seems overwhelmingly important is that you come to know the human situations in all their proportions and aspects, and the interplay of economic and political forces—national and international," said Domingo Gonzalez, national representative for farm labor of the American Friends Service Committee.

"Increasingly, INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) has an image as a police force," Gonzalez declared. "The service aspects of the agency must be strengthened.

He said that to a large extent, the major pull power to the United States "is the existence of jobs which are *not* attractive to US workers. These jobs seem to be tailor-made for docile workers, fearful of deportation and untouched by protective labor laws.

"The situation along the border in a nutshell is the existence in the United States of jobs which are degraded to below survival level, and of the 'illegal' immigrants forced by fear of deportation to accept them. The enforcement and improvement of existing labor laws in all parts of the country to assure that every worker at least collects full wages, receives an accounting for all deductions, participates in fringe benefits, and can join labor unions can remove the incentive to hire cheap, exploitable labor."

Candid communication cited as major need

Elkhart, Indiana (MBM)—Constituency communication and program priorities occupied the Mennonite Board of Missions' overseas committee during their quarterly meeting April 25-26.

"Our people just don't know about what is going on overseas," lamented one member. "How can supporters be best informed and convinced about international missions involvement?"

While no action was registered in the minutes, the mood called for intensifying efforts toward candid communication. "We must do more reporting more forthrightly," was the way one committee person put it, "beginning with a premise of trust among our supporting constituency."

During review of the budget, the committee identified several substantive matters for continuing consideration:

—Assessing the tension between allocating budget to valid established programs or creative new projects.

—Moving beyond interchurch aid into a posture of creative interdependence with missionary-planted churches overseas.

General Conference giving has increased

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—Donations to General Conference ministries increased from January 1 to April 30 when compared with receipts for the same period in 1977.

Receipts of $741,237 this year are up about $50,000 over the four-months total in 1977 of $688,479.

The General Conference budget for 1978 is $3,179,883. Hence, with one-third of the year reported, 23.3 percent ($741,237) of the budget has been met.

The 1978 budget is the same as the 1977 budget. But because receipts were 10.7 percent short in 1977, an additional $340,000 must be raised in 1978 to meet budget.

Most of the increased giving has been designated to the Commission on Overseas Mission (about $46,000), and to Mennonite Biblical Seminary (about $5,000).

Much of the increase has come from Canadian Mennonites, reports Ted Stuckey, conference treasurer.

If the pattern of the first four months continues, Stuckey does not anticipate the need to borrow funds to carry the General Conference program through the summer months. Although reserves were sharply depleted in 1977, the remaining reserves coupled with ongoing receipts should be sufficient to meet funding demand without borrowing.

Fifty thousand attend Jesus 78 rally

Rutherford, New Jersey—This youth, caught up in the fervor of the charismatic rally held May 13 at Giants' Stadium, joined some 54,000 Christians from thirty states in ecumenical worship. The theme of the huge gathering was "Jesus 78." It was sponsored by People of Hope and Logos International. Ruth Carter Stapleton, sister of President Carter, spoke to the throng. Described by Roman Catholic Archbishop Peter Gerety of Newark, New Jersey, as "one of the largest interfaith gatherings in the history of the world," the Pentecostal event quickly reached a peak of enthusiasm that was sustained throughout the day as participants alternately raised their arms in prayer and responded to messages with applause and shouts of "Thank you, Jesus," "Praise God," and "Alleluia."

Words & deeds

Significant numbers of young evangelicals have an Anabaptist orientation. This is the conclusion of Dale Suderman, associate director of Mennonite Voluntary Service. He bases his conclusion on a survey of its readers which *The Other Side* conducted. They discovered that while 5.3 percent of their readership said their religious background was Anabaptist, 9.2 percent described their current religious identity as Anabaptist. Suderman wonders whether the Mennonite church is the sort of Anabaptist organization with which these evangelicals might want to identify, and suggests the figures are a challenge for Mennonite church planting.

Luis Palau has resigned as president of Overseas Crusades, Santa Clara, California. Palau is particularly known for his mass crusades in Latin America and Europe. His evangelistic team will continue to function as part of the organization. Palau asked to be released from his administrative responsibilities so that he could spend more effort in evangelism. "I want to put my whole heart and soul into the work of preaching Jesus Christ fully in all nations that the Father opens to us," he said. The evangelist's next crusades are scheduled for Bolivia, Mexico, and Scotland.

Incentives to negotiate, such as humanitarian and economic aid, should be offered by the United States in the Middle East instead of selling 200 war planes to Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. This novel idea was shared May 10 with the House of Representatives' International Relations Committee in Washington, D.C., by John Sullivan of the American Friends Service Committee. He urged that approval be denied to all arms sales, and that careful attention be given to "what will really advance the possibilities of peace in the Middle East." Sullivan suggested that these included direct negotiations, recognition of Israel by all states in the region, security agreements backed by the UN and the major powers, and recognition by Israel that the Palestinian Arabs have the right to self-determination.

Record

Ministers

George Franz of Edmonton, Alberta, began serving as pastor of First Church, Kelowna, British Columbia, in May. Installation services were held June 4.

Timothy Liau will serve as summer assistant at the Mennonite Church of Normal, Illinois. He is a graduate of Tainan Theological Seminary in Taiwan, and served as the pastor of the Sek-an congregation north of Taipei. A student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, since last fall, he is studying towards the MA degree in peace studies under an advanced leadership training program sponsored by the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission.

Peter Lin has begun serving as summer assistant at Pine Grove Church, Bowmansville, Pennsylvania, on June 1. He has been attending Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, since September 1977 under the Overseas Churchman Service-Study Abroad program of the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission. Mrs. Lin will be coming from Taiwan to join her husband at Pine Grove. They will return to Taiwan in August.

Frederick Obold, Elkhart, Indiana, has accepted the pastorate of Bethel Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, effective June 15. He graduated in May with a MDiv degree from Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart. He has served summer pastorates at churches in Moundridge and Goessel, Kansas, and has been part of a three-member team at Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart. Interim Bethel pastor *Harry Yoder* and his wife, Jean, plan to continue their retirement at Bluffton, Ohio, and Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

Takeomi Takarabe will be serving as summer assistant at three congregations in Winnipeg—Charleswood Church, Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, and Home Street Church. He is studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, under the Overseas Churchman Service-Study Abroad program of the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission. He is the pastor of the Atago Christian Church in Nobeoka, Japan. The Takarabes will be returning to Japan in August.

Manager wanted

The Herbert Senior Citizens' Home, a facility owned by the Mennonite Brethren Church, requires a manager. The position requires someone conversant in English and German. Experience is desirable but not essential. Duties to commence September 1. Send applications to:

Jacob J. Dyck, manager
Box 10
Herbert, Saskatchewan SOH 2AO
Phone: 306-784-2613

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Workers

John and Tina Bohn, Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio, will leave in August as General Conference missionaries to Lesotho, southern Africa. They have been appointed for an initial term of three years to the staff of the Thaba Kupa agricultural training school, located about fifteen kilometers from Maseru. John served in agricultural extension work for ten years in Papua, New Guinea. His education includes a master's degree in vegetable crops and soils from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. Tina (nee Warkentin) served in Zaire for eleven years with the Commission on Overseas Mission. A commissioning service for the couple will be held this summer at Grace Church.

Chaplaincy work desired

A chaplaincy position in a hospital or special care institution is my interest. I have pastoral experience and chaplaincy training. Contact:

Pete Peters
115-267 St. Anne's Road
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2M 3A6.
Phone: 204-257-6081.

John and Tina Bohn

Herman Bontrager has been appointed Latin American secretary for Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pennsylvania, effective in midsummer. Currently serving as director of personnel development for MCC, Bontrager has worked with community development under Amish Mennonite Aid in El Salvador and served as director for the Mennonite Vocational Institute and coordinator for Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions' Central America work in Honduras. He holds an MA degree in sociology from the University of Florida. Bontrager will be replacing *Gerald Shank*. The Shanks are planning to return to Bolivia where they previously served under MCC.

Bontrager

Linberger

Ray C. Linberger, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, will begin serving as administrator at Camp Men-O-Lan, Quakertown, Pennsylvania, effective June 10. He has served as pastor of Second Church in Philadelphia and as youth director of Crossroads Community Center.

Dick Wohlgemuth, pastor of Emmanuel Church, Meade, Kansas, has been appointed to the advisory council of Grace College of the Bible in Omaha, Nebraska. He is a 1973 graduate of Dallas (Texas) Theological Seminary.

Published

On Earth Peace: Discussions on War-Peace Issues Between Friends, Mennonites, Brethren, and European Churches 1935-1975 is a 412-page paperback that has recently been released by the Brethren Press. In 1935, representatives of the three historic peace churches met in Newton, Kansas, to discuss the principles of Christian patriotism. Papers from these meetings are included in the new volume, plus studies and reports on militarism and violence developed at the suggestion of the World Council of Churches. The collection is edited by Donald F. Durnbaugh.

The Diary of Anna Baerg (1897-1972) has been transcribed by Clara K. Dyck under the auspices of Mennonite Central Committee (Canada). Baerg, a trained kindergarten teacher, was born in the Molotschna Colony of the Ukraine. She emigrated to Canada with her family in 1924 and died in a British Columbia nursing home in 1972. She was frail, sickly, and hunchbacked, yet her courage, fortitude, and sense of humor survived. Recorded in her more than forty years of diary entries are her love of nature, the solidarity and reassuring ritual of a prosperous Mennonite settlement, and the turmoil of the Russian Revolution and Civil War. Serialized excerpts of the 582 pages of entries will soon be published in *Der Bote* and *Die Mennonitische Post.*

Calendar

June 15-18—Northern District Conference annual sessions, Dawson County High School, Glendive, Montana

June 15-18—Pacific District Conference annual sessions, Mount Elden Southwest Conference Center, Flagstaff, Arizona

Canadian

June 23-25—Seventy-fifth anniversary and graduation weekend at Rosthern Junior College, Rosthern, Saskatchewan

Letters

Poor image for COM

Dear Editor: I write concerning the Commission on Overseas Mission fund appeal (May 2 issue).

It's sad enough that often top church officials identify with the executive world in dress and life-style. But to show a character, representing one of our own mission executives, sitting with little to do except ask for and receive money is too much.

Surely if COM is serious about asking us for increased support, they can communicate in a more convincing manner. *Ken Fast, First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kansas 67114* May 8

Led by the Spirit

Dear Editor: The April 18 issue is a masterpiece. Surely the Spirit himself led you all in putting it together. Thanks! *Metta Ann Lieb, Box 536, Blairsden, California 96103* May 4

MVS symbol not accurate

Dear Editor: Thanks for the article (April 25 issue) reporting the excitement and good work of the Champaign Voluntary Service unit and the three supporting churches.

However, the use of the MVS (GC) symbol is misleading. The Champaign unit is part of the VS program administered by the Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana.

While each VS unit has its unique emphasis, the Champaign unit is typical of the significant ministry being done through the partnership of both VS (MC) and MVS (GC) and local congregations in many locations. *John W. Eby, Box 370, Elkhart, Indiana 46515* May 5

Retarded are important

Dear Editor: Aldred Neufeldt's article "When You Are Different" (April 11 issue) brought back memories of similar articles which have been published over the years pointing out that the church should become involved with the problem of mental retardation. The first article appeared some time during the year 1954. Then there was very little help for the families with retarded children. The National Association for Retarded Children was in its infancy, but it was the only organization working to improve conditions for the retarded and their families.

After reading the article in *The Mennonite* then, my wife and I were happy to know that the church intended to become involved with the problem of retardation. We wrote to some of the leaders of the church then, but no one knew anything about a program. We were referred from one person to another, sometimes never getting an answer to our letters.

It wasn't until the 1962 General Conference in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, that anything happened. Delmar Stahley was executive secretary of Mennonite Mental Health Services at that time. It was through the efforts of Stahley and John Mumaw of Harrisonburg, Virginia, that the first camp for families with retarded children was instituted in 1965. We attended that camp which was held at the Laurelville Mennonite Church Center. It was an inspiring week and the families attending all felt that at long last the church was going to become involved in our problem. I felt so good that I wrote an article about our experience at the camp which was published in the *Gospel Herald* and *The Mennonite* entitled: "My Daughter and I Climbed a Mountain."

But it was not to be. Brother Stahley was transferred to another more *important* post, and the next year we learned that MMHS was withdrawing its involvement with the problem of retardation. John Mumaw was appointed on a part-time basis to carry on the work.

The annual camp at Laurelville has continued on a yearly basis with many new and younger families attending.

In 1972 my wife and I attended the Mennonite Health Assembly in Chicago. MMHS announced that once again it was taking up the problem of mental retardation.

We submitted a report to Harold Regier in Newton on our impressions of the seminars with some recommendations which could be implemented by the church without much financial involvement. One recommendation was that a special course on counseling the families with retarded members be established in our seminaries. Another recommendation was that groups be formed in our churches to become advocates for the retarded in the congregation to see that they are accorded humane and decent treatment when their parents are deceased. There were other recommendations too, but somehow I think the report became lost between the cracks and someone threw a rug over the cracks. In any event we have heard nothing about this report and even whether it was acceptable.

Several years ago we tried to interest the Eastern District Conference in working with the Franconia Conference in establishing a residence for the retarded. It was to be a Survivors' Home, and for several years it looked very promising. But once again things became lost between the cracks, and while the Franconia Conference has a residence for the retarded (a type seven home), the Eastern District has seemingly dropped all plans to establish a Survivors' Home.

May I suggest that if MMHS really intends to involve the Mennonite church in the field of mental retardation, a more positive approach should be inaugurated at once. The suggestion that "*If* churches are interested in doing something about the problem" gives me the impression that there is little if any interest in encouraging them to take up the work. In my opinion the retarded are just as important to God as the most important and intellectual person.

I believe the membership of our churches would become interested and support this work if they were given the necessary information to acquaint them with the possibilities of developing the capabilities of the retarded. As a reminder I would like to refer you to *The Story of the Mennonites* by C. Henry Smith. On page 274 and again on page 473 he points out that "Mennonites always had concern for their unfortunate brothers and sisters. Many years ago they built homes for the elderly, hospitals for the sick, and residences for the epileptics and those with nervous diseases, and maintained them by their own efforts." We are continually referring to our Anabaptist heritage, so if we are to live up to this heritage, can we do any less? *Holmes H. J. Raudenbush, 3015 French Street, Erie, Pennsylvania 16504* May 3

Powers and principalities

Dear Editor: The letter by Lawrence A. Bartel (April 25 issue) asks whether Mennonite Central Committee workers should become involved in foreign domestic strife. The letter responded to an article by Gene Stoltzfus and Dorothy Friesen in which they reported on Billy Graham's visit to the Philippines.

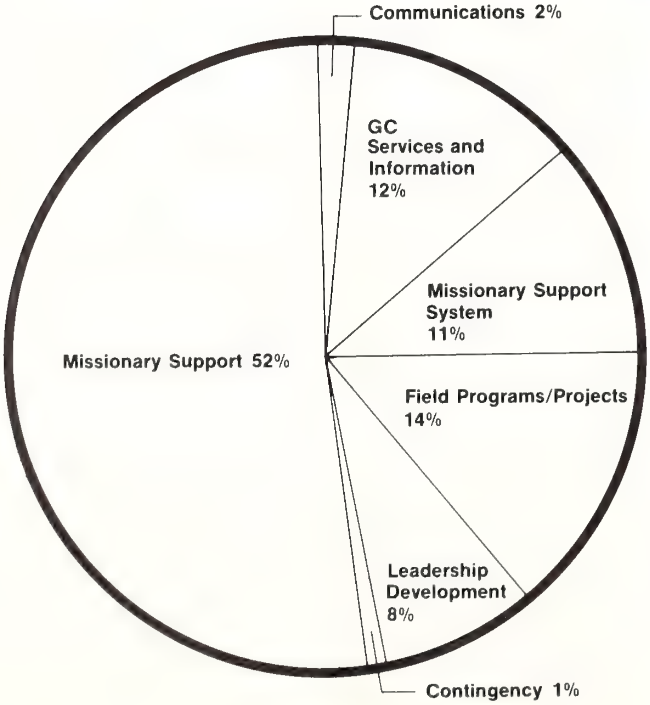
The Stoltzfus-Friesen article came to the MCC Information Services where Sarah Ann Eby decided it was not appropriate for MCC to sit in judgment on the ministry of Billy Graham. Consequently, the article was not released through the MCC News Service. However, Gene and Dorothy also sent the same article to various church papers that they thought might have interest in it, including *The Mennonite.*

The facts in the Stoltzfus-Friesen article on the oppressive conditions in the Philippines are accurate—regrettably accurate. I, too, was disappointed that Billy Graham decided to have lunch with a modern Herod. I was also disappointed that he did not witness to the injustices in the Philippines as he courageously did against apartheid in South Africa several years ago. Let us be thankful for Billy Graham's soul winning, but at the same time hope for his greater discernment that the church is struggling against powers and principalities.

In these days of increasing oppression by totalitarian governments of the right and left, the Christian must reexamine the traditional interpretation of Romans 13 in light of Revelation 13. *William T. Snyder, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501* May 3

YOUR MISSION DOLLAR AT WORK

Needed this year . . . $2,084,949



MISSIONARY SUPPORT	$1,094,129
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	156,881
FIELD PROGRAMS/PROJECTS	279,133
COMMUNICATIONS	47,200
GC SERVICES/INFORMATION	250,389
MISSIONARY SUPPORT SYSTEM	234,629
CONTINGENCY	22,588

A letter from two lesbians

Dear Christians:

They're "coming out" . . . defiantly marching across your television screen . . . debating Anita Bryant in Dade County . . . discussing their life-style on talk shows . . . holding hands in public . . . showing up on family TV shows . . . quietly working, living, and functioning like everyone else. For as long as we can remember, none dared to come out and say, "This is what I am, and I'm not ashamed." But now they are, and we as Christians must face the issue—What is the Christian response to a homosexual?

Let's deal with specifics. If we can learn how to respond to an individual we know, who happens to be homosexual, then we will be able to apply that to the issue of homosexuality in general. Suppose a very good friend of yours "comes out" and shares with you that he/she is gay. What should your response be as a Christian?

First, the individual needs to be accepted as he/she is. And he/she needs to know that you do accept him/her, and appreciate his/her sharing that important part with you. It wasn't easy to tell you. The last thing anyone needs is to be ignored or condemned. That makes people bitter, withdraw, and it doesn't give them a good idea of Christian love. Hard as it may be to believe, there are many homosexuals everywhere (probably 10 percent of the population). We must also realize that a person's sexual preference is not his/her totality. It is a part of his/her personhood but it doesn't make a total person abnormal or unnatural.

Most of us are ignorant about homosexuality, and ignorance is almost always acted out negatively. (Something you're not "up" on you'll likely be "down" on.) The only thing we have to go on is stereotypes or generalizations.

Second, it is vital to love the person as an individual. Love means becoming involved with the person, sharing of yourself and accepting your friend's sharing with you. Love heals prejudice, because love accepts people where they are, no matter how they look, act, or what their potential is or isn't.

Being gay, the person will probably feel that nobody wants to be his/her friend because he/she happens to love someone of the same sex. But as Christians we are called to care, heal, minister, touch, and *show* our love. This does not mean we say, "I love you, homosexual, but I hate your life-style and you'd better change because you're going to hell."

Third, we as Christians believe that the most important thing in a person's life is his/her relationship with God. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved," and "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and your neighbor as yourself" are two basic Scriptures that state this truth. So it is with your gay friend. The most important thing is whether he/she has accepted Jesus personally, and is striving to live with him daily.

There are many people in the world today who are both Christian and gay. They believe that God loves them as they are, and only wants them to love and serve him and then others. Everyone—black, white, American, Chinese, male, female, heterosexual, homosexual—is saved by the blood of Jesus Christ. The most important thing is a person's relationship with Christ, and that's all that matters.

> *"Everyone—black, white, American, Chinese, male, female, heterosexual, homosexual—is saved by the blood of Jesus Christ. The most important thing is a person's relationship with Christ, and that's all that matters."*

"But stop right there," you exclaim. "The Bible clearly states that homosexuality is wrong!" That introduces the fourth point of your response to your homosexual friend. You have accepted, loved, and seen that he/she is indeed right with God. What are you going to do about the Bible?

The rightness or wrongness of homosexuality according to the Bible can be debated until we are all blue in the face. We as Mennonites, along with the great majority of Christian denominations, have believed that the Bible clearly states that sexual relations between members of the same sex are wrong. However, many denominations are taking another look at the specific passages in question, and the attitude of the Bible as a whole. We as Mennonites, and as individuals, also need to educate ourselves to the fact that there *is* another side. We must recognize different beliefs and interpretations. "Straights" must respect another's belief that "gay is OK." Heterosexuals shouldn't force one belief on gays any more than heterosexuals would want to be forced into a homosexual orientation.

How should a Christian respond to a homosexual? They should respond in the same way a Christian is called to respond to saved and unsaved heterosexual brothers and sisters—with acceptance as an individual, love for a person created by God, concern for a person's salvation and a willingness to allow him/her a different interpretation of the Bible from yours. That is what God asks of us, and with him all things are possible. Looking for your understanding, *two persons, born-again, Mennonite, lesbian*

Hereford church as it stands today in the shade of the beautiful old oak trees

At right, Annie Funk, Hereford member who went as a missionary to India and died on the ill-fated voyage of the Titanic

CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

HEREFORD MENNONITE CHURCH

Casting shade over the Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pennsylvania, is a small grove of oak trees—all that remains of an oak forest that once covered what was then Hereford Township.

Hereford Church has its roots in the Old Mennonite meetinghouse nearby. Early Mennonite settlers built the first log meetinghouse at the site of what is now the community youth center.

A century after the construction of the first meetinghouse in 1732, a difference of convictions arose among the brethren, based on their interpretation of the Scriptures. A segment of the congregation withdrew, and in 1852 the brick meetinghouse was built. This was the beginning of Hereford Mennonite Church.

Recently we celebrated the 125th anniversary of the building of the original part of the church, which is now used by the Sunday school. Our present sanctuary was added in 1897.

God has richly blessed our congregation. Many names of dedicated pastors and faithful members appear on the record, perhaps none as well known as Annie Funk, who went as a missionary to India in the early 1900s. After some years of service, she was granted an early furlough to be at the bedside of her critically ill mother. Upon arriving in England, she learned that she could get home a few days earlier by sailing on the Titanic. She canceled her former booking and sailed on that ill-fated ship.

I like to think that during the final hours the Titanic was afloat our Annie Funk was sustained by her faith in the God whom she served, and was able to be a source of comfort and strength to her fellow passengers who may have been in the throes of hysteria as the hopelessness of their plight overwhelmed them.

Two sons of the congregation, whose father, Elwood Shelly, ministered in the Eastern District Conference, had far-reaching influence in the General Conference. Paul served on the faculty of Bluffton (Ohio) College up to the time of his death; and Andrew, after pastoring the Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ontario, served for many years as executive secretary of the Mission Board.

Hereford today has as its pastor Charles Sprunger, who grew up in the Belgian Congo (now Zaire) where his parents served as missionaries, and where he and his wife also served as missionaries for many years. We appreciate Pastor Sprunger's efforts to strengthen our congregation spiritually.

The women's organization holds monthly meetings, either at the church or in homes. Several prayer and Bible study groups meet weekly. A prayer partners' program has been meaningful for those participating. The bus ministry, initiated to bring children from nearby trailer courts, has had good support. It is not a spectacular ministry, but it has resulted in many meaningful relationships. A number of our members serve on boards of Eastern District Conference.

A call from Mennonite Disaster Service brought workers from our group to such disaster areas as Stroudsburg, Wilkes-Barre, and recently, West Virginia. We have an active youth group. Each month they have at least one inspirational activity and a recreational activity. The congregation partially supports Sue Martens, General Conference missionary to Taiwan. Three young men have served in PAX in Nepal and Pakistan, and presently David Lutz is serving in the Philippines with Mennonite Central Committee.

Recognizing that we cannot rest on past achievements, the pastor and members of Hereford are pressing on, prayerfully and hopefully, to any avenue of service that will serve to extend God's kingdom on earth.

Past pastors still living are Wilmer S. Shelly (1947-1954); Henry B. Grimm (1955-1964); and James R. Mohr (1965-1975). *Ivy M. Yost*

Meditation

Covetous Cora

Cora envied Mrs. Adams, the new neighbor. The real envy was an emerald-cut diamond ring on Mrs. Adams' right forefinger.

Cora always thought about how her husband had promised her a diamond ring.

"When I land a big account like the Staffer Company account, Cora, you can have a big diamond ring," Bill had told her.

Cora thought: He'll never land a big account like that. I'll never have a big diamond. I'd give anything, anything at all, if I could be sure I'd have a diamond someday.

Cora's envy grew each time she watched Mrs. Adams' ring catch the light and shower its sparkles and prisms.

One day she said to her neighbor, "I admire your ring very much. You're lucky to have such a beautiful emerald-cut diamond."

"Lucky?" Mrs. Adams murmured, her blue eyes clouding with tears. "This is my daughter's engagement ring. She and her fiance were killed driving home from their wedding rehearsal on the eve of their wedding."

Cora drew in her breath in shock. She looked again at the diamond on Mrs. Adams' forefinger. It was no longer desirable. The darts of lights from the diamond now seemed like shafts of pain. Was this what Moses meant when he told Israel, ". . . you shall not covet the silver or gold . . . lest you be enslaved by it. . ." (Deuteronomy 7:25)?

"I shouldn't covet what other people have," Cora said softly.

Mrs. Adams patted Cora's hand and smiled understandingly. *Evelyn Witter*

Jealous of my grandfather

It is now one hundred years ago that my grandfather, Joseph Shelly, participated in a catechism class prior to his baptism. I have had his German catechism, "Fragen und Antworten fuer die Kinder" (Questions and Answers for the Children), on my desk for several years. He has his name and the date 1878 written on the first page.

The catechism was printed in Milford Square, Pennsylvania, in 1863. This was the period when many Mennonites were coming from Russia to Canada and the United States. In 1878 the General Conference was held in Wadsworth. It was in 1878 that the Wadsworth Institute was closed down. One of the main problems had been the pressure to make it coed.

I wanted to know what the world was like when my grandfather was in catechism in 1878. It was so different and yet so much the same as today. Russia, Turkey, and Rumania were at war. Bismarck was trying to maintain friendliness in the *Dreikaiserbund* but all of Germany was beginning to feel isolated and believed Russia, France, and England were plotting against her. There were secret treaties between Russia and Austria; Russia and England; and England and Turkey. Much like today. So, I am not jealous because of that.

I am jealous because of the good and wonderful happenings during the time my grandfather was in catechism. It was at this time that D. L. Moody and Ira Sankey were at the peak of their evangelistic tours in Britain and America. It was at this time that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Whittier, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Mark Twain were pouring forth their writings.

It was by this time that Tennyson had recovered his faith as evidenced by *In Memoriam,* and was in 1878 the most prominent figure in English literature. Robert Louis Stevenson began his writing career that very year and William Cullen Bryant's was coming to a close. This was also the year that the statesmen Disraeli and Gladstone were at the height of their careers. It is also true that Karl Marx came on the scene at this time. Henry Ward Beecher, famous preacher of New England, was pressing the claims of God. I have four volumes of his sermons within arms' reach. This is also the period when "soul music" was coming from Gounod, Stainer, and Fanny Crosby.

What brought about the richness of that era and what is restraining it today? Can you blame me for being jealous of my grandfather? *Ward W. Shelly*

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CONTRIBUTORS

John W. Miller, 18 Heins Avenue, Kitchener, Ontario N2G 1Z8, is an author, college professor, and lives in an intentional community.

The two lesbians complied with *The Mennonite* policy that all writers need to be identified. We have their names on file but left the article anonymous to avoid embarrassment.

Ivy M. Yost, Frederick, Pennsylvania 19435, is a member of the Hereford Mennonite Church.

Our meditation writers are Evelyn Witter, Indian Bluff Road, Milan, Illinois 61264 and Ward W. Shelly, 109 East Adams, Washington, Illinois 61571.

Jacob J. Enz, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana 46515, wrote a letter to the editor. It is such a fresh and real experience that it seemed appropriate for the editorial page.

CREDITS

Cover and other artwork, John Hiebert; 374, Rudy Regehr; 376, Dennis Stoesz; 377, RNS; 382, Hereford Church.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

About homosexuality

Some denominations are openly divided on how to deal with homosexuality. No doubt there will be differences of opinion among Mennonites. It is probably the most explosive issue before Christians at this time.

I had hoped that someone would solve it and then we could report the answer. Instead, a number of pastors have urged *The Mennonite* to open the dialogue because they need help in their congregations.

We have included an article by one who has studied and dealt with homosexuals. A Mennonite gay couple, who have been in correspondence with me for about a year, share their faith in Christ and ask for our understanding.

What then shall we do? I have visited with homosexuals, read the Bible and other literature, and watched a special film. My mind and heart still say that homosexuality is not natural and not God's will.

But the Christian testimony by some of these people cannot be denied. Some are earnestly following a call to discipleship.

While I cannot endorse homosexuality, I do believe that Christians are called to understand people and try to share God's love with all people. A letter from professor Jacob Enz at the seminary shares a personal witness of putting this into practice. We invite you to share your insights and personal experiences. *Bernie Wiebe*

God loves gays, too

Dear Editor: The article (April 25 issue) entitled "Gays Dialogue with Church Leaders" was disturbing to me. It reminded me of a friend and roommate from graduate school days. Some twenty years or so later, while working in a Mennonite community, he was asked to leave his position when it was alleged he was gay. At the time I felt no love or concern for him, nor did I identify with him. In retrospect, it seems that I regarded gayness as the unpardonable sin.

On a recent Sunday at Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, the pastoral prayer gave opportunity to the congregation for praise and thanksgiving, intercession, confession, and rededication. I felt led to pray, "I confess that I have withheld the love of God from a homosexual." The article in *The Mennonite* helped me to that point.

What now? Is "gay" sin? I believe that gayness arises out of preoccupation with sex. We live in a sex-saturated society. This threatens the mission of God through Christ in us and the church. Recall Paul's words: "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desire."

Any kind of sex has become a personal right, it would appear. (We experience this normally as a temptation.) This is heightened in our culture which calls this the kind of freedom that at last brings the world to "maturity."

We are aping an ancient error among the Canaanites who even had ceremonial prostitution. Yet the ancient rite, as Vernard Eller has pointed out in an article in *The Christian Century* (March 11, 1970, pages 291ff) entitled "Sex Power and Revolution," had an integrity; it was to bring fertility to crops, herds, and families. Today it is done for the "fun of it." If it feels good, do it. Eller insists it is a fallacy to believe "that sexual permissiveness can be compatible with social revolution." Eller's last sentence is: "Save our revolution! (meaning social justice); Back to puritanism." (He differentiates between puritanism and Victorianism.) Our Anabaptist forefathers were puritans, he insists. And that is why they made an impact that we are still trying to catch up with.

But our culture is more than saturated with sex. As the gays tell us, we are saturated with materialism and excessive food consumption. This rips the food out of the mouths of the world's poor and hungry. Do we want perfection in the area of sex life without dealing with our obscenities of greed, unbridled appetites, and covenant breaking in the form of divorce and war?

I am glad you ran that news item. I think we must, as we confess our sins of affluence, obesity, and divorce, put our arms around gays and with the liberating, saving words of Christ say, "Neither do I condemn thee. Go thy way and sin no more." And if gays find it hard to break with their pattern, let us reflect on how difficult it is for us to break with affluence, obesity, and covenant breaking. *Eve of Ascension Day 1978, Jacob J. Enz, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana 46514* May 10

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:24 JUNE 13, 1978

To serve the present age

Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Leland Harder

Beyond professionalism in the ministry

The curriculum of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries (AMBS), Elkhart, Indiana, has developed in three stages, each one associated with a shifting view of the Christian ministry.

Mono-pastoral training. The two schools came together in the late 1950s, one from Chicago and one from Goshen, in a time when our churches were moving toward the pattern of "the single pastor with training and salary" as H. S. Bender described it (*Mennonite Encyclopedia,* Volume 3, page 704). In retrospect, it has been critically called the "mono-pastoral pattern."

When I attended the Chicago seminary in the early fifties, the students were mostly men being trained for "the ministry." It was assumed that the *esse* (being) of the church required the presence of properly ordained pastors; and while rural Mennonite congregations had once ordained them in the plural without training or salary, now one per congregation was thought to be sufficient, especially if he was seminary trained to do the preaching, baptizing, praying, pastoring, counseling, and administering, and was paid for the doing of them.

In the 1½ years after graduation, according to the polity of our conference at that time (*The Minister's Manual,* 1950, pages 93-96), I had to be ordained twice before I was authorized to give the "full ministry" in the congregation that had called me as pastor.

Servant of God's servants. Then in the mid-sixties, in an intensive two-year curricular revision in which the theological insights of John H. Yoder were especially helpful (Yoder, *Concern* 17, pages 33-93), we reaffirmed both our roots in the free church tradition and a New Testament vision of multiple ministry in which "no one is not a minister" and in which commissioning of the many was thought to have more validity than the ordination of the few.

The overarching purpose of the new curriculum was to prepare men *and women* for the ministry of all Christians, defined specifically as their own exercise of spiritual gifts in the ministries of the church, the essential being of which does not in principle require the presence of an ordained pastor. We continued to train men for salaried pastorates, with a new vision that they were to be primarily "servants of God's servants" (Miller, *Servant of God's Servants,* 1971), but this was no longer necessarily our main purpose as the number of women students increased from five to fifty and the proportion of students planning to be career pastors dropped to a minority.

Professionalism and beyond. Now in the late seventies we are entering a third stage of curricular revision in which training for several basic professional ministries is becoming the predominant focus within a New Testament context of the church as the body of Christ. This is not a return to the mono-pastoral pattern, nor is it discontinuous with the multiple ministry. It stems directly from the charismatic principles of Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4 which we affirmed in stage two.

For some reason in the past decade we were so caught up with the discoveries that to each is given a gift (1 Corinthians 12:7), and that each member's ministry is essential to the being of the church (12:22), that we were not fully aware of the realism in those same passages that some members are "weaker" (12:22-24) and that others are especially needed for the *bene esse* (well-being) of the church "to equip God's people for work in his service, to the building up of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12 NEB). This applied especially to such gifts as apostle, prophet, pastor, and teacher (4:11) and to whatever else Paul meant by "leader" in Romans 12:8.

Now one of our problems in stage three is to make a case for the professional ministry without doing violence to the concept of the church as the body of Christ in which gifts are given to all members.

The categories of professional and nonprofessional ministries do not come from the New Testament but from the modern sociology of occupations. Consequently, the pastoral ministry as an occupation is like all professions: It consists of specialized skills and services that a pastor is able to provide to a congregation by virtue of technical education, full-time employment, a salary commensurate with one's social status, and a professional self-identity provided by association with one's peers.

Congregations need professional pastors who are employed to do specific things that members in other full-time occupations do not have time to do well, and to provide technical skills and knowledge that might be lacking otherwise, especially a thorough knowledge of the Bible and an ability to provide direction in the operation of the local church.

In the first of these specialties, the pastor must be competent in a number of direct ministries to the congregation, such as planning and leading worship, preparing and preaching a sound biblical sermon, administering some of the work of the church, and counseling persons with responses psychologically appropriate to their problems. And in the second, the pastor must know how to work behind the scenes to facilitate the congregation's discernment of purpose, setting of goals, recruitment of workers, and implementation of programs. Actually, a church that believes in the ministry of all believers needs more, not less, expert leadership.

One thing the professional pastor in a Mennonite church is not supposed to do: He or she is not supposed to take over the ministry that properly belongs to the whole body of Christ and its members. It is their ministry that is primary and normative for the *esse* (being) of the church. In the believers' church the pastor is not set apart from anyone else because of being an expert or a professional. The role therefore must move beyond professionalism into total interdependence with the brothers and sisters in Christ.

Two of the most exciting congregations I

> It is the power of the resurrected Christ, whose Spirit gives gifts to his church (energizes our talents and skills), that produces true ministry.
>
> Leland Harder

have visited recently—one in St. Louis and one in Dallas—have started and existed for half a decade without the benefit of professional pastors. Both are now in the process of employing pastors, not because their being depends on it but for their well-being.

The special knowledge and skills which the professional brings to the work of the church are not simply to be identified with the gifts of the Spirit, no more than the latter are identical with the natural talents which other members bring. Skills and talents are only channels for the exercise of spiritual gifts. A spiritual gift can be defined as a talent or skill that has been "energized" by the Holy Spirit (Stedman, *Body Life*).

For instance, one of the special skills that a professional pastor brings to the work of the church is the ability to prepare and preach a sermon; but the most expert exegesis of a biblical text and the most polished delivery of a sermon will be useless unless the pastor is somehow enabled to preach "in the Spirit"—help the congregation discern how that particular "word of God" transforms their human predicament—or unless someone else is able to help the group to make this application—to "discern the spirits" as Paul described this gift in I Corinthians 12:10. In this phenomenon of the Spirit, the professional pastor is no different than anyone else in the church. It is the power of the resurrected Christ, whose Spirit gives gifts to his church (energizes our talents and skills), that produces true ministry.

At the seminary we are beginning to retool for the job of producing professionals for their part in the ministry of the church. One part of that is to see that our students acquire various competencies that go with being professionals. The other part is to discern the gifts which the Spirit has given to each one.

We are at the threshold of discovering anew that these are distinct and not identical parts of our work. Each has curricular implications, but the second is a lot more mysterious and uncontrollable and essential to true Christian ministry than the first.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries —twenty years

Erland Waltner

This year the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries (AMBS) celebrate their twentieth anniversary.

To appreciate the survival of this partnership, we recall that the inception of AMBS back in 1958 was viewed with considerable skepticism.

Two schools, representing two different Mennonite constituencies, embarked on a venture of faith, a journey which was likened to that of Abraham when he left Haran "not knowing where he was to go." The bets were hedged by keeping the schools at least ten miles apart, limiting the cooperative program to two afternoons a week in "safe and prudent" areas, and writing carefully the documents of agreement with provisions "in the event of dissolution." Joint chapels were not considered appropriate and joint work in the "practical courses" and in studying 1 Corinthians were quite out of range. Even with all of this caution, some in the constituencies feared "contamination"; others feared "domination."

By the end of the first decade, Dean Harold S. Bender had died and Dean S. F. Pannabecker had retired. A new dean, Ross T. Bender, was named "joint dean," serving both seminaries. One meaning of this was that he shuttled back and forth between the two campuses (Goshen and Elkhart), a situation which was soon to become less and less acceptable. This and other external challenges led to the setting up of a dean's seminar to hammer out a more adequate concept of "theological education in the free church tradition."

Serious questions were asked. Would the seminary have capacity to change and to become a more authentic expression of its own Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage?

The process was intense. There were at least forty-seven sessions in which not less than six strong faculty minds and hearts struggled with concepts and goals which never stood still. Is the seminary really more "church" or is it more "school"? Can the seminary admit persons not committed to church ministries, or for that matter, not to the church at all? Would not a university setting and posture be more appropriate for theological education in the modern scientific world? What should be the shape of ministry in the context of the believers' church? What in fact are the uniquely "free church" elements which form and inform the goals and shape of the seminary? How would AMBS be like other seminaries and how unlike them? Is accreditation of value or is it a yoke from which we ought to be made free?

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Mennonite Biblical Seminary —looking ahead

Henry Poettcker

To hear Erland Waltner survey the history of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, to study the history of its involvement with the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, and to note some of the hurdles and the achievements, is to be filled with thanksgiving to God.

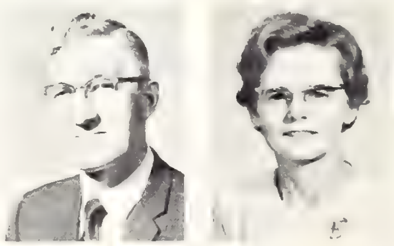
Our seminary is unique, as MBS and Goshen Biblical Seminary work together in AMBS to provide leadership for hundreds of churches. Much has gone into that relationship and there has been marked growth. Like the blue spruce growing in our backyard—growing slowly but surely as long as the life-giving food flows through its stem—those involved in the seminary's program need the continued sustenance which God gives so that life and fruit may result.

A look into the future must be put into perspective. There is an open door of further opportunity, *further* because the change of administrative personnel comes at a point well along the way; the beginning of this third chapter of theological education in our conference came already thirty-three years ago.

As an institution called to train church workers, we continue

(continued on second column, page 389)

Erland Waltner has been president of MBS for the past twenty years. Erland and Winifred will be in England and at Eastern Mennonite Seminary on sabbatical studies and teaching during the next year.



Henry Poettcker has been president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College for the past nineteen years and begins his term as president of MBS this summer. Henry and Agnes are moving to Elkhart in July.

THE MENNONITE seeks to witness, teach, motivate, and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published weekly except biweekly in July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton, Kansas 67114, by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kansas 67114, and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions: in United States and Canada $9.00 one year, $17.00 two years, $24.00 three years; foreign $9.50 per year. Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Canada R3P 0M4. Business office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

“Visions always need relentless testing.”

Erland Waltner

Answers came, but consensus did not develop easily. It was very hard to distinguish between that which represented “true vision” and that which was “visionary.”

In the seminaries' second decade some marked forward steps were taken. The academic programs of the two schools were virtually integrated. The Goshen Biblical Seminary long-range planning committee decided to relocate their school to the Elkhart campus.

The seminary curriculum moved toward congregational orientation and included experience-based programs: the SEM's (Supervised Experience in Ministry courses), CSPE (Congregationally Supervised Pastoral Education), UMPS (Urban Ministries Program for Seminarians), and later SCUPE (Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education). There were seminary-without-walls programs taking faculty members into the congregations, Washington seminars, Colombia (South America) seminars. An OMTC (Overseas Mission Training Center) program was set up to help prepare personnel for overseas. Meanwhile, the prolific Institute of Mennonite Studies was turning out research, publication projects, and seminars.

These have been twenty difficult, challenging, and costly years. They were difficult because there seemed always to be some resistance to every new step, and indeed every venture seemed to bring its own new problems. They were challenging because the call of God to faithful Christian discipleship was coming through and each step was felt to be the response of obedience. They were costly because the years called for an enormous investment of the time and energy of board, faculty, and staff, and the financial resources of those who supported. The building up of a new campus, its maintenance through inflationary years, and the growing costs of an expanding program at times seemed overwhelming.

They were also satisfying years because one could see the joy of growth in enrollment, in campus development, in the cooperative relationship of the schools, and in the curricular program.

Were they also fruitful? Have there been any children coming from this marriage? Yes, there have been children—students and graduates now serving in many places in the world—who have received inspiration, enlightenment, and a call to deeper commitment to Christ and the church at AMBS. There have been research and writing projects, such as John Howard Yoder's *The Politics of Jesus*, C. J. Dyck's *Introduction to Mennonite History*, Ross T. Bender's *The People of God*, and others.

In fact, other “Institutes of Mennonite Studies” have been spawned in such places as Fresno, California; Waterloo, Ontario; and elsewhere. Inter-Mennonite pastors' workshops, which were featured on the AMBS campus, now have become common also at regional levels. The concept of shared ministry, fraught with large problems but great possibilities, may also be seen as a significant legacy.

Visions always need relentless testing. Our reflection on twenty years of pilgrimage leads on to new frontiers and ways of conquering these. This now becomes the exciting and promising challenge which others must take up. In retrospect we would say gratefully, “Thanks be to God for his grace and faithfulness through these twenty years. To God be the glory, great things he hath done.”

“There is an open door of further opportunity.”

Henry Poettcker

to have a theological task. The past decades have brought our generation through a period of intense searching. Many wondered whether there was still a God, what kind of nature he had, whether he was little more than a figment of our imagination, whether he wasn't in fact actually dead. The reaffirmation has come: The God of Israel is none other than the Father of our Lord Jesus. But the implications haven't been immediately evident, and so the challenge remains: How do we open ourselves to God to reflect what he would reveal to the world?

If the God revealed in Jesus makes his claims felt, how should we believers structure our lives? How must we structure our churches? In the heterogeneous context of charismatic strains, conservative positions, radical life-styles, and nostalgic traditionalism, how shall we work together as members of God's family? How can pastors learn to “listen with love” to the pulse of the individuals who make up the church?

Nowhere must these questions be taken more seriously than in a seminary whose task is to train workers and to help them lead their congregations to a relevant body life of personal spiritual growth and meaningful service to others.

The practical questions of organizational lines and the working together of our Mennonite groups will continue to face us. Hopefully the good things which we have experienced the past twenty years will not only continue but be furthered. What possibilities may there be for other groups in the Mennonite fold to join us at Elkhart for mutual sharing and upbuilding? Are the difficulties too great? No, they cannot be, for we serve the Lord who desires the unity of his children which will fit them to be channels of his love.

As I think back on the Woodlawn chapter, I see the need to ask afresh the question of interracial relationships. Can our program reflect the ingredients that make *all* races *one* in Christ? The Overseas Mission Training Center has opened new horizons. We need the willingness, the wisdom, and the grace to *be* brothers and sisters from around the world. Our church ministry and congregational planting must reflect this among various *ethnoi* (ethnic groups).

The coming years should continue our research and writing. The Institute of Mennonite Studies needs to continue to open our past and interpret our present so that we can move into the future with integrity and conviction. The several models of graduate training will continue to see various thrusts in our constituency. Those endeavors will make for new ventures, the discarding of unproven ways, and the courage to use what is usable without unnecessary duplication.

We will continue to face the crucial question of adequate financial undergirding for the seminary. The support of our various conference programs—educational, missionary, philanthropic—has never come easily. But never before have we had more resources available, providing we can be motivated to share and to give first ourselves, and then our means.

If we can see God's call to us as individuals and specifically his call to the seminary—that we have come to the kingdom for such a time as this—we may move forward with trust in God and love for our neighbor. To make that love contagious, in the best prepared lives that we can know, is our task. Then, to come back to the analogy of the blue spruce, there will be the continued growth that gives the structure, the life-sustaining power, and the beauty which God intends.

Mennonites protest Trident

Seattle, Washington—"Civil disobedience can sometimes be a religious act," says Lauren Friesen, pastor of the South Seattle Mennonite Church.

Fifteen persons from the congregation joined nearly 1,000 others in a legal demonstration against the Trident submarine on May 21. They participated in a liturgical worship service before ferrying across to the rally point near the submarine base at Bangor, Washington.

Assembling behind a colorful banner, "Mennonites Against Trident," the group attracted other Mennonites from Portland, Oregon, and Vancouver, British Columbia, as well as other Christian pacifists who wished to affirm that their participation stemmed from religious conviction.

Many of the Mennonite marchers signed a statement drafted by several South Seattle Church members. It said, in part, "We are against Trident and the whole military system that assumes our protection and security come from weapons. Even more, we favor the building of the kingdom of peace in which our security and protection come from God."

"God's Arms Are Not Nuclear," proclaimed a placard in the joyful mile-long parade from the rally point to the base. A life-affirming spirit enveloped the crowd as they chanted and sang old favorites such as "Amen," as well as new songs. One of these, to the tune of "Row, row, row your boat," was "Stop, stop, stop the sub / Make the buildup cease. / Faithfully, faithfully, faithfully, faithfully, / We will live in peace."

About half the demonstrators left Sunday evening. Those who remained had arranged work schedules to engage in or support civil disobedience the next day. A candlelight vigil was maintained overnight. Early Monday morning the demonstrators again marched to the base, reverently climbing the six-foot fence onto government property—deliberately trespassing in order to be arrested—to publicize the horror of the Trident project.

Police used buses to transport 290 trespassers to the courthouse in nearby Tacoma. Surprisingly, all were released except for five "second offenders." Undaunted, the group and supporters returned on Tuesday to enter the base again. This time all were arrested, but released on personal recognizance.

Over a year of careful planning by a coalition of pacifist groups went into the demonstration, timed to coincide with the special session on disarmament at the United Nations. While all were welcome to the Sunday march, only those who belonged to affinity groups and had gone through nonviolence training were allowed to participate in the civil disobedience.

The Trident submarine has been a particular embarrassment to the Navy, and thus base officials had hoped to avoid publicity by not arresting demonstrators. Delays and cost overruns into the millions have made the first-strike weapon unpopular even in the Pentagon. "It's not too late to stop this project," emphasized a spokesperson from the Live Without Trident office. "Of the twenty $2-billion subs planned, each with 408 nuclear warheads, only one frame has been built on the East Coast, and it is not expected to arrive until 1981."

These demonstrators were among 290 arrested for assembling inside the Trident nuclear submarine base at Bangor, Washington, May 22-23. They were protesting international nuclear weaponry.

"I believe I'm in line with my Anabaptist heritage," explained Emily Goertz, a member of one of the Seattle Mennonite Voluntary Service units who was arrested. Strongly supported by members of the units and the congregation, as well as her place of employment, Emily will go to trial June 26.

"At first I thought all demonstrators were a bunch of rabble-rousers," confessed one member of the church, "but when I saw how conscientious the people were, I had to look at the issues more closely." *Peggy Newcomer*

Graphics and content of *The Mennonite* scrutinized

Newton, Kansas—Visual impact and philosophy of *The Mennonite* were the main concerns during a two-day workshop with the magazine's staff and the committee on *The Mennonite*, May 22-23.

Several resource persons contributed to the evaluation. The workshop was intended to help staff assess the current format and content. In essence the committee gave the staff approval to experiment within the context of a long-range goal to give the magazine a new look. A thorough readership survey is tentatively scheduled for 1979.

Resource person Gary Gaeddert, a communications specialist, said *The Mennonite* needed more "visually enhancing elements." The magazine has too much text, he noted.

Bob Regier, former art designer for *The Mennonite*, observed, "There is a need to look at the larger visual rhythm of the magazine, not only throughout an issue, but over a year." He said he did not sense coherence in the visual form of the magazine, and faulted the current editorial structure of the paper in which the two editors and the artist have separate offices, thereby often working with a minimum of interaction.

Former editor Maynard Shelly provided a historical review of the manual he wrote which continues to guide the character and production of *The Mennonite*. His presentation initiated a wide-ranging discussion on the philosophy of the periodical.

Heinz Janzen, general secretary, commented that there is considerable ambiguity in the function of the paper. Although one of its main functions is to publish news about General Conference activities, no administrative staff tells the editors what to publish, nor does the paper represent "official" positions.

Committee members—Myron Schrag, La Vernae Dick, Adolf Ens, LaVerna Klippenstein—also reviewed the policy on the letters to the editor. They counseled that even though there is a need to say things eyeball-to-eyeball, attacks on the integrity of writers are a cop-out. *Vic Reimer*

Input to be discussed in cross-cultural encounter groups

Keynote speakers named for World Conference

Lombard, Illinois (MWC)—When Mennonites from forty countries gather in Wichita, Kansas, during the last week in July, the rule of God for a world in turmoil will top the list of items for attention.

Using the five official languages of the conference, the more than 15,000 people expected to attend will talk and will be talked to about what it means for them to be citizens of the kingdom of God while living as members of nearly 100 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups on the world's five continents.

On each morning of the first four days of the Mennonite World Conference, the speakers will treat the conference theme, "The Kingdom of God in a Changing World." They will represent four different countries: David Schroeder, Canada; Paul G. Hiebert, the United States; Hank B. Kossen, the Netherlands; and Albert Widjaja, Indonesia. Their presentations will deal with the theology, social meaning, politics, and economics of living in God's one world while facing the many power systems of the present age.

In addition to these morning addresses on the conference theme, three evening messages will enlarge on the topic. Three persons associated with Africa will be featured: Million Belete, Ethiopia; Festo Kivengere, Uganda; and Donald R. Jacobs, formerly of Tanzania.

In releasing the names of the seven speakers who will highlight the six-day meeting of the Mennonite World Conference's tenth assembly, Paul N. Kraybill, executive secretary, noted that the number of addresses being given had been limited. This was done in order to give those in attendance more time to deal with the theme directly and to interact with each other.

David Schroeder, professor of New Testament and philosophy at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, will deliver the first in the series of four messages on the conference theme on Wednesday morning, July 26. Speaking on "The Church Representing the Kingdom," Schroeder will show how the Bible portrays the church as an agent of change, and how the church prepares the way for the coming of the kingdom.

Schroeder's twenty-five-minute statement, as those of the other speakers on the three following mornings, will be probed by 100 study groups of about fifty persons each. All persons registered for the conference will be assigned at random to one of these groups, providing a cross-cultural context for learning. They will meet twice each day.

Meeting immediately after the morning message has been given, the 100 units will use an intensive group process to probe the meaning of the Bible's teaching on the witness of the church in today's revolutionary world. In the afternoon, the same groups will spend 1½ hours finding ways to put the Bible's concepts into practice in the communities in which each person lives.

The second theme address will be given on Thursday morning, July 27, by Paul G. Hiebert, professor of anthropology at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California. He will deal with the relations of the church to other religions and with secularized society.

A European churchman will deal with the political meaning of the kingdom in the Friday morning message, "The Kingdom Confronting the Powers." Hank B. Kossen, professor of practical theology at the Mennonite Seminary, Amsterdam, will discuss the church's relation to the power systems of society.

Ecology, economics, energy, food, and stewardship will be dealt with by an Asian Mennonite on Saturday morning, July 29. How the church copes with the world's new awareness of the earth's limited resources will be discussed by Albert Widjaja, thirty-eight, an instructor in economics at the University of Indonesia in Jakarta.

Following each of the four morning presentations, three persons from different parts of the world will respond to the message, emphasizing the meaning of the theme for their churches and nations.

The four theme messages will be preceded by an introductory address. Million Belete, an Ethiopian living in Nairobi, Kenya, will open the assembly on Tuesday evening, July 25, speaking on "Christ Establishing the Kingdom." As president of the Mennonite World Conference, Belete is the first person from outside Europe or North America to hold that office. Formerly general secretary of the Bible Society of Ethiopia, he is the Africa regional secretary of the United Bible Societies.

The two concluding addresses of the assembly will be given by persons who have served the church in Africa with the title of bishop—one black and the other white, one an exile from his home country and the other a former missionary.

Festo Kivengere, bishop of the Church of Uganda (Anglican), will address the gathering on Saturday evening, July 29. Over 15,000 people are expected to come to hear the man marked for execution by his country's tyrant. His remarkable testimony of forgiveness has been given in a book published recently by Revell, *I Love Idi Amin.*

Speaking on "The Kingdom Shaping the Future," Donald R. Jacobs, overseas director of the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, Salunga, Pennsylvania, will summarize the experiences of the week at the assembly's closing service on Sunday evening, July 30.

The program of the conference will be a many-dimensional experience with music, drama, worship, reunions, tours, art exhibits, demonstrations of folk art, and a wide variety of interest groups on all phases of church life.

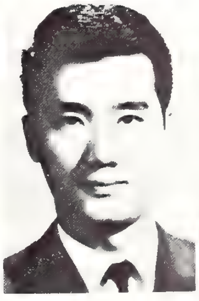
"This will be a unique opportunity," says Kraybill, "to experience greater reality in the meaning of the universal character of the church. We hope it will lead to new understanding and deeper commitment to discipleship and obedience to Christ."

Belete

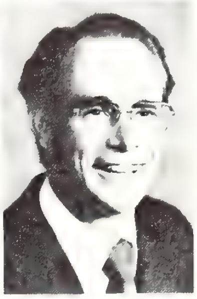
Schroeder

Hiebert

Kossen


Widjaja

Kivengere


Jacobs

No hope left as dam creates economic dislocation

Pantabangan, Philippines (MCC)—The hillsides of Pantabangan in the Philippines are barren now. The deep-rooted coggan grass is dead.

Not much is happening in this town of 14,000 since the completion of the Pantabangan dam. A church leader welcomed us, "Here are our homes in the cemetery."

Before the Upper Pampanga River Project was completed in 1974, life in the valley below was good. There was enough fertile land to go around, two rice crops were harvested each year, and gardens were lush.

Today the once-rich valley of 16,000 acres is covered with water. A dam measuring 1.3 miles in length and 110 yards high was built with $120 million in World Bank loans.

The Pantabangan story is a reminder that development is too important to leave to the "technocrats." Community and hope are very precious parts of life, and engineers are unable to control these human aspects of development. The people here blame the Philippine Government for their situation and seem relatively unaware that the entire project proceeded with foreign money and planning.

This project demonstrates the importance of Christians' monitoring the effect of big money projects on ordinary village people.

In 1971 when the townspeople realized that the dam was a serious possibility, protests were organized. A petition was made to the president. Trucks and buses were rented for a trip to Manila where the Pantabangan residents demonstrated at the presidential palace. The people now realize that they were sold out by their own leaders.

After martial law was declared in the Philippines in 1972, the army was sent in to encourage the progress of the dam and to protect workers from local hostility.

When the dam was completed in 1974, some people had to flee in haste, leaving behind unharvested rice and other valuables as the water began to rise.

At one time the government made lavish promises to relocate the people to a large plantation through a much-publicized land reform program. Another plan called for relocation several hundred miles to the north. All of these promises remain unfulfilled. Now the people's only farmland is the desolate, infertile mountainsides devoid of water, and farmers must walk ten to twenty miles to find suitable land to work.

Skin diseases and intestinal disorders are common, probably because of the poor water supply. During our visit a one-year-old child died from malnutrition. Yet the Philippines exports dozens of doctors and thousands of nurses to North America and elsewhere.

"Higher Ground" is the name the Pantabangan residents gave to a World Vision project for 300 of the poorest families near the Pantabangan Mennonite Bible Church. Ironically, since the residents have moved from their valley to higher ground, their lives have been miserable.

Welfare attempts fail to reach deeper problems of economic dislocation and disillusionment created by the development of the dam. Job training seminars and stopgap programs do not bring dignity to the people.

With all these disappointments there is little wonder that old-timers still look out over the water covering the valley where they once lived and begin to cry.

Occasionally representatives of the Communist party appear from their retreat in the nearby mountains to recruit the youth. They have had some success.

Members of the Pantabangan Mennonite Bible Church, themselves victims of this ruthless development project, try to bring hope to their hopeless community. *Gene Stoltzfus and Dorothy Friesen, MCC Philippines*

Trickle irrigation is difference between living and surviving

Jordan Valley, West Bank (MCC)—"For me the difference between drip irrigation and my old method of irrigation is the difference between living and merely surviving."

That's how Sa'id Fhidat, a Palestinian farmer, sums up the benefits he received from participation in an irrigation project sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

The MCC irrigation project helps Palestinian farmers in the Jordan Valley purchase and install a new type of crop irrigation known as "drip" or "trickle" irrigation.

Traditionally, farmers irrigated their crops with earthen furrows dug adjacent to the plants. Although simple to use, furrow irrigation requires large amounts of water—a problem in an arid area like the Jordan Valley.

Drip irrigation differs from this conventional method by providing the plant with a small amount of water from plastic pipes which are laid parallel to the rows of plants. The pipes contain small openings called "drippers" near each plant which allow water to drip out at a slow, even rate.

Farmers report that the amount of water required to irrigate one acre under furrow irrigation can now be stretched to irrigate two and three acres using the drip method.

Two Jordan Valley farmers beam over the much-expanded production that drip irrigation has brought to their crops.

Drip irrigation also increases productivity, especially in vegetables, because the plant receives exactly the amount of water it needs.

"Last year," says Abu Ghassan, a farmer from the village of Jiftlik, "I was lucky to harvest one ton of tomatoes per quarter acre. This year I will get at least four to five tons per quarter acre."

The benefits of water conservation, increased production, and flexible planting schedules all add up to the possibility of a brighter future for the small farmers of this region.

Comments Paul Quiring, MCC representative for the West Bank, "Since the beginning of the Israeli occupation in 1967, West Bank farmers have been forced to rely on themselves, as there is little financial help from the governing authorities. With inflation running more than 40 percent annually, the farmer must find a way to increase his return or he will have no choice but to leave farming and seek other employment."

During 1977 MCC helped West Bank farmers install drip irrigation on almost 100 acres of cropland by assisting technically and financially.

A drip irrigation system can cost $1,200 or more per acre. In total, forty-eight farmers participated in the purchase and installation of sixteen separate drip networks. These sixteen systems cost $140,000, of which the farmers paid 71 percent or $100,000, and MCC together with OXFAM contributed the remaining $40,000.

The drip irrigation project is part of a larger rural development program which MCC began in this area in 1976.

Gardening is a vital need in northern communities

Winnipeg, Manitoba (MCC)—Four Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) volunteers are assisting native communities in northern Ontario to grow vegetable gardens this summer.

The four volunteers, all college students, are going to Sachigo Lake, Ponask, Muskrat Dam, Sandy Lake, and Bearskin—communities within fifty miles of each other and several flight hours northeast of Winnipeg.

Menno Wiebe, MCC (Canada) native concerns director, says gardening is a major cultural innovation for the woodlands Cree and Ojibwa who live in these communities because they are traditionally a hunting, nomadic people.

Corny Buller, an agriculture student who experimented with gardening at Sachigo Lake last summer, sees gardening as a vital need, both for the nutritional value of the vegetables and the employment potential of the activity.

Wiebe points out other reasons for introducing gardening in the northern communities: (1) The Indian people are now sedentary in terms of residence patterns; (2) The lakeshores and riverbanks have been cleared of trees for firewood, so cultivable garden plots are available; (3) MCC has a philosophy of aid which encourages local food production.

MCC is sponsoring the volunteers at the request of the communities. They are Don Wiens of St. Catharines, Ontario; M. Bruce Duggan of Winnipeg; Ron Banman of Winnipeg; and Keith Moyer of New Dundee, Ontario.

Russian Mennonites coming to Wichita

Lombard, Illinois (MWC)—A six-member delegation from Russia is planning to attend the tenth assembly of the Mennonite World Conference in Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30.

Included in the delegation will be two Mennonites, Henry P. Goertzen from the Karaganda Mennonite Brethren Church and Bernard Sawatsky, a Kirchliche Mennonite from Novosibirsk.

This will be the first time that a delegation from the Soviet Union has been able to attend the Mennonite World Conference, even though an invitation has been extended repeatedly since the first Mennonite World Conference was held in 1925.

The delegation also includes four Baptist leaders—Traugot Quiring from Dushanbe, Jakob Fast from Novosibirsk, Michael Zhidkov of Moscow, and Sergei Nikolaev from Leningrad.

Has the temporary become permanent?

Dacca, Bangladesh (MCC)—In the beginning the Bihari refugee camps were seen as temporary. Six years later the ramshackle camps—dozens of them—are still there, housing more than a quarter million persons in enclaves. In the 1972 war of liberation between Pakistan and Bangladesh most Biharis were sympathetic to Pakistan. Defeat of the Pakistani forces left the Biharis in an untenable position. They do not feel secure in Bangladesh and are not being integrated into that society. Pakistan does not want any more Biharis. Six years of subsistence living through handouts from government and international relief agencies has quashed any self-help initiative. Development in this difficult situation has proven to be painfully slow and unsure. What outsiders see as development the Biharis see simply as relief in a new form.

Peace Section evaluates struggle for justice

Akron, Pennsylvania—The breadth of activities included in peacemaking was evident in the agenda of Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section (US) meeting on May 12-13 in Philadelphia.

The ten-hour session covered topics ranging from congregational peace education to nonviolent direct action, from urban America to Europe and South Africa.

A panel of five challenged the assumption that Americans, including Mennonites, have made much progress against the evils of racial and economic discrimination during the last ten years.

The business sessions were bulging with issues crying for attention. The future of New Call to Peacemaking was debated. The staff reported that Christian peacemaker registration materials are being printed at Akron, Pennsylvania. These will be available as a peace education resource and as a means of placing on record the sincerity of the conscientious objector. Such a record would be very useful if Selective Service registrations resume under proposed new procedures that would sharply reduce the time available to establish a CO claim.

The world arms race, nuclear threat, and militarism were the backdrop for a discussion of war tax resistance. Peace Section reaffirmed its 1975 recommendation to Mennonite institutions "to study the conflict between Christian obligations and legal obligations in the collection of federal taxes. . . ."

Speaking as representatives of Evangelicals for Social Action were Ronald J. Sider, author of *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* and Richard K. Taylor who wrote the 1977 book on nonviolence, *Blockade.* Taylor reminded the group that Jesus lived in the consciousness that God is a righteous judge and a God who has indignation every day (Psalm 7:11), and that Jesus was an advocate for the poor and for justice. Taylor defined nonviolence as "active resistance to evil and injustice, but with active creative goodwill toward opponents." Challenging Mennonites to resist evil, he added, "A witness made in safety and security has little to say to people living under the gun."

Elected as chairperson was A. J. Klassen, professor of theology at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Fresno, California; vice-chairperson is Janet Umble Reedy of Elkhart, Indiana; and secretary is Stan Bohn of Bluffton, Ohio. *John K. Stoner, MCC Peace Section (US)*

Words & deeds

Foundation Series materials for the deaf will be available soon. Supplemental teaching materials based on the kindergarten Foundation Series materials are being created quarterly by Rachel Zehr of Normal, Illinois, for use with deaf children. These materials will be made available to interested groups this fall. Write to Congregational Literature Division, Mennonite Publishing House, 616 Walnut Avenue, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683.

An MCC Bolivia retreat is being planned for July 31-August 2 at Camp Fellowship, Goddard, Kansas. All former Mennonite Central Committee Bolivia workers are invited. If interested contact Dale Linsenmeyer, Route 2, Beatrice, Nebraska 68310.

Books of the church fathers, icons, and biblical manuscripts were recently discovered in the monastery of St. Catherine at the foot of Mount Sinai. The items were discovered by chance as builders were demolishing a wall. In 1844 and 1859 the German theologian von Tischendorf recovered many of the 3,000 biblical manuscripts, which became known as the Codex Sinaiticus, in the same monastery. Eight pages which were missing from the Codex are in this new discovery.

The 1978 Persons in Ministry Conference will be held at the Akron Mennonite Church, October 27-29. (Persons in Ministry was formerly called Women in Ministry.) If you would like to receive a program and registration form, write to Persons in Ministry, Akron Mennonite Church, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

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Two TV spots released in Canada early this year confront viewers with the Golden Rule as quoted by Jesus—love for God and one's fellows. "What about the Aged?" (sixty seconds) highlights important milestones in the journey of life from infancy to senior citizen. "Time for Your Family" (thirty seconds) shows a little boy crashing an overtime meeting of company executives to buy a little of his dad's time to play ball. By late April the two spots had been released on fifty-three stations in Canada. Mennonite Radio and Television, an inter-Mennonite media group in Canada, produces the spots on a shoestring budget.

Winnipeg, Manitoba—The Mennonite Community Orchestra got off to a strong beginning when fifty string players turned out for the first rehearsal May 2. Under the enthusiastic leadership of concertmistress Karin Klassen (above), the players began preparation for a public concert on June 4. On that date the full orchestra, and the concert choirs from Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute and Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, performed a variety of orchestral and combined performances. Of special interest were the premiere performances of several works by Mennonite composers—"Mosaic of Mennonite Hymn Tunes" by Esther Wiebe, and "A Brotherly Gavotte" by John Klassen. George Wiebe served as guest conductor for the first concert.

Manager wanted

The Herbert Senior Citizens' Home, a facility owned by the Mennonite Brethren Church, requires a manager. The position requires someone conversant in English and German. Experience is desirable but not essential. Duties to commence September 1. Send applications to:

Jacob J. Dyck, manager
Box 10
Herbert, Saskatchewan SOH 2AO
Phone: 306-784-2613

Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission has scheduled a self-study consultation for April 1979. The AIMM board approved the study due to the steadily increasing program of the mission, and the highly volatile regions which dot the African continent. Included in the study will be an examination of assumptions, objectives, and strategies.

Eight billion persons by 2013. That is the newest United Nations prediction for the world's population in just another thirty-five years. China will have one billion people by the year 2000. Africa is experiencing the most rapid growth. At the present time Latin Americans and Asians are increasingly emigrating to the United States, more than Europeans.

Share your Christian life standards. Contributions for Mennonite Central Committee's new More-with-Less book on conserving resources and Christian life-style are coming in, but much more material is needed. Compiler Doris Longacre wants stories, ideas, and reports of innovations from persons who are attempting to be more self-sufficient and creative with resources and less responsive to consumerism and waste. Forms for submitting materials are available from MCC area and provincial offices, or by writing to More-with-Less II, MCC, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

Renewed Roman Catholic interest in the Bible has at least three different levels, stated Pedro Ortiz S. J., a Colombian priest, in a report to the American Bible Society in New York in March. Ortiz is a member of the translation team for the Bible in Today's Spanish—the "Version Popular." On one level Catholic Bible scholars have shared in the scientific study of the Bible with its emphasis on linguistic, archaeological, historical, and theological studies, Ortiz said Catholic biblical scholarship has caught up with Protestant scholarship. On a second level, Bible use is increasingly popular among Catholics. Third, with the approval of the use of vernacular languages in the mass and sacraments, the reading of the Bible in church services has taken on new significance for Catholics. The second Vatican Council said there should be easy access to Scripture for all, and the council expressly approved the possibility of preparing editions of the Bible in cooperation with Christians of other churches.

Record

Ministers

Steve Dick of Elmira, Ontario, will become the pastor of the United Mennonite Church, Black Creek, British Columbia, beginning September 1. He has attended Goshen (Indiana) College, Illinois State University, and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana. Dick has been serving as assistant pastor at the Elmira Church.

Gary Giesbrecht began serving the pastorate of the Laird (Saskatchewan) Church on June 1. He has attended Ontario Bible College, Toronto, and the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon. He has also served as youth pastor at Mayfair Church, Saskatoon.

Ernest W. Neufeld has resigned as pastor of First Church, Phoenix, Arizona, to accept the pastorate of the Bethany Church, Freeman, South Dakota, beginning in September. He has served previous pastorates at the Summerfield (Illinois) Church; Second Church, Philadelphia; and First Church, Allentown, Pennsylvania.

Neufeld

Pannabecker

Workers

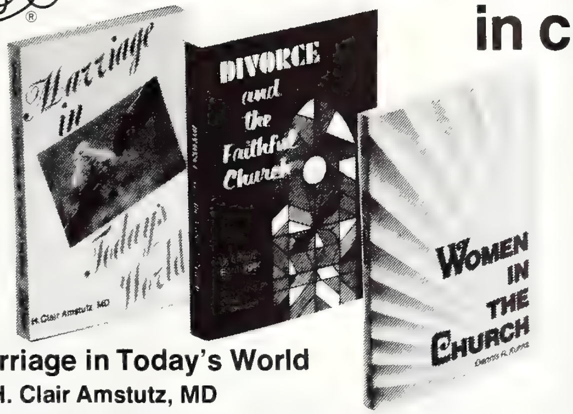
Frank Keller, Inman, Kansas, has been appointed to the staff of the Western District Conference at its North Newton office beginning November 1. He will be serving as committee coordinator and youth worker for the district. In the latter role, Keller will be replacing Michelle Friesen-Carper, who has resigned from her position as of July 31. Keller has served pastorates at Zion Church, Souderton, Pennsylvania, and Hoffnungsau Church, Inman.

Donald L. Pannabecker, acting academic dean at Bluffton (Ohio) College, has been named provost, a newly created position at the college. As provost, Pannabecker will have overall responsibility for financial affairs of the college and will be in charge of new program planning and systemizing record keeping and administration. He graduated from Bluffton in 1958 and received a master's of divinity from McCormick Theological Seminary in 1961. Pannabecker is currently completing a doctorate from the University of Toledo, Ohio, in higher education.

Deaths

Arthur Sutton, pastor of the Zion Church, Canton, Oklahoma, and an Arapaho chief, was born July 7, 1907, and died May 16. He was an active participant in tribal and community events. Most recently he served on the business committee of the tribal council and as the security supervisor of a recreational facility on the Cheyenne-Arapaho reservation.

Herald Press: Understanding the family in church and at home.



Marriage in Today's World
by H. Clair Amstutz, MD
In response to the sexual revolution and the infidelity in marriage today, Dr. Amstutz looks at the nature of human sexuality, marriage, and family, examines the historical record and the discoveries of science, and provides alternative suggestions for our culture today. "I heartily recommend it to all young readers who seek guidance for the important decision they face in courtship and marriage. Those who counsel youth will find in this book positive, wise counsel."—Professor Charles P. DeSanto. Paper, $4.95.

Divorce and the Faithful Church
by G. Edwin Bontrager
In recognizing the crucial importance of binding and loosing within the body of Christ, the author shares how the church can be an expression of forgiveness in relation to divorced persons. Marriage is viewed as permanent and the breaking of marriage as sin, but the author challenges congregations to become agents of Christ's deliverance from condemnation and guilt. Hard, $7.95. Paper, $4.95.

Women in the Church
by Dennis R. Kuhns
A pastor focuses on where he thinks Scripture has always been on the subject of women. His conclusion counteracts both "women's lib" and the "total subjection" applications. Paper, $2.50.

Quality literature for church and home.

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Introducing Mennonite Biblical Seminary Associates

ALL ARE MBS ALUMNI

Persons living in several communities have suggested that the seminary does not have enough visibility in their areas. Naturally not enough can be done from the Elkhart office. To receive more written material is not enough; they desire to see the seminary represented in person.

Plans for the Associates program are now complete. We have met with all associates and in a number of cases with alumni in the respective areas. The alumni serve as a sounding board or as an advisory council to their respective associate.

The duties of the associates are very flexible as the alumni may recommend or the associate may find practical. In any event, the associate will represent the seminary, sharing information in public meetings, talking person-to-person to encourage prayerful and material support, discovering and encouraging prospective students, and the like.

Yes, "we mean business." The associates are committed to set aside seven to ten days each year to represent the seminary in some meaningful way. The seminary is committed to keep them informed and pay all expenses, plus an allowance per diem. Together we shall help the seminary to get closer to our people.

Harry E. Martens, Director of Associates, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana 46514

Alberta Associate

Menno H. Epp, Pastor
Foothills Mennonite
2115 Urbana Road, N.W.
Calgary, Alberta
CANADA T2N 4B9
Tel. (403) 282-5592

British Columbia Associate

Dietrich D. Rempel, Pastor
West Abbotsford Mennonite
33257 Mayfair Avenue
Abbotsford, British Columbia
CANADA V2S 1P3
Tel. (604) 853-4504

Manitoba Associate

Peter G. Sawatzky, Pastor
Grace Mennonite
Box 508
Steinbach, Manitoba
CANADA R0A 2A0
Tel. (204) 326-6744

Ontario Associate

Darrell W. Fast, Pastor
Toronto United
1772 Queen Street, E.
Toronto, Ontario
CANADA M4L 1G7
Tel. (416) 694-7121

Saskatchewan Associate

Erick Sawatzky, Pastor
Grace Mennonite
3732 Normandy Ave.
Regina, Saskatchewan
CANADA S4S 0X9
Tel. (306) 586-9318

Pacific District Associate

Floyd Quenzer, Pastor
Mennonite Community
1223 North Adler
Fresno, CA 93727
Tel. (209) 255-1218

"Each one of us has a ministry. These ministries differ, of course, but in Christ they blend into a beautiful unity."

Congregation and seminary

Jacob W. Elias

This is an adaptation of a "kingdom report" which I shared with the Toronto United Mennonite Church—affectionately known simply as TUMC, "Tumsee"—on January 22 the Sunday before our move to Elkhart.

When we came to Toronto in 1975, our hearts were still with our brothers and sisters in Vancouver. But it didn't take long to warm to the welcoming acceptance and love here at TUMC. Now, once again, we are separating from our family.

However, in a real sense we are not leaving the family. We will join another branch of that extended family which we call the church. It is beautiful to find brothers and sisters wherever we go.

We make this move so that I can teach and work at our seminary. We will make ourselves at home in Elkhart, in the seminary community, and in the Hively branch of the Mennonite family.

I would like to share some things as a representative of the seminary. You might expect me to begin by saying, "The seminary is an arm of the church. At the seminary we do what the congregations are not equipped to do; we prepare persons for ministry."

If that were my main premise, my challenge would be simple and straightforward: "We at Mennonite Biblical Seminary are involved in training for ministry. Just pay your money and we'll do it for you."

The seminary *is* an arm of the church. The seminary has been called into being by the church. The seminary is a servant of the church. But the task of preparing persons for ministry does not rest with the seminary alone. Let me suggest that TUMC is part of the same leadership training team. The professors at the seminary *and* the members of this congregation have something to give. A congregation's partnership can work in several concrete ways.

First, cultivate a keen awareness of the fact that all Christians are ministers. Each one of us has a ministry. These ministries differ, of course, but in Christ they blend into a beautiful unity. As Paul wrote to the church family in Rome, "For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them" (Romans 12:4-6a).

Second, discern the gifts within the congregation and develop them. I have been speaking about ministry in general terms, but I also want to focus specifically on the pastoral ministry. How many pastors have come from the TUMC family? Are there those among us whose gifts lie in preaching and teaching and caring? Are there young people in our families—both young men and young women—who need to be challenged to consider full-time congregational ministry?

As a student at the University of Saskatchewan, I involved myself in the life and the ministry of the First Mennonite Church in Saskatoon. On an occasion that I will never forget, J. J. Thiessen put his hands on my shoulder and said, "Jake, I want you to consider the ministry." That was the call of God on my life!

The need is acute. Last fall, when my future with the seminary was still uncertain, a number of churches approached me about accepting another pastoral call. There is a long list of churches without pastors—twelve or more in Canada alone—and the Canadian enrollment at seminary is down. Might it be that right here in TUMC there are those whose gifts can be channeled to meet some of the leadership needs in our churches?

Third, give consideration to having a seminarian here as a summer pastoral assistant. One of my responsibilities, beginning in July of this year, will be to direct the field education program at the seminary. This means that I will be involved in the placement and supervision of seminary students in the churches, both in the Elkhart area during the school term and in various parts of North America during the summer.

TUMC would be an ideal congregation for a summer pastoral assignment for a pastor-in-training. Why? TUMC is an urban congregation and there is a need for energetic and innovative leadership in urban churches. TUMC is a church rich in resources. There are gifts within this body that would help to equip a seminarian for ministry in the city. I challenge this congregation to seriously consider becoming directly involved in this way in partnership with the seminary. We are members of one team.

Letters

Start a prayer chain

Dear Editor: Anyone who wishes instructions on how to start a prayer chain in their church or organization should send a self-addressed stamped envelope to me. *Marjory H. Snyder, 255 Pawnee Drive, Boulder, Colorado 80303* May 15

Homosexuality is unbiblical

Dear Editor: Appalled, shocked, disappointed, angry would not adequately describe my feelings on reading in the May 2 issue "Homosexuality Workshop in Kansas City." That a Mennonite church would condone, much less sponsor, such a workshop is beyond my comprehension. Have we as a Mennonite church slipped so far from our forefathers' beliefs in the Bible that we can overlook direct defiance of Scripture (Romans 1:26-32) and do nothing about it? I hope that the leaders of Rainbow Boulevard Mennonite Church will do some deep soul-searching and repenting over this backbending attempt at accommodating everyone who comes crying "equality," in direct defiance of God-given Scripture.

Hopefully the editorial staff of *The Mennonite* will also give more thought in the future to the content of articles printed. *C. R. Preheim, 10705 West 60th, Arvada, Colorado 80004* May 12

Faith makes difference

Dear Editor: In his letter (March 21 issue) David P. Suderman states that: "We must also ask ourselves hard questions about whether we can require permanence of any human relationship, or if, under present social conditions, failures in marriage are inevitable, or whether marriages at the tolerance level are morally acceptable."

Those of us who have not faced the question of either divorce or separation in our marriages, and furthermore, who also find our marriages much better than "at the tolerance level," may not be the ones who should point fingers at those whose experience has become otherwise. If adultery could be defined in broader terms to include an irreparable alienation between partners, whether or not sexual infidelity had taken place (I say "if," for I do not know whether I would be making a logical extrapolation), then the Bible itself would allow the possibility of divorce, though the Bible does not require it.

Some evidence could be brought forward to indicate that some marriages have broken up because one or both partners despaired of the effort of making the partnership work. The biblical ideal is that of a permanent relationship, and it should be expected with joyful anticipation by every Christian couple who marry. Why else would Christ use the marriage relationship to exemplify that between him and the church? Would anything on earth provide a better and more beautiful illustration?

The Christians at Corinth (and other places) were converts from a heathen society. There was little of tradition to support them. Certainly the "social conditions" of that time placed every conceivable strain upon relationships and also would have made "failures in marriage . . . inevitable." Yet, Paul admonished those Christians for allowing so much of that heathenish background to cling to them who had become members of the "church." We come out of a Christian tradition. Most of us have much support. Our hope for permanence in marriage relationships should exceed that of the Corinthian Christians.

As people of the world, those of Mennonite background can be expected to face exactly the same problems, be subject to the same pressures, be victims of the same conditions, and suffer breakdowns in marriage as others do in their communities, whether these be rural or urban. But, for a people of "the way"—if indeed there is for those who know Christ as a source of love and power who also works a difference in marriage and in family life—a difference should be expected and also realized, not only because of duty and not because of increased tolerance, but because of a maturing love which provides the strength to meet the problems associated with marriage and with life in general, problems which also grow in dimension as the years pass by.

I am not inferring an idyllic relationship which might be spared the problems of temptations, illness, children who worry their parents, and even uncongenial friends and in-laws, but one in which two people indeed see Christ as being part of that relationship. If a relationship could indeed falter even though he were there, please, would some who have not been able to maintain their marriage relationship explain how that could nevertheless happen, even though indeed his presence was desired and beseeched? *John J. Bergen, 11242 75th Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 0H3* May 10

Warning on Pentecostals

Dear Editor: The meditation "The Holy Spirit—Who?" by D. Gary Loewen (April 18 issue) needs a fuller discussion. Gary says, "I believe that we have failed to inform people about the work of the Holy Spirit." I agree. The person who introduces another to the Savior should also introduce him or her to the Holy Spirit so that there would be intelligent yielding to his control, because the Holy Spirit will never control us automatically—we must want his control.

Salvation is by faith from start to finish. But God waits for us, unsaved or saved as the case may be, to avail ourselves of the salvation we need by means of faith. James says: "Or what do you think the Scripture means when it says that the Holy Spirit, whom God has placed within us, watches over us with tender jealousy" (4:5)? He is eager and willing to control us if we yield to him.

Let me say at the outset that the name "charismatic renewal movement" is an ill-chosen name; they should rather be called "neo-Pentecostal." Central to neo-Pentecostalism is the teaching that every believer must seek a post-conversion baptism in the Spirit in order to obtain full power for Christian service and to receive the full complement of the Spirit's gifts.

Having had occasion to live in close contact with the Pentecostal movement for the last forty-four years, I feel it is my obligation to sound a word of warning, and at the same time give an exhortation of Scripture on the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

Charles and Francis Hunter, who are leading promoters of charismatic teaching, are distributing a tape recording on *"How to Receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit."* Here is an excerpt of the lesson: "I'm going to lift up my hands to heaven, everybody out there lift them, too. I'm going to open my mouth, and I'm going to give you a little sound when necessary. But I'm not going to talk in English because I can't talk two languages at one time. And, Lord Jesus, I'm going to talk loud tonight so I can hear my own voice. And I'm going to pray rapidly so that it will bypass my mind, because this is supernatural."

In between each sentence, which she asks the congregation to repeat, there is a lot of shouting and babbling. Finally she says, "Now with your hands lifted high, open your mouth and inhale deeply, because the Holy Spirit is the breath of God, and then let it come out, but not in English."

Now listen to what Paul has to say: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power and love and a sound mind . . . So keep my words in your mind as a pattern of sound teaching, given to you in faith and love of Christ Jesus . . . Take the greatest care of the good things which were entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit who lives within us" (2 Timothy 1:7, 13, 14 Phillips).

Charismatics speak of receiving "a greater measure of the Spirit," or of receiving "more of the Spirit," or we hear the petition, "Spirit of God fall afresh on me." This all may sound very pious, but completely misses the mark. This kind of reasoning reduces the Holy Spirit to a substance, and yet he is a person. He is dwelling in another person, the believer. You cannot have a person in part, we have him either completely or not at all. Kenneth Wuest, who is an authority in Greek, says that the word "be ye filled" should really be translated, "be ye controlled."

Another dangerous error is the institution of "tarrying meetings" to bring seekers "through" to a Pentecostal experience. Nowhere in the New Testament after the day of Pentecost are believers in Christ commanded to seek, to tarry, or pray for the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Nor is there any report that such meetings were held. *D. D. Klassen, Box 417, Carman, Manitoba ROG OJO* May 4

Meditation

Help the seeker to find—Acts 8:4-24

When Philip went preaching through Samaria, one of his early converts was Simon, a man who had been a magician among the Samaritans. Perhaps Simon was a sort of faith healer. He was impressed by the wonderful things which Philip was doing in the power of the Holy Spirit, and when he saw that Peter and John seemed to have even more power than Philip—since by laying hands on the new Christians they seemed to give them the Holy Spirit—Simon asked if he could buy this power from Peter and John. From Simon's point of view, this was a normal and honest thing to do. He did not try to get this power by trickery, but offered a fair price, and he was totally taken aback by Peter's violent rebuke.

Philip, Peter, and John stumbled in mission precisely where many of us stumble today. They forgot that when Simon saw these manifestations of the power of the Holy Spirit he would naturally assume that when he was filled with the Holy Spirit he would become a *powerful* person. They forgot that Simon would not yet fully comprehend the unique way that Jesus reckons things, that with him the first is last, he who loses his life saves it, and the leader is the servant of all. Simon stumbled early in his Christian life because those who had come to share Jesus Christ with him had not helped him to see how truly radical the new way of Jesus Christ is.

Perhaps Philip, Peter, and John had been fellowshipping with Christians too much. Perhaps they had forgotten that when new people come to Jesus Christ they first see him through their own understandings. Perhaps these apostles had not yet come to understand that when we tell people about Jesus Christ we must also listen to them and try to see the world from their point of view. They did not seem to be aware that much of what was said and done within the church could be understood very differently by those outside coming in.

Many of us are where Philip and Peter and John were. When new Christians like Simon misunderstand and stumble, we want to blame only them and shout at them with Peter, "May you and your money go to hell." We have not yet really learned that if we want to share the good news about Jesus Christ with others, we need to put ourselves in their shoes and see things from their perspective. As Christians we have used special words such as *justification, atonement, community, discipleship,* and even *love* so long that we forget they have different meanings outside of the Christian fellowship. It may even be that we have used these words so long that we ourselves have forgotten what they really mean. A good test is to see if we can tell about Jesus Christ using only the simple, everyday language of the world.

This incident should also show us the importance of patience. It is helpful to remember when I have problems of understanding in mission and am tempted to lose my temper as Peter did here, that the fault is almost certainly at least as much mine as the other person's. Instead of becoming angry, I need to look at myself and at the way I am understanding and communicating God's love. Unless we have patience as we attempt to understand both ourselves and those with whom we work, we make it extremely difficult for the Simons of this world ever to become faithful followers of Jesus Christ. *Robert Ramseyer*

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CONTRIBUTORS

This is a special Mennonite Biblical Seminary issue prepared with the aid of J. Herbert Fretz, church relations staff person at the seminary. Writers are seminary professors Leland Harder (practical theology), Erland Waltner (retiring president), Henry Poettcker (president-elect), Jacob W. Elias (director of field education), Robert Ramseyer (director of Overseas Mission Training Center), and students Peter and Gladys Buller. The seminary address is 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana 46514.

CREDITS

Cover artwork, 387, Robert W. Regier; 388, Steve Fath, MBS; 390, RNS; 392, Paul Quiring, MCC; 393, Ralph Miller, MCC.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Assistant editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

The inspiration of Scriptures

At the Baptist and Mennonite study conference on the believers' church in Canada, May 15-18, afternoons were devoted to seminars. I went to the one titled "Biblical Authority and Denominational Traditions." Clark Pinnock and David Schroeder presented the major papers.

Pinnock echoed the concern that the authority of the Bible is being undermined since the introduction of the historical-critical approach to Scriptures. Schroeder said that all "theories designed to affirm and explain the authority of Scriptures" are limited.

The issue of inspiration and authority of the Bible is important for Christians. However, I get frightened by some of the attempts to build a "high" view of Scripture. Some of the highest concerns for the sacred Word, as far as I can tell, were held by the Pharisees and the Sadducees. They wanted to observe the holy writings to the last iota.

When I reflect upon my own view of the Bible, I am reminded of a night when I was eleven years old. An evangelist was proclaiming the Word in a manner that totally grabbed me. The elderly gentleman sitting next to me must have felt my inner desire. Through a gentle encouragement from him, I responded to the altar call.

God's Word has never really come into question for me since then. It has been a challenge (those parts that are readily understood but difficult to follow) and it has been a comfort (the continuing thread of redemption and reconciliation).

Theories of inspiration are important and inevitable. To feel empowered with *authority* from the Bible is essential. But the greatest tests remain the same. Does the Word of God live in you and me? Can we care in such a way that it can come alive to non-Christians? Without that, all views and theories are of little or no use. *Bernie Wiebe*

Church-speak and the gospel

Peter and Gladys Buller

As missionaries, we at times feel like twentieth-century reincarnations of Rip Van Winkle. Each time we return to the United States for furlough (pardon me, North American assignment), it takes us a few months to adjust to the current vocabulary of church-speak. Until we adjust, we walk about in a kind of ecclesiastical limbo, afraid that we shall say the word which reveals how utterly out of touch a stint in the Zaire bush has left us.

How embarrassing to call for people to "give testimonies" and be met with minutes of booming silence. The "revival service" has largely joined the dodo. In its place is a gathering for "spiritual renewal," which on occasion can be neater and cleaner by dispensing with the sawdust trail. Finding someone who has been "saved" is quite a rarity in our decade. Making a "personal commitment" though is acceptable and has the added advantage of not having to admit you were ever "lost." "Hell" is apparently a victim of the energy crisis, having been robbed of its last Btu. And rest in peace, for the modern theologian will never predict your arrival there. At most you might be threatened with a "pained conscience" which will pass away when you do.

Our time spent at Mennonite Biblical Seminary has been refreshing, for it has underlined in our thinking the fact that spiritual and biblical truth is eternal and is not subject to the vagaries and foibles of human cogitation. A semester with Erland Waltner restudying the epistles of Peter leaves no question of the fact that sin and redemption, old-fashioned as they may sound, are yet among the basic concepts around which the church interprets the meaning of life in Jesus Christ. And spiritual pilgrimages notwithstanding, a semester of the devotional life with J. C. Wenger leaves us rooted in the truth that victorious Christian living still comes to those who, "being saved by the blood" (don't pardon the expression), yield themselves to the Holy Spirit for old-fashioned sanctification.

It is good that the words by which we express our faith change, for as each generation makes its peace with God, it must do so in language meaningful to itself. But what guarantee have we that in changing language we won't change the faith? Paul gives us a clue in 1 Corinthians 4:20 when he says that "the kingdom of God is not in words, but in power"—power which expresses itself in action that flows from our lives.

We return to Africa this fall with a new determination to "do theology" and not just speak it.

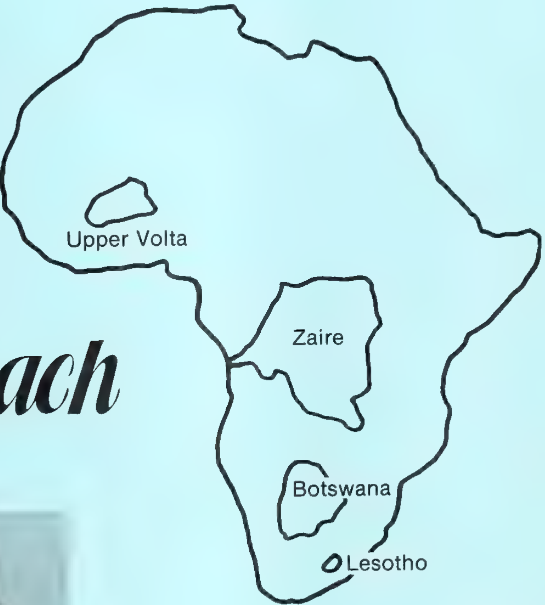
The Mennonite
Overseas Mission
Edition

encompass

JUNE 13, 1978

Upper Volta

New Scene, New Approach



Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) coordinates the mission outreach of several Mennonite groups into Africa, namely, the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Conference, the Mennonite Brethren Church (in Southern Africa), and other interested church bodies. Since its founding in 1911, some 230 missionaries have served to build a church of over 25,000 baptized members and have helped meet many kinds of human need. While maintaining its original purpose to preach by word and deed the gospel of Christ to every creature and to build His Church, AIMM pursues a strategy geared to the rapid sociopolitical changes on the continent. Today its more than fifty missionaries serve in three countries (Zaire, Lesotho, and Botswana) with a fourth (Upper Volta) soon to be opened to a Mennonite witness.

Loren and Donna Entz (center) and Dennis and Jeanne Rempel, currently in France

The Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission has come on the Upper Volta scene in Northern Africa at an opportune time. "Within the past five years, basic irreversible changes have been set in motion by a mix of factors," explains James Bertsche, executive secretary of AIMM. These are:

"—the Sahel drought with resultant population movement

—crumbling polity arrangement long honored among the traditional five Protestant Missions

—rapidly growing Moslem influence

—realization that present Protestant personnel/program is not sufficient for the need

—increasing openness to outside help

—a moderate government which although headed by a nominal Moslem is favorably disposed toward Protestant mission work in the country."

The focus of AIMM work is in the

Continued on page 3

With the Spiritual Churches in Botswana

B. Harry Dyck

It was about 7 p.m. Ed Weaver and I had just propped ourselves up in our chairs resting and relaxing after a long day of cleaning and furnishing a house for me and my family in Francistown. Our rest was short-lived. We had hardly begun to reflect on our new beginnings when two young men on bicycles arrived at the door to invite us to their church meeting that evening. Almost too tired to be excited about the prospect of visiting my first "Spiritual Church," but too inquisitive to decline, we piled into Ed's Peugeot with them and followed their directions of "Go this way! Now around that bush! Mind that stone!" to their place of meeting. It was dark when we arrived, but the flicker of candlelight through the cracks in the building and the voice of a speaker ringing through the air indicated that we were in the precincts of a worshipping assembly. Our guides paused by the door and then, as though a lull inside signalled our entree, both men raised their voices in song and ushered Ed and me inside that little shanty. For an hour or so we enjoyed a worship service of praise and exhortation.

That was my first encounter with the Spiritual Churches of Botswana, more specifically with the Spiritual Healing Church of Francistown. It was a happy introduction, for one of those two guests-turned-hosts was Freedman Reuben who became my friend and colleague in the Bible teaching ministry with the Spiritual Churches. From him, in the following months, came repeated encouragement to teach the people, visit the churches, and continue my inter-church endeavors.

The second assembly to which I was introduced was St. John's Apostolic Faith Mission led by prophetess Ma Lekuta. This lady's hospitality and encouragement has become almost legendary to the Mennonites who have come to know her. She proved her ecumenical spirit early by arranging for me to meet the leader of the Eleven Apostles Healing Spirit Church, Rev. B. Monyatsi.

Mr. Monyatsi, a kind of Peter in the Gospel tradition, immediately invited me to start Bible classes in his church in order to get the community aware of my presence and purposes in Francistown. That this was not an attempt on his part to usurp a tool for his own church's benefit (a suspicion among some leaders) was apparent from the effort Mr. Monyatsi made to introduce me to other leaders.

A benefit of this link with the Eleven Apostles Church was the help I received from Otsile Ditsheko, the church secretary. Otsile was appointed by his denomination to become a colleague of mine in lesson preparations and subsequent teaching ministries which Freedman and I had begun. A wise choice it turned out to be, for not only did Otsile become a reliable translator for me, but he and Freedman also struck up a trusted friendship which is an example to all church leaders encountering other denominations. I am reminded of what one man told me after our class was functioning. "Until you came here we seldom talked to people from other churches, but now that we have begun to study together we like to talk to them; we like to be together with them just like with our own church people."

Continued on page 3

Deacon pouring water over hands of ministers so that they may pray over and purify the water

Congregation falls in line to drink water intended to be a cure or preventative of illness for all participants.

After drinking the water, participants file past minister who lays hands on them and prays for them.

With the Spiritual Churches, continued from page 2

Where are we now in the ministry with the Spiritual Churches in Francistown? After a number of courses of Bible book studies in Francistown and points north and west, we find that our contacts are gradually increasing and our classes are bringing in more students. One course, requested by and intended especially for church leaders and their assistants, has thirty registrants; a second course for other church workers not specifically known as leaders has twenty-three enrolled. Of these students more than half are men. This is a significant proportion when one considers how far women outnumber men in all the church groups I know.

Some long range planning is going on, this largely due to the initiative taken by the leaders locally. There is genuine interest for the establishment of a Bible school which will be an on-going ministry for both young and old in the community. There is a greater sense of mutuality among the leaders, and a "pulpit exchange" is quite probable. In a minister's meeting one of the committee members requested to be allowed to vacate his committee position in order to make room for other denominations not represented in the committee. One cannot help but become excited about the spirit of cooperation manifest among these leaders when one bears in mind the apparent lack of such rapport in the past.

Enthusiasm and sentiment, of course, do not of themselves dissolve the pills we may still occasionally have to swallow. When we meet together one or the other of us still has to speak in a foreign language, and confusion occasionally results despite our efforts to prevent it. Our cultural backgrounds are still very different and when ambitious steps are taken, the attempts made to stall such moves may well appear to be a hindrance to progress. Schedules and related plans of one running smack into the schedules and plans of another must almost certainly bring disappointment to some. One does not have to work long until one becomes very conscious of the fact that "this ain't heav'n yet."

As we reflect on what is being done here in Botswana, we recognize that the work is still in the infancy stage; we may have great ambitions and that is good; some of the ambitions we presently foster may well prove out of place or out of reach or both; that too is OK if they redirect us to the good and reachable. A spirit of discipleship and a desire to learn together (Acts 2:42) lead one to expect that there will also be apostles—people of God going forth to witness to the One who is the Good News to all the world.

Upper Volta, continued from page 1

western part of the country, an area north of the government regional post, Orodara, containing some 100,000 people among whom there are fewer than five known Protestant believers, and sections of the city of Bobo Dioulasso, where there is no resident evangelical witness.

General Conference missionaries, Loren and Donna Entz, who left last September, and Dennis and Jeannie Rempel, who went after New Year's, are presently in France in language study in preparation for going to Upper Volta. Dialogue continues with the Zaire Mennonite Church concerning plans for a Zairian couple to become part of the missionary team.

The missionary team is expected to be knowledgeable about agriculture, soils, public health, adult literacy, and leading small group Bible study. The members are to be prepared to accept a very simple life-style. Rather than be in a hurry to produce "statistics" they are to be "prepared to become integral parts of a Christian community along with local believers avoiding the mission/church dichotomy which has often characterized mission work in the past," states Bertsche.

Harry Dyck, Freedman Reuben, and Otsile Ditsheko make class preparations.

Bible Classes in Francistown and Beyond

It was in early 1976 that we met with Rev. B. Harry Dyck of the Mennonite Church. He took up residence here in Francistown, Botswana, and began a rather ambitious drive to coordinate the churches within Francistown to work together for Bible classes. We have enjoyed the privilege of sharing ideas in our evening Bible classes, both in English and Setswana courses. We have achieved much progress since the formation of these classes.

Our work with Mr. Dyck has involved both the preparation and interpretation of lessons to our students. This work gives us a tremendous feeling of sharing and fellowship with the churches, many of which we had no contact with before Mr. Dyck came here.

We have travelled long distances together with Mr. Dyck in the interests of our Bible classes. We have gone as far as Maun, Kasane, Madinare, and Bobonong to meet with the leaders of the different churches. We have always found a welcome, and are even asked to stay longer for further studies. Because of our classes we are receiving light leading us to the glorious kingdom of our Savior. PEACE.
Otsile Ditsheko

Bible Translation

In One Corner of the World

Khege Mwata-Swana and Ben Eidse translate Bible into "Good News" Chokwe.

In Zaire there are more than *two hundred* distinct languages. These are not just "dialects," but separate languages at least as different as Portuguese and Spanish for example. To be sure, many of them are closely related, but they are different languages and must be dealt with as such. At present *only thirteen* of these Zairian languages have the complete Bible. Another fourteen languages have only the New Testament. Smaller portions and selections have been translated into nearly thirty additional languages, but most of these publications are now out of print. In this great, but sometimes troubled nation, the task of Bible translation is overwhelming. There are frequent and urgent requests for new translations, but often they have to be rejected because of lack of funds or qualified personnel.

Linguistically the Republic of Zaire is composed of three distinct strata. The *official language* of the country is French. This was the language imposed by the Belgian colonial authorities and retained by the newly independent "Democratic Republic of Congo." In 1967 the name of the country was changed to the Republic of Zaire and there was a strong trend toward the abolition of non-African items imported into Zairian culture. Nevertheless, for purposes of national unity the French language has been retained. Many Bibles and other scripture portions in French are distributed each year.

On another level, there are four so-called *national languages.* These are major languages used for inter-ethnic communication. They are often described as "trade languages." These trade languages are: Lingala, Swahili, Tshiluba and Kikongo. Virtually every one of Zaire's 21 million people speak at least one of these four languages.

The *tribal languages* make up the third linguistic level in Zaire today. Each ethnic group has its own language. Such groups may be composed of as few as 10,000 speakers in some cases and as many as a million or more in others. Many of them have never had any scripture in their own language.

Two important languages in this third category are Chokwe and Giphende; languages in which the AIMM is directly involved. The first bit of scripture to appear in Giphende was the Gospel according to Luke, translated by Agnes Sprunger and Alma E. Doring in 1926. . . . In 1935 the entire New Testament was published . . . the work of a team of missionaries and Africans. . . .

Just about the time of independence of the former Belgian Congo in 1960, work began on a revision of this earlier translation. Rev. James Bertsche and Kipoko David headed up this work and were eventually assisted by Pastor Ghymalu Kianza. . . . With the completion of the New Testament revision, the translation of the Old Testament started immediately. This work is being done primarily by Pastor Ghymalu Kianza assisted by a number of African and missionary revisers. . . .

The Chokwe language is spread over a large area including parts of eastern Angola and southwestern Shaba. It is spoken by more than a half million persons. Early work on the Chokwe Bible was done by the Garanganze Brethren, or "Christian Missions in Many Lands." The Gospel of John appeared as early as 1916 and work progressed steadily on the New Testament until its publication in 1927. . . . The entire Chokwe Bible was printed in 1970. . . .

With the advent of modern principles of *dynamic equivalent* translation, AIMM missionary Ben Eidse had a vision. While the older translation was a faithful rendering of the original, it was sometimes difficult to understand. Rev. Eidse envisioned a new translation into modern idiomatic Chokwe equivalent to the *Good News for Modern Man* which first appeared in America in 1966. Under the supervision of Dr. Harold W. Fehderau, then Translations Consultant for Zaire, and with the help of Pastor Khege, he set out to realize this dream. . . . It is not intended to replace the earlier Chokwe Bible, but will be offered as an alternative to those who find the more formal translation difficult to understand, and as an additional source to be used together with the earlier work in Bible study.

. . . We can look forward to a dynamic translation of the entire Bible in Chokwe within a few years.

From "Bible Translation in one corner of the world" by John Ellington, Translations Consultant for the United Bible Societies in the Republic of Zaire, *The AIMM Messenger,* Summer 1977.

My Experiences in Translating the Bible

Ghymalu Kianza

There is a saying which goes: "Experience makes a man wise." Personally I have no problem believing that!

At the theological school where I studied, we learned a few basic concepts of Bible translation. Counting on this knowledge I believed myself to be well preparing for translation work and was really interested in it. But after working for a while in another vocation, I gave up the idea of attempting translation work.

When the Mennonite Church of Zaire invited me to join the translation team of which my brothers Rev. Jim Bertsche and Deacon Kipoko David were already members, I asked myself if I would still be able to recall the methodology of translation that we had studied given the fact that several years has passed since I finished school. Here let me say that I still had confidence in what I had learned in school concerning translation work. But, alas, my confidence in my understanding of Bible translation was shaken. I soon realized that what one imagines Bible translation to be is completely different from what one actually finds in the work. I came to understand that the translation of the Bible is a very difficult task which many have never experienced. In order to understand this, it is not sufficient to only hear about it, one must experience the reality of it.

The translation of the Bible is both theoretically and practically different from the translation of secular works.

First I would like to talk about the translator himself. He must *know and understand the Bible* that he is responsible to translate. He must be possessed of a tranquil spirit and an exactitude for he translates a message of the first century into a receptor language of the twentieth century. He must translate it meticulously in a manner that his fellowmen understand it as the people of the first century understood it. These are the major concerns which preoccupy the translator of the Bible. He must furthermore know that he is engaged not in a secular, but in a sacred labor. He must be a man of God who knows the King of Kings. This is not necessarily a requirement for the translation of secular works.

Like my brothers, I at first thought a literal translation would be the best. But through experience I came to understand that there are many inconveniences in a literal translation. An example is Proverbs 25:22 which speaks of piling hot coals on the head of your enemy. To translate this passage literally is to twist its sense and make it resemble a Giphende proverb which says, "You placed a red hot coal in the hand of your fellow man," which is to say, you have provoked or placed your fellow man in serious difficulty. This, however, is not the sense of this passage.

There are many problems which are confronted in the translation of the Bible. Some are understood by those who are not translators, but others are not. For instance, there is the problem of language. Some people see in the Bible a good document for the preservation of their language. This is a false concept. The translator seeks the closest possible equivalent with which to translate intelligently the Word of God while always remaining faithful to the message to be presented as it is found in the original text. Approached in this manner the translation can be neither altogether a dynamic translation nor a literal translation but it must be as nearly as possible an equivalent translation.

There is a problem of public understanding of our work. There are some of my friends who studied with me in theological school who, like I, thought some time back that the task of translation is comparatively simple. At one point they suggested to Dr. Fehdereau, who was the translation consultant for Zaire, that responsibility for the translation of the Old Testament be divided among several of them so that work could move ahead quickly. Their idea was that most any existing version of the Old Testament could be used and translated into our language. If Dr. Fehdereau had accepted their proposal, a translation of the Bible into Giphende would undoubtedly have been finished in less than two years but it would have been a work done without method and frequently without accurate sense which would have been a useless loss of time.

There is also a financial problem. I would be very happy if our readers of the Bible understood that the Bible is a unique book which is given practically free of charge. If all of the expense involved in the work of translation were calculated such as travel expenses, material used and salaries of personnel involved, I am sure that the Bible could only be purchased by rich people. I therefore regret the fact that some people who receive the Bible at a subsidized rate still complain about the price! This I am not able to understand.

The translation of the Bible is a work which surpasses my abilities. If I am involved in this work, it is only due to God who extends to me His grace. I love this work not only because I want to make the Bible available to my fellow people but also because in the process I am able to glean precious gems which are hidden there for my own personal benefit. For this privilege I am truly grateful.

It's "Springing Forth" in Kikwit

by Donovan Unruh

Shortly after our return to the United States for furlough in 1976, someone expressed the feeling that our ministry and work in Zaire would be taking a new direction upon our return. It is. "Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert" (Is. 43:19) best illustrates what has happened in the first six months of this term.

New Home

As it turned out, the "new thing" included a move from a rural to an urban center with a population of 250,000 to 300,000 and a trip of 118 miles over roads that can exist only in Zaire. One can well imagine our hesitancy at such a move. However, when the Lord says that He is going to do a "new thing," we should not be surprised when things are accomplished with ease. Our move was completed in one long eighteen-hour day and we found an adequate and comfortable dwelling waiting for us in Kikwit. Because the physical aspect of moving was concluded without any trouble, we found that our family adjustment to the new surroundings went much smoother than anticipated.

Right away one of the "new things" of the Lord was the return of Matadi to our family. Matadi is an orphan who had lived with us three years previously. As our family circle was completed with joy, we settled down to the task of being parents, brother, and sisters, learning to love and respect each other. Naomi's task includes not only mothering and homemaking, but also teaching our children, which occupies the largest block of her time.

New Language

The "new thing" of the Lord included, as well as the move to Kikwit, the learning of a new language. This was necessary in order for us to be most effective in our new assignment of Theological Education by Extension (TEE) in Bandundu Province, west of the Louange River. The discipline of language study has been tempered by the opening of new doors for ministry to the professional people of Kikwit, including university students and faculty. In studying together we form new friendships in the student-teacher relationship that naturally open the way to talk about spiritual matters. Because of these contacts we have met commercial secretaries, clerks, and other university students, some of whom are already interested in renewal prayer and fellowship groups and are in turn interesting others.

Enrolling for Theological Education by Extension seminar at Kikwit

Sunday morning choir participation resulting from TEE seminar

New Extensions

The "new thing" for missionaries and church leaders is the extending of our Bible institute through the seminars of TEE. This comes at a particularly opportune time now that schools have been returned once more to the churches for the moral and spiritual nurture of Zairian children. Of the thirteen students enrolled in our current TEE session at Kikwit, only three are not from the teaching profession. The preliminary planning sessions with Pastor Kingambo were positive, as he began to sense the value of biblically oriented lay persons in the church. Comments by the students themselves indicate what they hope to receive from the course: "curiosity about the Bible," "finding a changed attitude taking place in myself and my relationship to the church," "I don't know anything about Bible study and how it applies to me," and "I need to know how to communicate my faith to those outside the church and to my friends."

The first sessions in all centers of TEE will focus on "Following Jesus" as a basic discipleship course. This and "Learning how to speak with God" and "Leading others to Jesus" will constitute the first three courses of thirty lessons. A student following through a series of twenty-six basic courses will have accumulated the equivalence of about three years in a resident Bible institute. However, the greater value lies in the fact that he will have applied directly in his daily living what he is learning in theory through the programmed lessons, an element often missing in the usual resident campus situation.

Renewal

Finally, our excitement is kindled by the Lord's promise to make rivers in the deserts. We have to see the fulfillment of this "new thing" taking place in the renewal experiences of the church. In almost every major parish renewal is happening as people come to experience a new joy in the Lord and discover a deeper power of prayer and personal devotion than they had ever imagined possible.

Continued on page 7

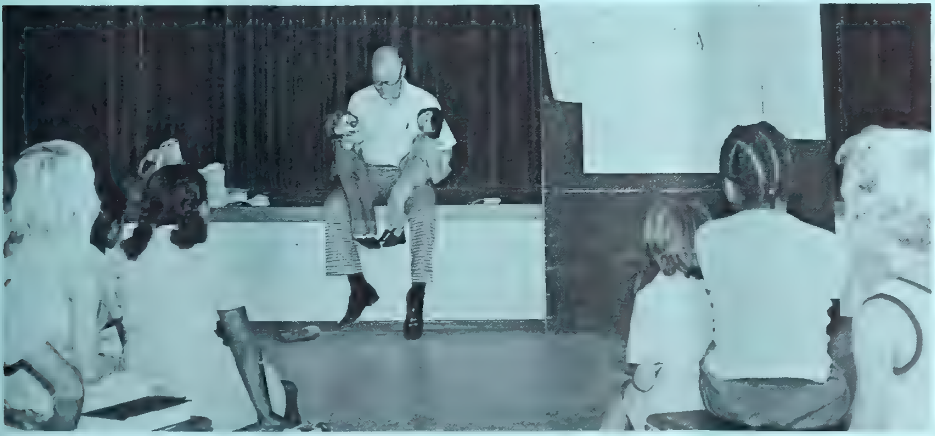
Developing Ministry to Lesotho Children

Vacation Bible School three times a year! That's what can happen when the school holidays are divided among three terms. And that's the recent experience of the folks at United Church in Maseru, Lesotho.

First time around it was 110 students in five days. Second time 110 showed up in three days. What will it be for our third Holiday Club since this, too, will be five days in length? In Africa as in Europe, vacation periods are called holidays, and a Holiday Club is a combination Vacation Bible School, day camp, and Good News Club. These first three sessions were held at the English Medium Preparatory School, conducted by volunteers from Maseru United Church. Scripture Union (SU) of South Africa supplied a couple for the first club in August 1977, with United Church personnel conducting the entire program of January '78. SU will be sending Frank Sayi, Scripture Union's primary school worker from Soweto, to assist with the third Holiday Club. This primarily is to help train Sesotho-speaking personnel for a Sesotho language Holiday Club next time.

These are first attempts at using visual aids, dramatized stories, games, and small group activity periods in an interdenominational presentation of the Good News of Jesus Christ. To date the English medium clubs have been approximately half national Basotho children and half expatriate children from Asia, Europe, the Americas, the Middle East, and other African countries. The majority of these young people are not regularly involved in a local church or Sunday School. An outgrowth of the periodic Holiday Clubs is the S. U. Club for seven to thirteen year olds which meets each Tuesday afternoon during the school term. This hour long Bible study and activity period is attended by forty-five boys and girls. Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission is providing leadership through the involvement of Bob and Joyce Gerhart and Lorri Nussbaum as part of the staff in this new and exciting children's work.

Emmanuel waiting for Scripture Union Club to begin


Bob Gerhart with puppets Jimmy and Jed at weekly children's meeting at the Maseru Prep School

LESOTHO

Lesotho, the home of many,
My home it seems to me,
I love it dearly,
And would like to live here forever.

Here my parents are missionaries,
In the U. S. they are people,
But as I said,
I like missionaries in Lesotho better.

I love Lesotho, it is my home,
Even though I was born somewhere else,
I'd rather live my life out here,
In my dear home, Lesotho.

—Barbara Sue Gerhart

Barbara, aged twelve, is a Class 7 student at Maseru English Medium Preparatory School. Her parents are Robert and Joyce Gerhart.

It's "Springing Forth"

Continued from page 6

These renewal groups are resulting in personal conviction of sin and conversion and they are becoming the spiritual dynamos of many congregations. In our own Mennonite community we have two such prayer fellowships in operation and I am participating in another at the local Catholic cathedral.

The results of these contacts have increased the flow of traffic to our veranda as people come to sit, talk, and seek counsel and prayer for their spiritual needs. Our job does not end when we leave our parish center, but continues through all hours of the day. We are thankful, for in all this we are seeing the Lord "do a new thing." Almost day by day we can "now see it spring forth."

Prayer Before the Sermon

at Maseru United Church
an international congregation
using the English medium in Lesotho

Here we are, Lord. Another Sunday morning and it's almost time to preach again.

About that sermon, Lord, there they are; and here it is — 2 Corinthians 5:16-21. Back there is Subba and his wife. They've been coming about five months now. How will the message sound to their ears trained in Hindu thought? What does their Indian context mean in terms of obstacles to Your reconciling the world unto yourself?

And this passage Paul wrote to the Corinthians, will it have meaning to that UN volunteer who is discouraged over the way his assignment isn't turning out any way near what he was promised? He's put in for a transfer, You know, Lord; please give him guidance and help him find a place to blend his Christian faith with his field work.

Lord, in a few minutes it'll be time to get into this message. Was the title, "Assignment from the King," really a good choice? This matter of being sent as ambassadors—help me to explain it, even to James, back there, assistant to the ambassador in his embassy here. You know, Lord, how hard a time James' Chinese ears have had with our English.

Over there is Margaret, probably with her home and family back in Rhodesia heavy on her heart. Will our words on the conditions for reconciling also be applicable to such a complex situation? And Lord, we do want peace for her country and her people, and how mixed up the world seems to be in understanding what's going on there and so many places! Give her encouragement today. I see, Lord, our new Uganda friends didn't get here today. I wonder if one of them is sick, or maybe the doctor was called in on an emergency at the city hospital. But they, too, are wondering about their families back home in their troubled land. Keep them trusting, and thanks for the encouragement they have brought to so many of the rest of us by their faith and testimony.

I'm glad Charles is back, Lord. You know the depths of his life that we haven't been able to get into yet. I guess the hurt and emptiness of losing two darling daughters in that accident is still there, though it doesn't seem possible that it's been three years already. Fill that hurting heart with Your comfort.

Alexander and his wife, how regular they are. And right now what a responsibility is his with all the exam results to untangle, not only for Lesotho, but for Botswana and Swaziland as well. Lord, You know, too, that the computer mix-up wasn't his fault, but strengthen him in his big job—and control, as well, in the voting taking place back in their home country of Ghana right now. With this cold Lesotho winter making an early appearance today, help Alex's wife to endure the cold again this year.

And Lord, those couples caught in the whole development rat race, with pressures to produce results that can be seen by their agencies—and the slowness of change—what a problem it must be. And then seeing funds wasted because it's not really money that helps, solves, or that's even needed so often! Give them wisdom to see and courage to witness to Your way of seeing things even in their so-called "secular" jobs.

. . . I'm going to have to go up into that pulpit now. The message is to be given. I sure hope those folks "back home" who said they would be praying really have been, because I'm surely going to need it! Here goes, Lord. It's going to have to be Your Spirit using Your Word—because I can't alone. . . *Bob Gerhart*

Eight nationalities are represented in this Sunday morning worship group at Maseru United Church, Lesotho.

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The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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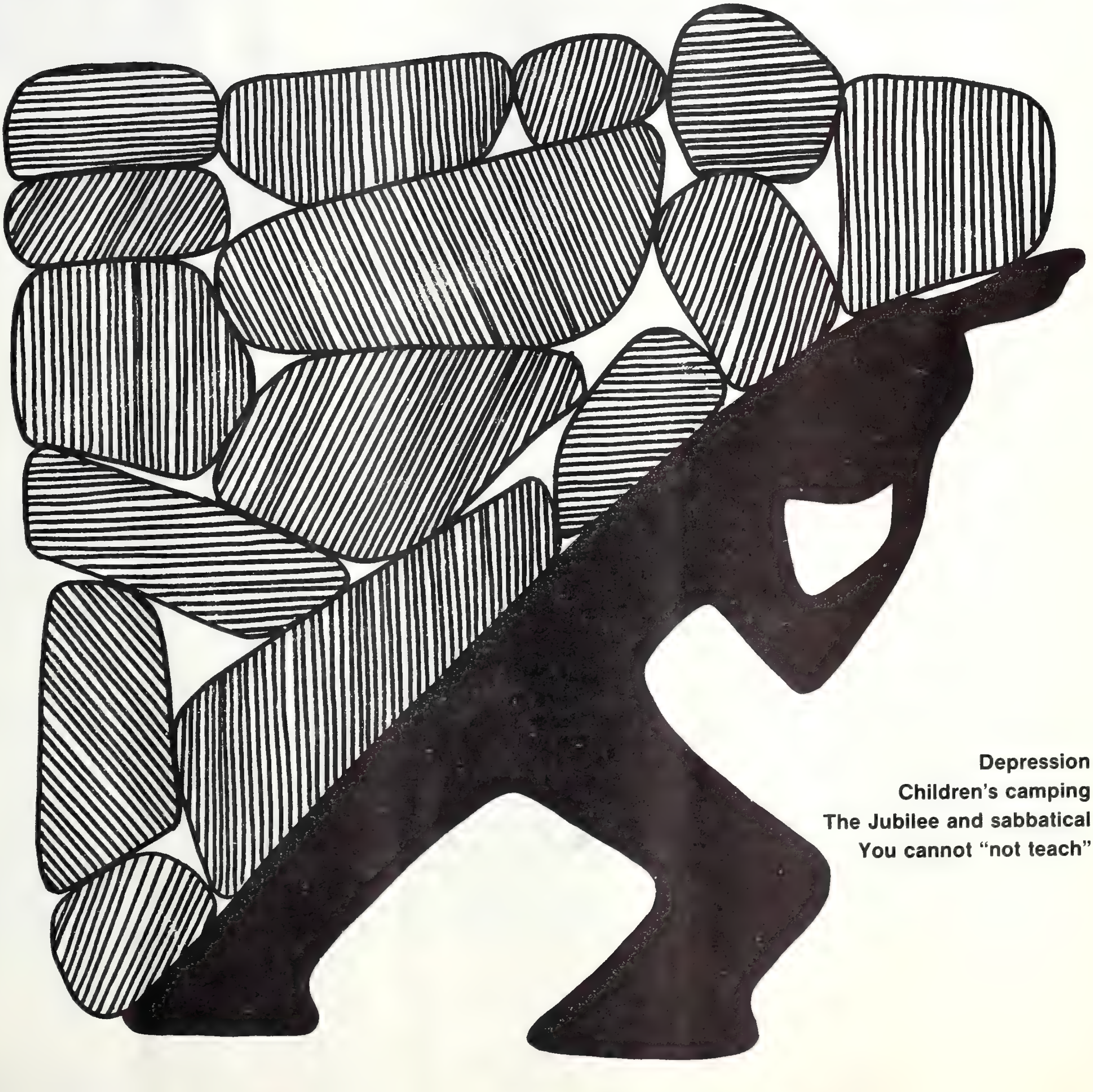


Depression
Children's camping
The Jubilee and sabbatical
You cannot "not teach"

DE-PRES-SION

Marie Snider, newsletter editor at Prairie View Mental Health Center, Newton, Kansas, interviewed Vernon Yoder, Prairie View medical director, about depression.

Snider: Many people complain about being depressed. What do people mean when they say they are depressed?

Yoder: Most people use the term *depressed* to describe a mood of feeling "down in the dumps" or experiencing a "blue spell." Such "depression" can last for minutes, hours, days, or even longer, and is a perfectly normal part of most everyone's experience.

Snider: Are you suggesting then that depression is normal?

Yoder: Depression as described above is normal. But the word depression is used in different ways and is easily misunderstood; for instance, it is even used to define economic conditions. Not all psychological depression is normal.

Snider: How do you differentiate between the various kinds of depression?

Yoder: Depression can be divided into two broad categories. I call them "depression with a little d," the kind that affects most of us, and "depression with a big D."

Snider: How do you recognize "depression with a big D"?

Yoder: "Depression with a big D" is indicated when people begin to develop physical symptoms that interfere with their functioning.

Snider: What kinds of physical symptoms does this most commonly include?

Yoder: With the depressive syndrome, everything slows down physiologically. This includes the thought processes, digestive tract, muscular activity, and energy level. As a result, it is common to experience loss of appetite with an accompanying weight loss. However, occasionally the opposite occurs; some people overeat. Sleep disturbances are also common. This may include insomnia or hypersomnia (wanting to sleep excessively). There's usually constipation, decreased interest in sex, general lethargy, and feelings of hopelessness. Other frequent symptoms of depression are inability to make decisions, low self-esteem, loss of interest in life, and inability to enjoy anything including the things that previously brought pleasure.

Snider: How long does such depression last?

Yoder: It may last weeks, months, or sometimes even years—the most typical is months. Generally speaking, depression is a self-limiting disorder and in most cases the victim who survives will eventually recover.

Snider: Does that mean then that treatment is unnecessary?

Yoder: No, for two reasons. In some cases the person may become suicidal. Second, treatment can be very effective in relieving the suffering, and one must never underestimate how much a severely depressed person is really hurting. Treatment can also speed up the recovery process.

Snider: What forms of treatment are most often used?

Yoder: Typically, treatment includes psychotherapy, planning a schedule of appropriate activities, and medication.

Snider: Could you explain a little more about psychotherapy?

Yoder: Talking about problems often helps. Families and friends usually care deeply and want to help but are often at a loss as to how to help. A therapist is trained to hear what is said and how it is said, and can often pick up cues that would be missed or not fully understood by family or friends. In the treatment of depression, psychotherapy is often more effective when combined with medication.

Snider: How is medication effective in relieving depression?

Yoder: There is evidence of chemical disturbance in the brains of depressed persons involving compounds such as adrenalin and others. This chemical disturbance returns to normal as the depression retreats and vice versa. Antidepressant medicines function to slowly correct the balance of chemicals in the brain and are effective in most cases. As the brain chemistry of patients is normalizing, they become more receptive to the benefits of psychotherapy. Through this process pa-

> “A period of depression can be an opportunity for persons to redefine themselves and to resolve long-standing destructive conflicts.” Vernon Yoder

tients can come to understand themselves and learn new ways of coping.

Snider: Is there anything the family can do to help the person who is being treated for depression?

Yoder: Dealing with depression in a family member is often very painful to the rest of the family. It demands a fine balance between tender loving care and firmness. It is helpful within reason to push the depressed person to stay on some sort of a schedule of daily activities, including constructive work. However, it would be unrealistic to expect a full day's work from a severely depressed person. It is also helpful for the family to take a look at its functioning.

Snider: Would you explain a little more about the importance of the family examining its functioning?

Yoder: Depression in one of the family members may be "blowing the whistle" on an unsatisfactory situation. Such an unsatisfactory situation is usually bad for everyone, and recognition of the situation can bring hope that change can occur. The whistle may get blown by some crisis such as quitting a job, attempting suicide, or asking for a divorce. Such a call for help can be a godsend both to the person involved and to the family.

It is often helpful for the whole family to be involved in therapy. On the other hand, it is important for the other family members not to engage in "kicking themselves" and feeling guilty. There are many potential causes for depression outside the family.

Snider: You mentioned that there are many potential causes of depression.

Yoder: "Depression with a big D" usually follows a loss. That loss may be real or imagined, obvious or invisible. It may be loss of a job, a spouse, or loss of a dream or hope. Most typically, the loss has occurred within the last year. Also, loss is usually associated with hurt which is naturally associated with anger. This may or may not be recognized by the person involved. All of this engenders guilt, a feeling of worthlessness and loss of purpose. Through no fault of their own, some people are genetically more vulnerable to depression and others are more resistant.

Snider: You've mentioned the possibility of suicide several times during this discussion. How should suicide threats be viewed?

Yoder: Any suicide threat should be taken seriously. Such threats may be written or verbal, or they may be in the form of actions; for instance, getting one's affairs in order, paying bills, etc. Suicide threats may be a plea for help. The person's therapist should be alerted to any threats. And at all times the severely depressed person should be encouraged to explore with family and therapist the possible values that can come from a period of depression.

Snider: Can you explain further what some of those values might be?

Yoder: It is possible for people who are severely depressed not only to get well but to become more well than they were before they ever became ill. A period of depression can be an opportunity for persons to redefine themselves and to resolve long-standing destructive conflicts. In fact, depression handled properly can be a golden opportunity for growth and change in both the depressed persons and their families.

Snider: Shouldn't Christians be able to trust in God enough to avoid being depressed?

Yoder: A lot of Christians come to this issue with the assumption that people who are "right with God" won't have serious emotional problems. It turns out that while that may be true in some ultimate sense, in a practical sense it's not true. My years of practice and seeing various devout missionaries and all kinds of saints suffering from severe depression are convincing evidence of this.

Snider: If being a Christian doesn't necessarily keep a person from suffering depression, does a strong faith help in getting over it?

Yoder: There is no doubt that faith has been very useful to many people in their struggles with depression, and I personally always try to capitalize on a person's faith in treatment. However, we need to be cautious in telling a severely depressed person to have faith. The sad truth is that we may be telling them to do something that at that moment they can't do. We need to be careful not to be like Job's friends and come with all the answers, but rather to come with an understanding of their deep suffering.

Snider: How can the church then be helpful to one of its members who is severely depressed?

Yoder: The church can function much like the family by offering caring support. It is important not to do everything for such persons, but also to expect something from them.

Snider: You say that a Christian faith can often be helpful in overcoming depression. Would you explain a little more about that?

Yoder: One thing that healthy religion should do is not only create guilt but provide a way to deal with it. Christianity does that. A depressed person can be led to an assessment of how much guilt is realistic and to drop unrealistic guilt; in other words, to allow the conscience to grow up. A person can then be led to experience forgiveness.

Snider: Would you say then that depression can also be a golden opportunity for Christians to experience new growth and self-understanding?

Yoder: Yes, I certainly would. A period of severe depression can be an excellent opportunity for Christians to test their faith and use it more effectively, and to learn to manage their emotions in a better way. Depression handled properly can not only strengthen the person but can provide an opportunity for growth for an involved and understanding congregation.

Children's camps and congregations

The camper arrives at camp. For weeks, friends and parents have been telling about the fun, the spiritual adventure, the making of new friends, and the learning of exciting skills.

But reality hits as the camper steps out of the car. A new camp, new people . . . a scared camper.

"What if I don't have fun?"

"Will the other campers be friendly?"

"What if everyone is better than me?"

Excited, happy, and scared—the camper wants to have fun, make new friends, learn new things, and participate in the activities. A counselor is introduced and offers a helping hand to carry the suitcase and sleeping bag. Off they go to the cabin. Parents say good-bye and turn away. The car leaves and now the camper is on his own. So begins the life of a child in camp.

The days will pass. Hopefully the camper will feel the joy of achievement in many activities; the camper will experience that warm feeling of being a part of a group in a singing session, a roundup, a Bible study, around a campfire, cleaning the cabin, cooking over an open fire, and the development of skills. The camper may go through the unhappiness of getting into a fight or feeling unwanted by the group, and he or she may sense the deep down satisfaction of being recognized as an individual while learning to become more understanding of the differences of others.

Then will come the realization that camp will soon be over, parents or friends will soon come to take the camper home again. And because camping has been so happy, because many friends have been made, and because the camper has improved in the activities, there is a sense in which one person has seemed primarily responsible, one person who has helped above all others, guided, reassured, corrected, and respected—the counselor.

In a special way, the camper tries to say

Terry Burkhalter

thank-you. The counselor says good-bye to all the campers. The camper climbs into the car, the engine starts, the door closes, and the camp has come to an end, at least for another year. As he or she waves good-bye, the eyes meet those of the counselor, just as their hearts and minds have met. Tears well up, and the counselor, overcome by emotion, now knows why being a camp counselor—a servant—can be one of the warmest, most human, most spiritual and valuable experiences of life.

One cannot say enough or overstress the importance of a sensitive, relational, committed, humorous, imaginative, reliable, confident, enthusiastic, patient, and fair counselor. The church, parents, and camp program people expect these high and valuable characteristics of each and every camp staff person. It's at this point that we need to verbalize the importance of the camping ministry as an extension of congregational life.

When we talk about church camping, we usually have children in mind. Young staff are expected to deliver fun-filled, spiritually meaningful, and well-respected experiences for each and every camper. Very few persons ask or think about what the camping ministry does for the young staffer or how camp work relates to what is experienced in the Sunday school class or at church. What are the differences?

Sunday school meets weekly for forty-five minutes. For the eight- to fourteen-year-olds, the setting is usually quite formal. Teacher-student roles are normally quite clear. Continuity and reinforcement of material from week to week is often less than desirable. Excitement for learning must be creatively motivated by the teacher. Book-oriented learning usually far outweighs activity- and experience-oriented learning.

The camp setting provides an opportunity to go far beyond the above observations; but before we get too critical, we must remind ourselves that Sunday school continues to be at the core of our Christian educational experiences for children. The camp setting may get the credit for marrying experience and learning to the point where the child remembers much of what happens at camp and the Sunday school experience may seem to fall by the wayside.

Camps have opportunities to model good teaching methods outdoors, in small groups, in the stewardship of God's resources, where emphasis is placed on the development of meaningful relationships between campers and counselor-staff on a twenty-four-hour-per-day basis.

Sunday schools need to pick up on the privilege of integrating the importance of discipleship, fellowship, faith, and experience into daily living. The one week at camp provides a context for meaning and living, and Sunday school sharpens the tools in the ongoing and growing importance of the meaning of discipleship. The worst sin we can commit is to bore children by the way that we try to educate and teach in churches and at camps. In the camp and Sunday school settings, the potential is ours to complement each to the other, and to recognize the importance of each as a ministry that touches the needs of a more complete person—physically, socially, mentally, and spiritually.

The goals for Christian camping are identical with those of the church—to fulfill God's purpose in people. While we talk about evangelism and Christian education as separate concepts, they are in reality two inseparable aspects of God's plan. Winning persons is not enough, if by "winning" we settle for a momentary decision. Saving faith always leads to action, a lifelong search for the high purpose to which Christ calls persons. Our aims for the campers and Sunday school pupils include the challenge to excellence in all of life as befits persons who belong to God.

Camp staffs, like Sunday school teachers, must strive for excellence as well as lead toward excellence through example—our faith, our vocation, our service, our leadership.

One cannot say enough about the importance of a sensitive, relational, committed, humorous, imaginative, reliable, patient, confident and fair counselor.

Reality hits as the new camper walks away from parents. A new camp, new people . . . a scared camper.

THE MENNONITE seeks to witness, teach, motivate, and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published weekly except biweekly during July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton, Kansas 67114, by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Second-class postage paid at Newton Kansas 67114, and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions in United States and Canada, $9 00 one year, $17 00 two years, $24 00 three years, foreign: $9.50 per year. Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard Winnipeg, Canada R3P OM4. Business office: 722 Main Street, Box 347 Newton, Kansas 67114. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114

News

Prophets and managers listen to each other

"We have to decide where we say, 'This is as far as I go.' "—David Schroeder

Five themes—the nuclear menace, taxes for military purposes, the lessons of biblical and Anabaptist history, faithfulness, and effective witness—dominated the consultation on civil responsibility in Elkhart, Indiana, June 1-4.

In its sharpest focus the issue was how Mennonite institutions should respond to those employees who request that the military portion of their income taxes not be withheld by the employer.

Several Mennonite organizations are facing the issue. The General Conference is seeking the will of its 60,000 members in answering such a request from one of its employees, Cornelia Lehn. The consultation in Elkhart was one part of the discerning process leading to a delegate assembly, and a decision in February 1979.

Bible scholars, theologians, pastors, administrators, attorneys—twenty-nine persons in all—presented papers, exchanged insights, and probed the issue. Much of their analysis will be incorporated into a study guide to be published by September.

There was general agreement that militarism and the nuclear arms buildup are a massive threat to human existence. "We are in pre-Holocaust days," asserted John Stoner, director of Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section.

How does one change the direction of society? How does one influence government policy so that it is prohuman? Some individuals claim that the witness of taxes withheld from the military could do much to change American priorities.

Is civil disobedience biblical?

Is there a biblical case for civil disobedience? Seminary professor and Old Testament scholar Millard Lind said the question was wrong. He declared the question assumes that the government provides the norm for the person of faith, and asks whether there may be a religious basis for sometimes disobeying it.

On the contrary, he counseled, the biblical accounts emphasize the absolute sovereignty of the God of Israel. Biblical thought challenges the sovereignty of the civil authorities, calling it rebellion. Not only individuals, but above all, the state, with its self-interest and empire building, are against the rule and order of Yahweh.

Is civil disobedience called for in the specific instance of taxes spent for military purposes? Two papers were presented on this question, one by David Schroeder of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba, and the second by Kenneth Bauman, pastor of First Mennonite Church in Berne, Indiana.

"It is clear," said Schroeder, "that the New Testament speaks for civil disobedience, but it is difficult to determine the form." Interpreting the will of God must be done in the community of believers. The Scripture must not only be searched to know the will of God, but also to bind ourselves to doing it.

He observed that the issue of taxes for military purposes is often seen in isolation from other options. He counseled that the church needs to look at all avenues which would lead to peace, and then choose those options which would be effective at the individual and corporate levels.

A noticeable reaction of surprise was evident after Schroeder indicated that as a Canadian member of the General Conference he would abstain from voting at the mid-triennium conference in February.

"Those (Americans) who must take the consequences of tax withholding must take the responsibility," he opined. When questioned on this Schroeder said he held the position because he would not, as a Canadian national, be able to effectively support an American practicing tax resistance. Later in the conference, however, he appeared to modify his position.

Bauman's paper was a careful overview of the tax situation in the time of Christ, of Jesus' stance relative to the authorities, and of Anabaptist practice.

He indicated that Jesus' political stance was not with the ecclesiastical nor with the social establishment. Nor did Jesus identify himself as a radical social revolutionary. Rather, Christ was a representative of the kingdom of God with a prophetic call to repentance, faith, and righteous living which transforms society through the transformation of the individual.

"It is amazing," he reflected, "to see the early church and the Apostles show such respect and subordination to a political system that crucified their Lord and killed their leaders."

When asked at what point he would practice civil disobedience, Bauman said, "For me it would be more than taxation; it would be when government becomes an object of worship."

Mennonite practice he noted has been to pay taxes. Only the Hutterites have a consistent pattern of resisting taxes.

Kings and prophets

In a humorous manner, J. Lawrence Burkholder, president of Goshen College, illuminated the tension between individual conscience and management responsibility.

"The Bible is stacked against managers," he remarked. The managers (kings) were always getting critiques from the prophets. Burkholder confessed that before becoming a college president (a "king") he had often been prophetic in his utterances.

But now as a manager he values continuity, order, and making life possible. Decisions often have ambiguity built into them. Further, although individuals are free to order their lives as they wish, a corporation incarnates the many wills of its supporters into a limited function. Is it right to expect a corporation to respond in the same way as an individual?

Burkholder did conclude though that a corporation must be willing to die for the sake of principle. For a Mennonite school he suggested such a case would be required ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps).

In his paper on the same topic, William Keeney of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, warned that biblical and Anabaptist history illustrate that the voice of the majority is not necessarily the voice of God. He also noted that for many people there is a double ethical standard, one for the Christian, and one for the state. Keeney said Christians should have a bias in favor of loyalty to the prophets, and to the way of the cross and costly discipleship. From this he concluded that corporate action needs to respect the individual conscience.

In his response to the above papers, Peter Ediger, pastor of the Arvada (Colorado) Mennonite Church, cried out, "I would hope that management could be prophetic. Can leadership in institutions not give evidence of faithfulness to God? Why do we see this question (tax withholding) as a threat to our institutions? We need more faith in the powers of resurrection. Do we foster fear or faith? Spread the rumor that the Lord is going to do wonderful things."

The attorneys present provided a legal framework, as distinct from a biblical rationale, for approaching the issue of not withholding taxes used for military purposes. The General Conference could, if it wished, simply stop remitting taxes and wait for the government to take action.

A long process of litigation might ensue in which the church could argue that using the corporate body to collect taxes violates the conscience of tax objectors, and also violates the principle of separation of church and state because the church is held hostage by the state, under penalty of fines or imprisonment of its officers. The attorneys also observed that the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) could decide to avoid litigation and its attendant publicity, and simply go to the individual to collect.

In essence the attorneys said there were ways of working on the issue through legal, legislative, and administrative channels.

Findings

A findings committee—Palmer Becker, Hugo Jantz, Elmer Neufeld, John Stoner, Larry Kehler—drafted a statement. After hours of discussion and subsequent changes the persons at the consultation agreed that the statement fairly represented their thinking. Some excerpts:

—"Our Christian obedience has to find new and creative responses to the proliferation of military weaponry and technology . . .

—"Christians respect the governing authorities . . . which leads to a broad range of activities in support of the public good. Nevertheless, at times our call of prior obedience to God's sovereignty leads us to disobey the claims of the state . . .

—"We . . . have differing convictions about refusing to pay taxes for the military.

—"Let us be open to the possibility that the Spirit of God may lead some of us in a direction that is both prophetic and full of risks.

—"We agree that a way should be sought which will facilitate the expression of the convictions of conference employees who request that their taxes not be withheld.

—"We need to seek the counsel of and work with other Mennnonite groups and denominations, particularly the historic peace churches, in developing the most appropriate response to this issue." *Vic Reimer*

Seminaries counseled to work at unfinished business

Elkhart, Indiana—The Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries called a consultation on May 26 to review twenty years of cooperation between Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Goshen Biblical Seminary and to begin the self-study process required for an accreditation review.

About thirty persons joined with the faculty in daylong consideration of the seminaries' place in the life of two Mennonite denominations. In addition to board members and denominational executives, there were a number of district conference leaders present. Focus of the consultation was a review of twenty years of cooperation prepared by retiring MBS president Erland Waltner.

Waltner noted five areas of unfinished business in the development of seminary education through this association. These involve: (1) integrating Bible and theology with pastoral work and Christian living; (2) deciding on models of pastoral and church life; (3) maintaining relationships between associated seminaries and unassociated supporting groups; (4) maintaining adequate financial support; (5) deciding on priorities for the seminary program.

A first group of four respondents commented on Waltner's review and found it generally satisfying. None of them questioned the idea of association. Instead they: (1) dreamed of a higher level of partnership (Heinz Janzen); (2) asked for help in developing better relations between pastors and congregations (John Neufeldt); (3) raised the issue of training for leaders of minority churches (Ivan Kauffmann); (4) called for a common Mennonite identity throughout North America (R. Yordy).

A second group responded to "Theological Education in the Free Church Tradition," a statement of philosophy appearing in the seminaries' catalog.

Ralph Lebold from London, Ontario, observed that AMBS graduates are seen as having a good knowledge of the Bible, theology, and the historical heritage, but not as strong in functional skills, and weak in evangelism, which he acknowledged is a denominational problem.

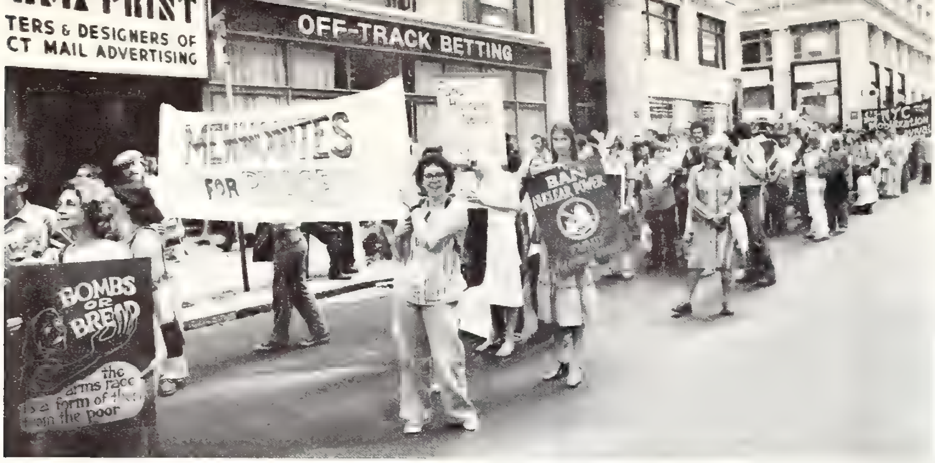
Some comments and partially focused questions that floated around at the end of the meeting were such as these.

Do the seminaries prepare students for churches that do not exist? Graduate Erick Sawatsky raised this point when he reported that he had received a house-church, anti-institutional model of church life in seminary. Then his first assignment was a 100-year-old congregation with 300 members.

Is pastoral work the only calling for which the seminaries should be preparing students? Missionary service and scholarly work were little mentioned in the consultation. Are these low priorities in the church or was this simply because the group represented in this consultation had strong pastoral interests?

Are the seminaries too comfortable in their relationships with the churches? Several speakers reported good acceptance of AMBS in their constituencies, but some wondered whether the seminaries should not be creating some controversy by taking leadership in areas not adequately explored.

Are the questions we are asking too large and sweeping? Waldemar Janzen pressed this right at the end when he said that better measures than were being used would be questions such as these: Do the students learn well about Colossians, Galatians, and Romans? Do they know who Constantine was? Can they give a sermon in good English? *Daniel Hertzler*



Any off-track bets on winning peace?

New York—Following the banner "Mennonites For Peace," persons from as far away as California and Saskatchewan found fellow church members and joined the walk through Times Square to the United Nations on May 27. The Mennonite group of about eighty was one small segment of the estimated ten to fifteen thousand gathered at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza to rally for disarmament. Months of careful planning by the grass-roots organization Mobilization for Survival culminated in the rally of speeches and songs, and a petition to President Carter which was presented to Andrew Young at the US Mission to the UN. Volunteer service worker Steve Goossen, formerly of Reedley, California, said he was there to be a witness not only to the world but also to the church. Charlie Lord of Akron, Pennsylvania, commented, "It was good for Mennonites to be visible. If moving out into the streets is not appropriate, then we must find other modes of communicating our discomfort with the escalating arms race." Prior to the march an interreligious worship service highlighted the theme, "Therefore choose life so that you and your children will live . . . ."

Vancouver churches initiate new congregation

Richmond, British Columbia—A new General Conference church is being planned for this community.

A committee representing four churches in the greater Vancouver area has developed a plan in which the current Prince of Peace Mennonite Church in Richmond would be sold and a new congregation formed. The new group would draw its membership from people who live in Richmond, but who currently attend other General Conference churches.

The idea for a new church arose from discussions among church leaders on how the Vancouver congregations—First United, Mountainview, and Sherbrooke—could help each other. A joint committee was struck which included representatives of the Prince of Peace Church.

Each of the congregations has members living in Richmond but the concentration has not been near the Prince of Peace Church. It is felt a different location would better serve the Mennonite community in Richmond.

A church of 400 seating capacity is planned.

Serve the oppressed and end oppression—Epp

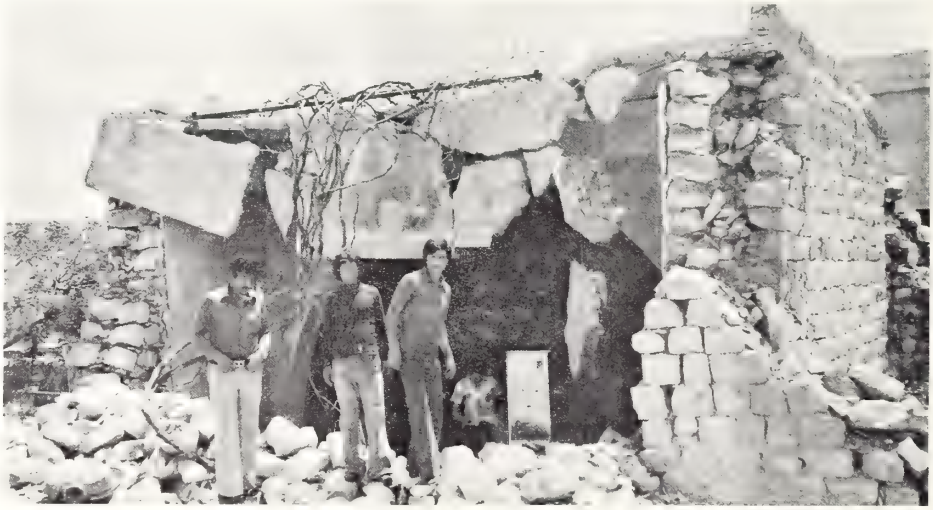
Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee Offender Ministries Reference Council met May 8-9 in Denver, Colorado, to evaluate their two-year history and to consider future assignments.

Edgar Epp reviewed his activities as consultant to the council and reported that the two years have been a time for testing the constituency's wants and needs and for discovering its resources.

Epp noted a primary need for information about the criminal justice process and explained, "While this relative lack of information is not peculiar to the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ constituencies, our historic position on separation of church and state has caused us at times to avoid deliberately any direct contact with criminal justice."

Sufficient interest and concern exist for programs of ministering to offenders, Epp observed, but what is not yet evident is a concern with larger issues of justice. "We are more ready to serve the oppressed than we are to end the oppression," he added. "The scriptural call to live out our faith is surely a call to both."

The council agreed that Epp's assignment for the coming year will focus on advising and supporting the contact person network.



MCC begins projects in south Lebanon

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—Villagers (above) survey damage done by Israeli bombing during the March invasion of south Lebanon. MCC representative Ralph Miller reports some villages destroyed, although others sustained partial damage. The United Nations has said 2,500 homes were destroyed and 5,200 damaged. An estimated 200,000 persons fled the invasion, including 60,000 Palestinian refugees. Lebanese officials estimate that 50,000 of these persons have now returned to the UN zone, the territory between the present Israeli line and the Litani River, which was the most northern point of the Israeli advance. Agriculture in the area has been adversely affected because farmers had to flee their land at precisely the wrong time—the planting season. Further, farmers are now afraid to go into their fields because the Israelis dropped anti-personnel cluster bombs in the area. Fist-sized, they detonate when stepped on. MCC projects will focus on helping farmers get land back into production by providing tools, seedlings, fertilizer, and insecticides.

Harvesttime in Kansas . . .

is a time of celebration
just like it is in Koyom, Chad,
or any other place around the globe
where farm families till the soil.
In Kansas the golden wheat ripples
as far as the eye can see
and impressive combines cut wide swaths.

The Chadian field is small,
and the rice is threshed by hand.
The joy at a good harvest
becomes very special in poor countries
because the tiny fields
are so often plagued
by drought, floods, insects, fungus.

Designate your CROP contribution to MCC to support agriculture programs that give poor farmers something to celebrate at harvesttime.

Mennonite Central Committee
21 South 12th Street
Akron, PA 17501

Mennonite Central Committee (Canada)
201-1483 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, Man. R3T 2C8

Words & deeds

"Deepening Our Missionary Perspectives" is the theme for a seven-day seminar, June 21-27, sponsored by the Commission on Overseas Mission for missionaries under appointment, and those who are on North American assignment. About forty persons will participate. To be held at Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas, the seminar will feature Bible studies and discussions on topics related to theology, witness, economics, politics, and communication.

The United Presbyterian Church in the USA has come out against the ordination of homosexuals. Meeting in San Diego, California, the annual assembly overwhelmingly agreed that "unrepentant homosexual practice does not accord with the requirements for ordination." The vote went against the majority recommendation of a task force which came out squarely in favor of the ordination of homosexuals. The assembly did, however, accept a document drafted during the convention. It denies homosexuals outright ordination but does ask committees examining candidates for the ministry to abstain from making "specific inquiry into the sexual orientation or practice of candidates." With regard to the civil rights of homosexuals the assembly declared: "There is no legal, social, or moral justification for denying homosexual persons access to the basic requirements of human social existence."

Manitoba Women in Mission, 600 strong, met May 6 in Winkler for their thirty-sixth annual conference. Guest speaker was Lois Deckert, North Newton, Kansas, who gave a presentation on the conference theme taken from Micah 6:8—"He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and walk humbly with your God." Deckert also reported on the All India Mennonite Women's Conference which she attended last November. The organization decided to continue support for missionaries Ed and Linda Enns in Colombia. Five women from the Mandarin Chinese Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, the newest General Conference congregation in that city, attended the gathering.

N'Djamena, Chad—MCC workers have withdrawn from Biltine in east central Chad and will be reassigned to a new project in the southern part of the country building wells for dispensaries. Increasing military activity against the Chadian Government by the National Front for the Liberation of Chad has made the northern and some central sections of the country unsafe. The conflict is long-standing and stems from an ethnic division in Chad. The north is populated by Muslim Arabs, whereas the south is populated by blacks of the Bantu tribe. Because the south was more receptive to western penetration, southerners tend to be better educated and thus control the country's government. The rebels are aided by Libya, Chad's neighbor to the north.

Communications net being formed—Mennonite Disaster Service representatives met May 20 in Maryland to plan an MDS communications net 3907KHZ for Region I (East Coast). Richard Weaver (above), pastor of Broad Street Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, Virginia, avid radio hobbyist and national communications coordinator for MDS, is helping to establish the network. The network of ham radio and CB operators will provide a communication system for times of emergency. Each MDS region has a coordinator. They are Russel Mumaw, K3NLT of Hatfield, Pennsylvania, for Region I; Jake Swartzendruber, K9WJU of Goshen, Indiana, for Region II; and Maurice Smith, WBOKK of Letour, Missouri, for Region III. Coordinators for Regions IV (West Coast) and V (Canada) have yet to be appointed. More operators are needed. Persons interested in making this kind of contribution to MDS should contact Richard Weaver, W4JZC, 1088 College Avenue, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801.

Record

Published

The English translation of the history of the Mennonites in Russia (and particularly the story of the Mennonite Brethren in that country) by Peter Martin Friesen is being printed for the Board of Christian Literature of the MB General Conference by the Christian Press in Winnipeg. Titled *The Mennonite Brotherhood in Russia (1789-1910),* the 1,100-page book is seen as a companion volume to J. A. Toews's *History of the Mennonite Brethren Church* published in 1975. The Friesen history will be available through General Conference bookstores.

The Struggle for Humanity, Agents of Nonviolent Change in a Violent World by Marjorie Hope and James Young, (Orbis Books, 305 pages, hardback, $8.95, paper, $4.95), gives an overview of the role of nonviolence in today's world. Seven people are profiled: Lanza del Vasto, of Shantidas, founder of the worldwide Ark communities in France; Danilo Dolci in Sicily; Dom Helder Camara in Brazil; Kenneth Kaunda in Zambia; Cesar Chavez in the United States; and Thich Nhat Hanh and Caog Ngoc Phuong in Asia. Thumbnail sketches are also provided of the movements represented by each of these leaders.

A study guide on the arms race and nuclear proliferation has been compiled by the staff of *Sojourners* magazine. The guide consists of four booklets totaling sixty-eight pages. One of the booklets deals with the relationship between the church and the arms race; another offers suggestions for groups interested in resisting nuclear energy and armaments. Some of the authors are Sidney Lens, Richard Barnet, and Robert Aldridge on the arms race, and Helen Caldicott, Jim Cubie, and Wes Michaelson on nuclear energy. The cost of the packet is $1.50 each for fewer than ten copies. In multiples of ten the cost is $1.25 each, and in mulitples of 100, $1.00 each. Checks should be made out to Sojourners. Send orders to Nuclear Packets, Sojourners Magazine, 1029 Vermont Avenue Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Ministers

John Lenshyn will assume the pastorate of the North Battleford (Saskatchewan) Church beginning August 1. He is a senior student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, and is a member of Morningside-Danforth Mennonite Church of Toronto.

Allen White, a licensed lay minister in the Mennonite Church from Peabody, Kansas, is serving the First Church, Burns, Kansas, on an interim basis.

Workers

Three staff members of the Commission on Home Ministries have resigned their positions effective during the summer of 1979. *Palmer Becker*, executive secretary of CHM, stated in his letter of resignation, "I feel prompted to put my words and concepts of the church into greater practice in a local congregational setting." Becker began his work with the Commission on Home Ministries in July 1969. For the first seven years he also took responsibility for the congregational mission and evangelism portfolio. *Harold Regier*, secretary for peace and social concerns for CHM, began serving the General Conference from its central offices in Newton, Kansas, in June 1971. Except for this past year when he was half-time cosecretary for peace and social concerns, he has worked full-time in the position. His plans are indefinite. *Diane Umble*, who is director of Faith and Life Radio and Television, has resigned effective May 1979, at which time she will have completed 3½ years of service. She intends to do graduate work in mass communications.

Five Bluffton (Ohio) College faculty members have been granted sabbaticals during the 1978-79 school year. They are *Jaye Bumbaugh* (printmaking), *Ronald Friesen* (management and resource economics), *Delbert Gratz* (research in European libraries and archives), *Richard Pannabecker* (human physiology), and *Robert Suter* (computer science and earth science).

Four persons, each teaching in his or her speciality area, will be part of the art faculty at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, for the 1978-79 school year. *Marilyn Grisham*, El Dorado, Kansas, will be teaching crafts. She operates the Grisham Weaving Studio in El Dorado. *Reinhild Janzen*, Lawrence, Kansas, will teach art history and visual arts. She is a candidate for the PhD degree in art history from the University of Kansas. *Paul Friesen*, Hesston, Kansas, has resigned from the Hesston (Kansas) College art faculty to teach ceramics and sculpture at Bethel on a half-time basis. He holds an MA degree from Fort Hays (Kansas) University. *Robert W. Regier*, North Newton, who previously taught half-time at Hesston College under an exchange arrangement, will be teaching full-time at Bethel in the areas of design, drawing, painting, and printmaking. He is chairman of Bethel's art department and holds an MA degree from the University of Illinois.

Henry and Naomi Unrau, Olivet Church, Clearbrook, British Columbia, will leave in July for a three-year term as General Conference missionaries in Botswana, southern Africa. Henry, who recently graduated from Goshen (Indiana) College with a degree in communications, will become religious program director for government-owned Radio Botswana. Henry has served as the assistant pastor and youth director of First United Mennonite Church in Vancouver, British Columbia. Their daughter, Bethany Ann, was born in 1976. Their commissioning service will be July 16 at the Olivet Church.

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CBi

God is helping me grow

Floyd Bartel

After graduation from seminary in 1956, Pearl and I accepted the call of the Western District to Topeka, Kansas, to help organize a new congregation. A group of about eighty young people had come to Topeka because of 1-W service. Some were settling there and wanted to be a part of a Mennonite church.

Ours would be the first inter-Mennonite congregation in the country, we thought. We would locate in an unchurched area and reach out to our community. After one year we held a charter service.

But things didn't go well; dissatisfaction grew. After two years, the Mennonite Brethren organized a church of their own. A number of our General Conference families moved away. Our group of eighty had "grown" to fifteen. And one year after our charter service there was one person left from our original church council—me.

This was devastating. I was unprepared to cope with this crumbling of my world.

The home missions committee encouraged us to stay as long as there were those interested in meeting. I started teaching in the public school. We moved to our home for Sunday services. During this low time I picked up the book *The Meaning of Christ*. The author explains that when Christ died on the cross it meant God had already forgiven us, and he did that because he loved us unconditionally.

It hit me like a breath of fresh air. Unconditionally? In my inner struggle with failure and despair, I couldn't put it out of my mind. It slowly became clear to me that the only thing I could do was to accept God's acceptance of me. That sounds easy, but it was one of the hardest things to do.

The continuing caring love that I received from others helped. Experiences in clinical training forced me to look at myself more honestly, but it was that message of God's prior love which fascinated me.

I remember one Friday night in particular. Pearl was at work at the hospital. The children were asleep. I was trying to prepare for Sunday. But I was in inner turmoil. Finally, out of my desperation, I cried out to God for help, with the realization that I needed his forgiveness and love more than anything else.

That became a turning point in my life. I remember that to my surprise I felt different. What was it? I knew the meaning of grace in a way I had not grasped before. I began to see the almost unconscious assumptions by which I had been living—namely, that the way you make it is by working hard and doing all the right things.

How does one develop such assumptions? I believe it happened very naturally. Having grown up as the oldest of four brothers in a Kansas Mennonite farm family, I learned early the virtues of hard work and right living. I took pride in doing my chores without being told.

My family never missed church. Our church was like a big family to me, where I experienced affirmation and acceptance.

My baptism at age thirteen was a solemn occasion. I was making a lifelong vow to follow Jesus 100 percent. But the meaning of salvation, by grace, did not become real to me until I was brought to the end of my ability and I could admit how far I fell short.

God continues patiently working in my life to reorient me and put my soul together in a new way. I don't reorient easily. I still at times resist what he is trying to teach me. I need to hear the gospel again and again. And I am amazed at the far-flung implications of its simple truths.

After my new discovery, I did not refer directly to it, because I was not accustomed to sharing in personal ways. But it began to affect my sermons. We continued to meet in the parsonage for over three years. The Lord sent new people, and the last Sunday we met there, we were using every room except the bathroom for Sunday school. The home missions committee helped us locate a site and many volunteers from our Kansas churches helped to erect a building.

My experience has helped me to see that the Sermon on the Mount, which I had early adopted as my "code for living," was the most evangelistic sermon ever preached. Jesus said, "Except your righteousness *exceed* the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom." To take the Sermon on the Mount seriously, as I according to my Mennonite upbringing had tried to do, brought me to the realization that I could not enter the kingdom by the righteousness of my own achievements. I could enter it only by the righteousness that comes by faith in Jesus Christ himself, as Paul declares in Philippians 3. I now know something of the experience Paul described. While Paul had become a super Jew, I had tried to be a super Mennonite before I grasped the meaning of the gospel.

God helped me to see that all the gain I had—from my upbringing, my education, my Mennonite heritage—all of that paled before the wonder of God's grace toward me in Jesus Christ. To this day one of the things that helps me through difficult times is remembering that.

In 1965 we moved to Pennsylvania. The Vietnam War was escalating and the civil rights movement was very active. I remember weeping openly while watching the funeral of Martin Luther King. In my preaching I found myself naming the sins of war, of bigotry, of self-righteousness, and hypocrisy. Our congregation became involved locally with issues like racial injustice and housing for the poor. We struggled with the challenges of the youth counterculture.

But out of that ferment, some new things began to happen. Several of our youth came to a new relationship with Christ in the midst of the Jesus movement and brought new inspiration and leadership to our church youth fellowship.

I had a peer group with whom I could share most deeply. Through these contacts I learned of John I. Smucker, whom we invited to lead us in a renewal series in the fall of 1972.

My own experience in that series was unexpected. One evening I joined a group who remained for prayer. I shared how I had tried to quiet my inner restlessness about our lack of evangelism.

The group listened and prayed for me. I cannot explain what happened that evening. I only know there was new joy and freedom in my own heart. There were new experiences of openness and reconciliation in several families in the weeks that followed. I personally experienced a new reconciliation with several fellow pastors in our district.

Six months later, Palmer Becker, who was visiting our district, asked a group of us whether anyone would like to attend a five-day Evangelism Explosion clinic. Back home the women of our church were already planning to be in charge of the morning service that weekend. So I volunteered. My church council encouraged me. That clinic turned out to be the best learning experience I had ever had for evangelism.

The Holy Spirit has been at work in my life from the beginning until now. I am especially grateful for those special times, a few of which I've shared in this story, when he has made me aware of my need to repent and respond in fresh new ways to his work of regeneration and preparation. Those times have also involved pain, because I tend to resist before I repent and open myself for a new step.

Review

The Jubilee and sabbatical

A Socio-Theology of Letting Go: The Role of a First World Church Facing Third World Peoples *by Marie Augusta Neal (Paulist Press, New York, 1977) is reviewed by Carolyn Cox, member of the Arvada (Colorado) Mennonite Church.*

Question: When the poor reach out to take what is rightfully theirs, what does the gospel direct the nonpoor to do? Answer: Relinquish.

As a "theology of relinquishment" for the nonpoor or nonoppressed—a natural companion to the "theology of liberation" developed by and for the oppressed peoples of the Third World—this is a book which should be in Mennonite churches and personal libraries.

Luther's transplantation of the salvation-ethics of thrift and industrious labor from the monastery to the marketplace resulted, unintentionally, in securing the economic interests of a great many pious Protestants. So, too, the quiet living out of the Anabaptist vision over 4½ centuries has spawned the equally unintended consequence of wealth and respectability among Mennonites.

What has happened, Neal states, "is that, as in the case of the Mennonites, what was protest in one era becomes the custom of a new era and the sect once scorned and ridiculed comes to be imaged in the law of the land and its rule of life." In this regard, *A Socio-Theology of Letting Go* pursues the "Where do we go from here?" question posed indirectly by James C. Juhnke's documentation of Mennonite political and social acculturation in the United States (*A People of Two Kingdoms.* Faith and Life Press).

We as a nation are richer than two-thirds of the world's population. Our high standard of living is dependent upon the substandard living of most other members of our global community. The maintenance of justice which protects *our* property and persons, is achieved at the expense of justice for all. Jesus Christ, however, calls us clearly to stand with the "little ones," the "least of these" our sisters and brethren. For us Mennonites, to whom reconciliation is a chosen way of life, how are these facts to be reconciled?

Two strands of Neal's approach to this conundrum are woven into a fabric of prophetic thought already familiar to Mennonites. She grapples with the thorny issue of civil religion and she revives the Old Testament custom of the Jubilee.

Although socially conscious Mennonite ears readily associate civil religion with the immoral linkage of God and the American flag, or with the intrinsic heresy of Presidential prayer breakfasts, our attitude of healthy suspicion is not yet sufficiently developed in its social-scientific understanding of the relation between religion and the other social systems which it functions to sustain or transform.

Neal takes us back to the Latin root of the word *religion. Re-ligare* means to "bind together again." She distinguishes, thus, between religion in the true sense, which binds *all* together—all four billion of us—and religion which is merely civil, binding together, celebrating, and preserving the civil rights only of the privileged.

To the extent that civil religion celebrates the well-being and welfare of the privileged and powerful few, in violation of the well-being of the disenfranchised many—as reflected in our discriminatory delivery of health care, our "correctional" system, our welfare programs, our legal practices, and our employment and job-training policies, to name but a few—it is no longer religious, but merely civil. When religion is thus supplanted by rationalization, it must be prophetically challenged in Christian worship and in Christian outreach.

To the extent that civil religion creates "sacred space" for the psychic release and renewal of oppressed peoples, and liberates psychic energy for the transformation of unjust social systems, as in African and Latin American liberation theology and US black religious movements of the last decade, it is, in the authentic sense of the word, religious, and is then to be affirmed and celebrated. Civil religion is, therefore, not a universal evil, but is evil only insofar as it consecrates and legitimates a style of life which cannot be universally actualized.

The implication for Mennonites is that our gratitude to the United States Government for its toleration of our once-unorthodox religious beliefs is now ill-founded, in that the justice now freely distributed to *us* does not extend to *all.* It is not so much *God's* sanctity about which we should be concerned in the promulgation of civilly religious practices and pronouncements, but the sanctity of *human life,* which is routinely desecrated in the avowal of national religious principles in which most of our international, and many of our US sisters and brothers have no share.

Giving helpful guides for discerning the times and advocating religious education which would enable church people to analyze, participate in public decision-making about, and engage in transformative action toward unjust social institutions, Neal suggests that our peace-making efforts, if truly prophetic, may appear to the powers-that-be as *disturbances* of the peace. To the oppressed, they will appear as the sympathetic sign of solidarity and the practical promise of a place in the kingdom taking shape on earth.

As a model for the social program which would facilitate the radical redistribution of wealth and power, Neal proposes—in conclusion, and all-too-briefly—an updated revival of the Jubilee. (See Leviticus 25:1-28.) This involves in addition to the return of property to its original owners after every forty-ninth year regardless of the circumstances of loss, a sabbatical every seventh year for every adult.

"The purpose of the year is to cease from customary activity . . . to review our lives and to decide whether we should continue in the same way of life for the next seven years. With a little imagination we can see that, given this sabbatical, rich and poor alike could have time for public service . . ."

Public welfare—literally, the "common wealth"—would be redirected from its present function of generally nonproductive living subsidization, to finance the more productive, more satisfying, and more universally participatory sabbatical year. With all adult citizens reducing their remunerative employment by one-seventh, the active work force could also be expanded over time, thus mitigating the current high rate of unemployment.

Utopian? Yes and no. Yes, if we take no steps to realize such a possibility; no, if we begin *now* in stages achievable within our churches and communities to experiment.

Perhaps we Mennonites, with our long-standing commitment to local and foreign missions and voluntary service, might be among the first to create workable models for the Jubilee and sabbatical years, supporting each other reciprocally in taking time off—a week, a month, a year—from the ordinarily unceasing cycle of income-generating work to engage in this kind of reflection, renewal, and service. At the very least, I would encourage a few "sabbatical evenings" for the study and discussion of this book in our congregations.

Letters

Pause before condemning

Dear Editor: Although I am not a Mennonite—nor even a professing Christian—I have been reading your magazine and enjoying fellowship with Christian pacifists since my days as a war resister in the 1960s.

But I must take exception to a sentence on page 261 (April 18 issue), "The synthesis of rock music, drugs, and the occult has created a culture of evil which enslaves thousands."

As an observer and sometimes participant in all three areas of modern culture, I feel that the author is condemning practices that have had a very edifying effect on the world that we live in.

That synthesis brought us Haight-Ashbury and the "flower children" in the early sixties, which in turn was a major influence on the secular antiwar movement. This was certainly an admirable alternative for those who were not in touch with historic peace churches and who were faced with the approach of unholy conscription.

And the "Concert for Bangladesh" which provided hundreds of dollars in relief aid, was organized by the major rock musicians and promoters. Dylan's "Night of the Hurricane" concert in Houston which lost tens of thousands of dollars in order to publicize (and eventually reverse) the injustice done to "Hurricane" Carter and through him perhaps other unfortunate victims of our "justice" system is another example.

The music itself provides a haven (or cover) for loosening the body and the soul—how akin the movements of rock dancing to the gyrations of the charismatics—and who could deny that the so-called lyrics, being often unintelligible, resemble speaking in tongues?

Drugs? Which drugs? In a society gone mad we are in need of many drugs. From aspirin to the hallucinogens, and for some people even the opiates. I for one have learned (during several years of therapy) to use marijuana and LSD to come closer to myself and my God as have many millions of people around the world. Where is the harm? Which drugs should be condemned? Who is to condemn?

Let he who is without stone cast the first sin—as we pacifists are wont to do, not having stones at hand.

The occult, that which is unknown. The charismatic movement, as I have seen it, does not differ in substance from the mysteries of the dervishes, or even the Druidic rites.

All mysticism deals with the occult—that which goes beyond ordinary human experience—whether it be speaking in tongues, prophecy, or any other gift which is a manifestation of, or invitation to a filling of the soul by a force greater than oneself. That which the Christian calls the Holy Spirit does not belong to the Christian alone, but is a real entity that exists independent of mere mortal existence and has been the basis of men's and women's searches for much more than 2,000 years.

I write this letter not as criticism, but rather as a critique. I applaud the Mennonite church and the millions of Mennonites around the world involved in living Christianity, leaders and teachers all.

But in all fairness to those readers of yours who are my friends—and the many others with whom I would like to be friends—I ask that you pause and reflect before condemning the actions of others.

We are all in this world together searching for our own manifestations of the Godhead—be we Christians, Jews, Moslems, Hindus, artists, or even rock musicians. *Bob Ross, 6258 Belmont, Dallas, Texas 75214*

May 4

Further on the Holy Spirit

Dear Editor: I wish to express my appreciation for the four articles (April 18 issue) regarding the present-day outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Hopefully these will correct some of the false impressions which certain anticharismatic people have been spreading.

I praise the Lord that in the last paragraph of Heinz Janzen's article he makes reference to the fact that the General Conference General Board executive committee recognizes the need and desire for spiritual renewal in the General Conference, and that they have asked the Commission on Home Ministries to be in dialogue with Mennonite Renewal Services and others as resources. I know the Lord is using MRS in a beautiful way, especially in the Mennonite Church (Old), where several estimates are that about 20 percent of the people in that conference have received the baptism with the Holy Spirit (in addition to the salvation experience), mostly in the last ten years.

Drawing on a part of the outline Dan Yutzy presented at Kansas City last year, he pointed out the difference between the baptism *by* the Holy Spirit (new birth), and the baptism *with* or *in* the Holy Spirit (Pentecost experience), showing that the agent, the object, the result, and the purpose of each are different:

Baptism *by* the Spirit (new birth)—agent: Holy Spirit; object: sinner; result: life; purpose: "That they might have life." (1 Corinthians 12:13a; John 3:1-21; John 10:10b; 1 John 5:12)

Baptism *with* the Spirit (Pentecostal experience)—agent: Jesus; object: saint (Christian); result: power; purpose: to be a witness of Jesus; to be enabled to do God's work. (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:32-34; Acts 1:4, 5; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; 8:14-17; 9:17-19; 10:44-46; 19:1-7)

As someone has pointed out, the two experiences *may* happen simultaneously (like Cornelius), but they are not the same thing. In most cases, however, the baptism *with* the Spirit comes after the new birth—sometimes many years later—and some, of course, never receive because they don't know that God has more than salvation available for his children.

Possibly churches or groups of churches could study the Scriptures on this subject, drawing on men like Yutzy, Nelson Litwiller, Roy Koch, Gerald Derstine, Vic Hildebrand, Fred Augsburger, and many others who are active leaders. I know the Lord would work in the General Conference in a greater way, as he is doing in the Mennonite Church. *Arnold Reimer, Route 4, Beatrice, Nebraska 68310* May 11

Adults and little children

Dear Editor: In the April 25 issue I read "Children of Broken Churches" by E. S. Ballard. I wish to thank Elizabeth for this very thoughtful and sensitive article. The tone of the article is such that one cannot help but *feel* the fears, insecurities, and bewilderment of children caught in such a dilemma. Yet God has been gracious in restoring such a one to "living in grace."

Such testimonies as this could encourage us as adults to become "as little children" and follow Christ more closely. "Have this mind in you also which is in Christ. . . ."

Thanks, and God bless you Elizabeth. *Clare Neufeld, Box 33, Mather, Manitoba ROK 1LO* May 11

About letters: To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Brevity is encouraged. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations. Editor

Meditation

You cannot "not teach"

The impact of a Christian family upon the world is powerful. It begins at home, where attitudes, decisions, and actions are consistently bared for each other to see. Preaching love and thousands of words mean nothing if the family does not see it in action.

One Saturday afternoon my husband and small son were peeling apples that we had picked the week before. I was making pies for the freezer and as I placed the top crust on the filling I made a special design around the edge. "Where did you learn that, Mom?" my son asked. "From my mother," I replied.

To mind came also the countless times I watched mother take those pies or sandwiches or salads to the homes of ill persons. Without trying, she taught me the importance of service.

My father ministered to old folks with the tools of a self-taught barber and my brother drove miles out of his way to pick up passengers. I learned from them.

Toddlers are easy to guide; they look to parents for everything. On their way to becoming teenagers, they still observe our lives. If when they answer the door we say, "Tell them I'm not at home," they will not understand when we chastise them for lying. After gossiping on the telephone about Mary Smith, they notice when we smile at her on the street and say, "Do come over for coffee; love to have you."

Bob and Jean sent their son to "religious education." They never went to church but felt that Jim could benefit from some good training. They really taught him that it wasn't very important to attend church. As soon as Jim could express his own thoughts loudly, he also quit going to church.

To a certain extent, parents do brainwash their children. If they grow up in a home which is always unkempt, they will be more likely to keep a messy place. If parents indulge in habits that ruin health and personalities, it may be of no use to caution the children against them.

Bill's son felt that he was always being questioned about driving, tickets for something, or about his clothing. It made the boy angry because his dad didn't seem to trust him. But he tried not to stretch the law and not to laugh about others' cheating and maneuvering. Sometimes he felt that everyone else was getting away with things and he was being deprived. Along life's way, he saw some of his friends caught and eventually fined or hurt by what they had done. Much to his surprise, when he became a young man the honesty that he had seen in his father became his own.

What do you teach about working in the church and other community services? If we show joy in our jobs, few words will have to be said.

The magazines on the coffee table teach what we consider good reading. Parents have the right and the responsibility to comment on TV programs and to set an example in the use of TV. One mother became disgusted with several television commercials and finally called her children's attention to a liquor advertisement. "You know kids," she said, "they always show you a clear, bubbling stream in springtime, with a beautiful young girl looking into the eyes of a handsome young man and raising the glass to her lips with a smile. Do you know the other side of the picture? That would be an alcoholic, sick in the gutter, and the drunk father or mother coming home and beating up a child."

Don and Chris were a Christian couple who seemed to be able to live on both sides of the fence. They were never able to choose one or the other. When they attended church, they were faithful and enthusiastic. When the neighborhood parties came, they drank and had fun with the friends in that circle.

The children were confused. A young daughter left home for her own apartment and began drinking heavily. The parents were heavy-hearted and could not understand. But the daughter had never seen her parents stand true for anything; they were blown about by whatever came along.

Whether it be to our family or to the world, we always teach something to one another. A dentist made a statement about a man he had known for many years: "It is through the window of this man's life that many, including myself, have seen what God is like." What an awakening might take place if we could come face to face with the people whose lives we have influenced.

The closer we come to Jesus, the mightier is his hand upon our lives and the more careful we become of our words, attitudes, and actions.

Joan Martin

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CONTRIBUTORS

Terry Burkhalter is the camp program coordinator for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba, 1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 2C9.

Floyd Bartel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114, is the secretary for congregational mission of the Commission on Home Ministries.

Joan Martin, 541 Baseline Road, Grand Island, New York 14072, is a free-lance writer.

CREDITS

Cover, 402, Lavonne Dyck, Route 3, Box 49, Viborg, South Dakota 57070; 404, 405, Terry Burkhalter; 406, Vic Reimer-GCNS; 408, Steve Goossen, Ralph Miller; 410, Ken Neufeld.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

In anticipation of conferences

As I write this, I think back upon conferences already attended this year, and I anticipate the July Conference of Mennonites in Canada (an historic revisit to its birthplace of seventy-five years ago) and the Mennonite World Conference (my first participation in a world conference on anything).

Conferences can move me to renewed vigor. I get intensely involved when I hear about new ventures of faith and see new people committing themselves to the service of Christ in such acts of faith. It makes me feel that God is still creatively acting among us and I want to be part of the twentieth-century Acts of God. My own zeal is strengthened and my vision lifted higher.

This happened at the Ontario conference when they presented the work of Welcome Inn at Hamilton. I felt it at Manitoba when a decision was made to do chaplaincy work among those who have been mentally ill. My pulse quickened when Alberta accepted two new churches. The Eastern District commitment to Wilkes-Barre house church and to the peace-maker registration warmed my heart. When about 160 Baptists and Mennonites met together at Winnipeg to study the believers' church in Canada, it moved me deeply to sense the common concern for new outreach thrusts to Canada's unchurched.

Conferences can also test my patience. When people present their causes without any sense of emotion or seeming personal commitment, I finish listening before they complete their reports. If I've been told that a lecture will be thirty minutes and discussion will be an hour, I get upset that the lecturer is still holding forth at well past an hour. (It happened several times at the believers' church study conference.) Leaders who wax eloquently about the centrality of the congregation and the significance of all brothers and sisters, and then become extremely defensive (almost belligerent) at the first tough challenge, hardly get my respect or trust. A committee, after a year of meetings, who says that it found no role for any significant contribution on its part is perhaps to be pitied for its lack of creativity in a world so full of needs.

I believe that conferences are a legitimate part of Christ's church. They are essential ways for us to share in the larger spiritual family of God. They give us opportunity to sing, pray, study, fellowship, and praise God together with those we do not meet very often (many only once in a lifetime). We can share how God's Spirit has been active in us and learn how he is energizing others. Together we can accept new challenges and dream new dreams.

In particular, a world conference makes my senses tingle with eager anticipation. I have known that God is active in Zaire, Colombia, Japan, Taiwan, Mexico, Russia, and all around our mudball (called earth). But most of the evidence has come through our missionaries. On July 25-30, I expect to hear, meet, and see my brothers and sisters in Christ in person. It will be a great affirmation of our missionary workers and national church leaders. And it will be a beautiful cross-cultural celebration of a oneness which we have found in the healing and liberating power of our Lord Jesus.

Kansas will likely give us a very warm welcome (in several ways). Our patience will be tested at points. But my anticipations of the international music, the multicultural study of the kingdom parables, the joy of meeting people hitherto only names on our missions prayer list, and the confidence that our usual worship and fellowship "highs" will be multiplied, are by far my dominant feelings.

Yes, I'm packing my bags for the historic Canadian conference at Gretna and then expecting another special conference of God's people at Wichita. *Bernie Wiebe*

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The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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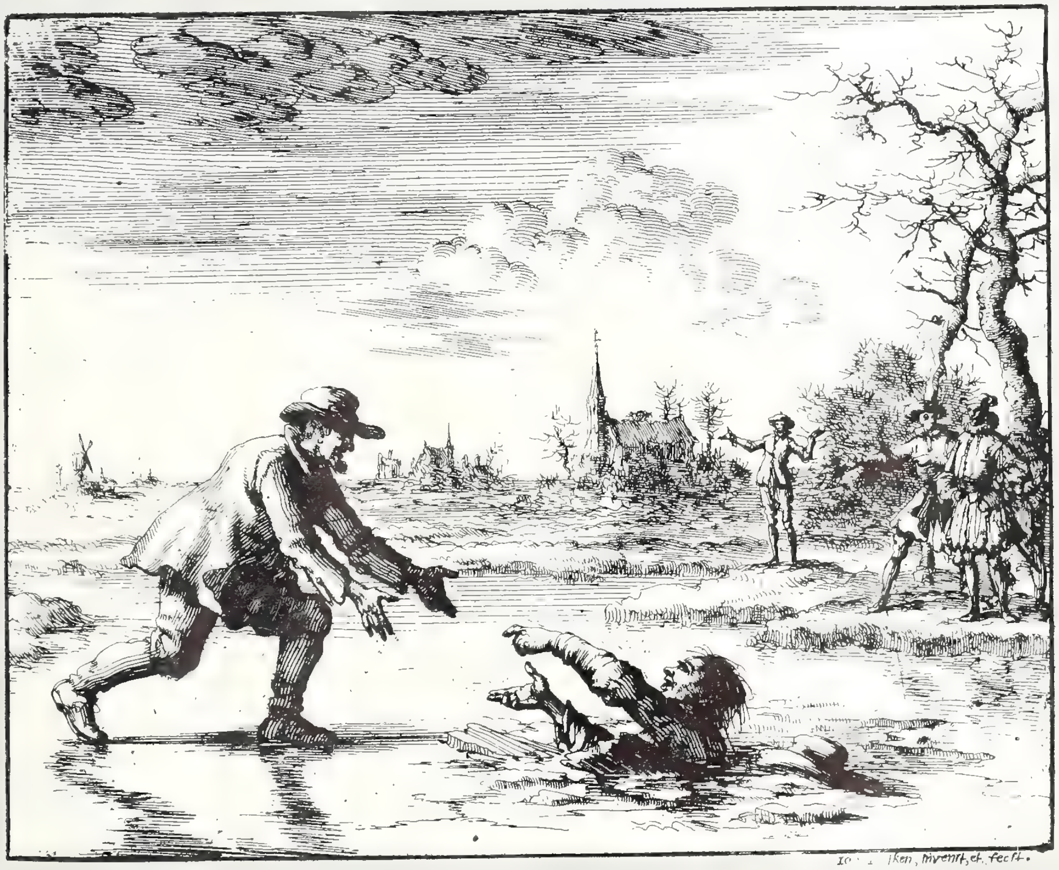
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Dirk Willems, 1569, was fleeing from his persecutors, when one of the pursuers fell through the thin ice. Willems turned around and saved his tormentor's life. In spite of this, the burgomaster of Asperen, Holland, sentenced Dirk Willems to imprisonment, torture, and death at a lingering fire. *Martyrs Mirror,* page 741

The Holy Spirit and peacemaking
Peace and the Christian church
To celebrate the Fourth

The Holy Spirit and peacemaking

Marvin Hein

Menno Simons, after whom Mennonites are named, was a village Catholic priest in the 1520s in Pingjum, just a mile from his hometown. By his own testimony, his life as a priest was in the fashion of useless people and he wasted away his time in careless living. The study of the Scriptures, disillusionment with the Roman Catholic mass, and the influence of Luther eventually led him to a new commitment to Jesus Christ.

At a moment when he might have become very belligerent in his new faith, one particular experience led him to the conviction that discipleship called for peacemaking, even when confronting those who opposed him. A group of Muensterites, whom Menno respected for some of their beliefs and their zeal and sincerity, created havoc by their aggressive, militant defense of the Anabaptist faith. When a group of them were besieged, captured, and killed in battle or executed, Menno broke with the Muensterites and searched the Word which led him to peacemaking despite being hounded by enemies for the rest of his life.

The Holy Spirit worked a miracle in his life. While he sometimes erred in his views and practices, he was persuaded that the Holy Spirit wanted him to reject the false and proclaim the true, in a spirit that was firm but peaceful. While his followers have not always been successful, Mennonites still feel strongly that the role of a peacemaker arises out of that kind of Spirit-motivated experience of new life in Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit and spiritual renewal. Mennonites believe that the great transformation in the human heart—the kind experienced by Menno 450 years ago—is the work of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual renewal always comes by the work of the Word and the Holy Spirit. While the person of Christ has always been pivotal in our understanding of Scripture, the action of God by the Holy Spirit in making the Word intelligible is also crucial. The Holy Spirit, after conversion, leads the disciple into a life of peacemaking.

Menno expressed this persuasion in a beautiful passage (*The Complete Writings of Menno Simons,* pages 145-146): "Just as natural bread is made of many grains, pulverized by the mill, kneaded with water, and baked by the heat of the fire, so is the church of Christ made up of true believers, broken in their hearts with the mill of the divine Word, baptized with the water of the Holy Ghost, and with the fire of pure, unfeigned love made into one body.

"Just as there is harmony and peace in the body and all its members, and just as each member naturally performs its function to promote the benefit of the whole body, so it also becomes the true and living members of the body of Christ to be one: one heart, one mind, and one soul. Not contentious, not spiteful and envious, not cruel and hateful, not quarrelsome and disputatious one toward another like the ambitious, covetous, and the proud of this world. But in all things, one toward another, long-suffering, friendly, peaceable, ever ready in true Christian love to serve one's neighbor in all things possible . . . ."

Peacemaking is the result of a changed person, not simply the education of an enlightened mind. Mennonites believe that this change is the result of the Holy Spirit working through the Word of God, resulting in a new creation. Paul Peachy writes (*Mennonite Quarterly Review,* Volume 30, page 217): "Anabaptism rests ultimately on perpetual re-creation which derives its authority from the work of the Spirit among men thereby united, and not from ecclesiastical structure."

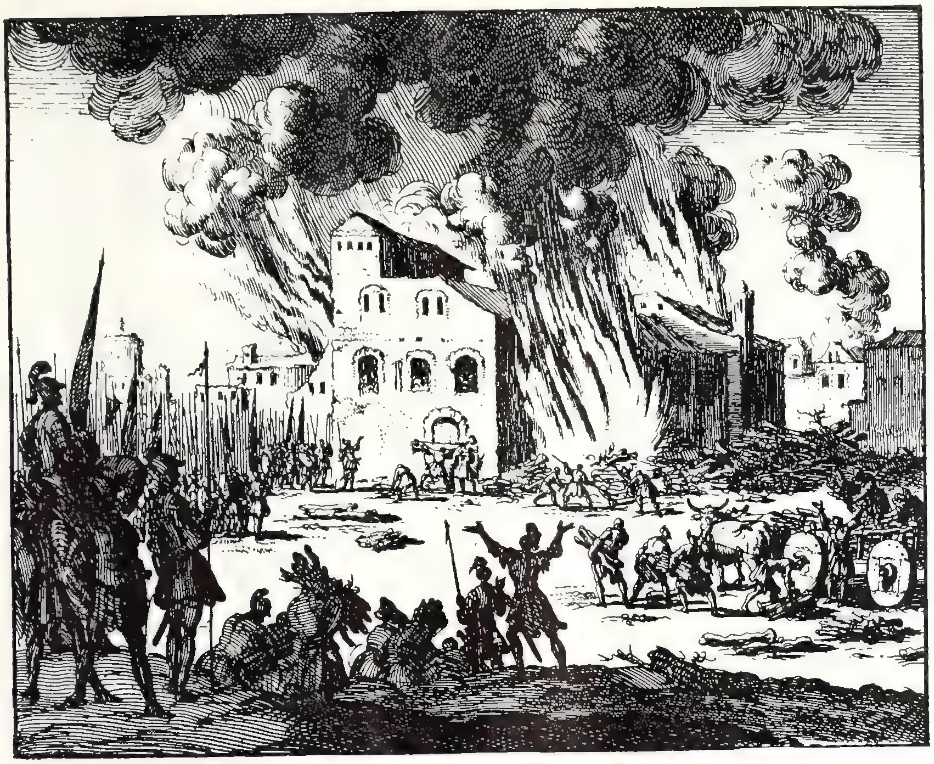
The Holy Spirit, salvation, and social reform. Franklin H. Littell says: "The Anabaptist-Mennonites were no social revolutionaries; yet there was a whole new style of human relations in the congregations of the Anabaptists and those who followed after. At the door of the church the power of the secular prince halted. This was the beginning of religious liberty. At the door of the church the claims of class privilege halted. This was the beginning of a new style of human relations, in which for the first time in centuries in the relations between human beings—also in the church—men attempted to see the least brother through the eyes of Christ rather than according to his status in the world" (*A Tribute to Menno Simons,* pages 43-44).

The pietism so dominant in the first Anabaptist preaching was not simply a subjective pietism that remained cornered within the believing community. It was not disinterested in the radical world transformation. It was a kind of pietism that would divide homes and families and society. It had the courage to face opposition and conflict.

John Stoner has written ("Why a New Call to Peacemaking?", *The Christian Leader,* April 12, 1977): "Conrad Grebel and Menno Simons of the Mennonites, Alexander Mack of the Brethren, and George Fox of the Quakers all had an understanding of Jesus and a vision of his kingdom which was profoundly evangelical and energetically pacifist."

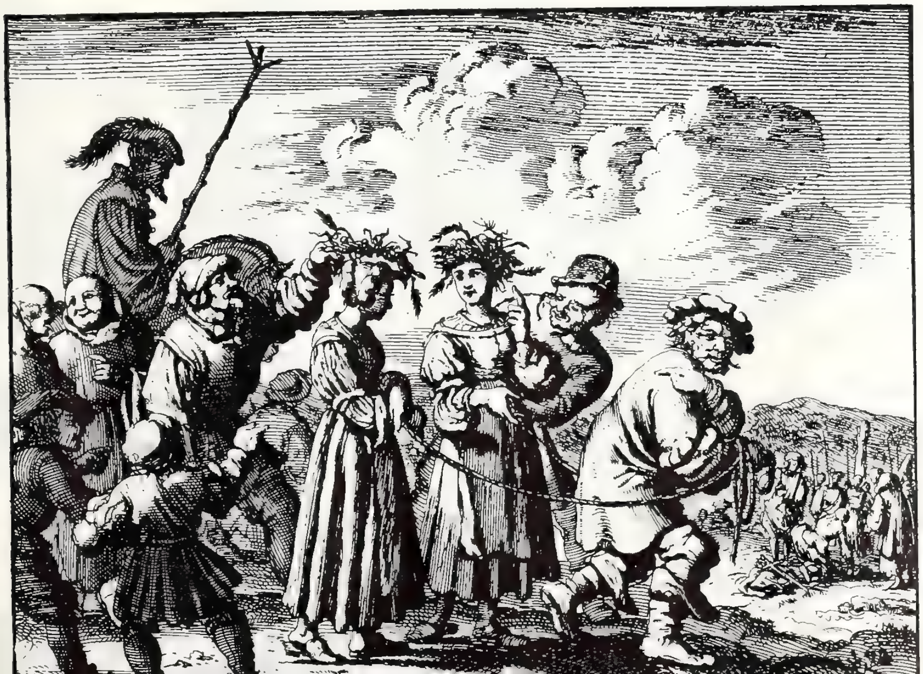
The Mennonites of the sixteenth century, and faithful adherents today, agree that often the Scriptures are used by the Holy Spirit to bring under judgment both the things that we do and those we fail to do. This means that salvation becomes not simply a deliverance from one's own sins, but a call to deliver men and women from whatever may be destroying them and their relationships with other people.

Too often Mennonites have torn asunder the call to salvation and the call to peacemaking. In so doing we have not been faithful to the Word nor the Holy Spirit nor our forefathers. "Another concrete expression of such renewal would be that we should find a closer linkage between the love of enemy and the saving of souls. We would not assume that preaching the gospel and loving the enemy are unrelated topics of proclamation, but would learn that each is a way of saying the other . . . One way of describing the atonement is that God loves his enemies. We pulled that apart because we borrowed our systematic theology from state-church theologians who had pulled it apart. They wanted atonement without loving their enemies, because they wanted to save Europe from the infidel" (John Howard Yoder, "The Unique Role of the Historic Peace Churches," reprinted from *Brethren Life and Thought*).



Emperor Maximin, in the year 237, when Christians were assembled in their meeting places, had all of these places locked up and then had wood placed around them and set them on fire to burn all the Christians. Before setting fire to the wood, a proclamation of forgiveness and reward was announced for anyone who would come out and worship Jupiter. Among thousands of Christians, not one came out of the churches. All remained with one accord, singing, and praising Christ until they died of the fire. *Martyrs Mirror*, page 131

About the year 1550 two young women espoused the Anabaptist faith and were severely persecuted. When they refused to renounce their faith in Christ, the authorities condemned them to death; at which they were joyful and undaunted. On the way to their execution, wreaths of straw were placed on their heads. They died in the bishopric of Bamberg. *Martyrs Mirror*, page 500



> **“Salvation becomes not simply a deliverance from one's own sins, but a call to deliver men and women from whatever may be destroying them and their relationships with other people.”**

The Holy Spirit and confrontation with government. Some Christian groups accept war not because they like it, but because they assume the church is asked to help control society in conjunction with the state. We oppose war because the Holy Spirit teaches new creatures in Christ a higher citizenship. Consequently, just as was true in the first century and the early church, and as was true of the early Anabaptists, we find ourselves often being offensive to society. But that is the commitment to which the Holy Spirit leads us.

Robert Friedmann (*Mennonite Piety Through the Centuries*) maintained that the genius of Anabaptism is an “earnest and uncompromising endeavor to live a life of true discipleship of Christ, that is to give expression in fellowship and love to the deepest Christian faith, with full readiness to suffer in conflict with evil world order.”

Neither Menno Simons nor the early Anabaptists were social revolutionaries; but neither were Hosea and Amos when they condemned those who trod upon the poor. But others often saw the prophets—and will see peacemaking disciples of Christ—as revolutionaries. Magistrates among the early Mennonites weren't capable of distinguishing between incendiaries and Anabaptists. The nature of the faithful disciple necessarily involves confrontation with other loyalties when those conflict with the Holy Spirit's direction.

In March 1525, when the Anabaptist movement was in its infancy, a group of farmers at Zollikon, near Zurich, Switzerland, defied governmental authorities by having a communion service in broad daylight—a public meeting that embraced more than four persons—and they not only read the Bible, but preached the Word.

Many things have changed since 1525, but it remains true that Christian disciples' allegiance to Jesus Christ, led by the Holy Spirit, will pit them against the powers that be. Christians are not revolutionary by intention. Mennonites do not ask for trouble. However, faithfulness to the Holy Spirit will lead you to peacemaking and to confrontation.

The problem of peace which arises in society, also arises within the church.

Its history is filled with so-called theological confrontations which were actually ideological ones. Even today these confrontations subsist within each of the Christian denominations.

The church, which proclaims the reconciliation of humankind in Jesus Christ, actually ignores this reconciliation in its midst and does not live shalom.

Shalom in the Bible has an eminently relational meaning, for peace is the fruit of the alliance: it is not, therefore, the absence of war, but the continuous, desired construction of the world by people, and of the world for people.

Shalom is salvation in its plenitude, without injustice—"For if you truly amend your ways and your doings, if you truly execute justice one with another . . . " (Jeremiah 7:5). Shalom and sedaqa, peace and justice, are inseparable.

Peace is, therefore, inseparable from a certain struggle—the struggle for justice.

Believing in Jesus Christ also means taking the side of the poor; it therefore means facing up to the conflicts of society. Believing in Jesus Christ means loving human beings and, consequently, hating everything that distorts them, alienates them, or dehumanizes them. Believing in Jesus Christ means having a protesting attitude toward everything that destroys justice—toward everything that destroys the relationship of a person to God, to others, or to oneself or one's environment. Believing in Jesus Christ means knowing that one is invested with a critical function in relation to everything threatening to peace and justice.

Well, what is taking place in the church?

Generally speaking, it refuses to acknowledge that exploiters and exploited exist. It refuses to acknowledge the reality of the class struggle as something that divides, as if injustice no longer seriously divided humanity. It refuses to acknowledge that the exploited individuals can do nothing other than fight back, so long as their shalom is unjustly stolen from them.

Due to its material property, the church appears as a financial power governed usually by highly placed, influential persons. Its ideology therefore cannot be neutral; it is an ideology of wealth. The property of the church is an obstacle to a genuine struggle for the poor and for social justice, an obstacle to its universality.

The church often presents itself as the defender of order, even if this order is based on a disorder or injustice. This derives from its own power which places the church at the side of the established order. It thus loses its prophetic meaning. It can be said: "The church is largely conformist, never revolutionary. . . . " The symbol of a patriarchic society, it "minimalizes" people.

Moreover, it presents a gospel enrobed (whether consciously or unconsciously) in an ideology which is generally that of the ruling power which it supports. It effects a practical syncretism between the various economic-political systems. Through its knowledge it has formidable ideological power. Its claim of being in possession of the truth (instead of being possessed by it) leads it to bedevil the adversary of the moment and to launch accusations of heresy.

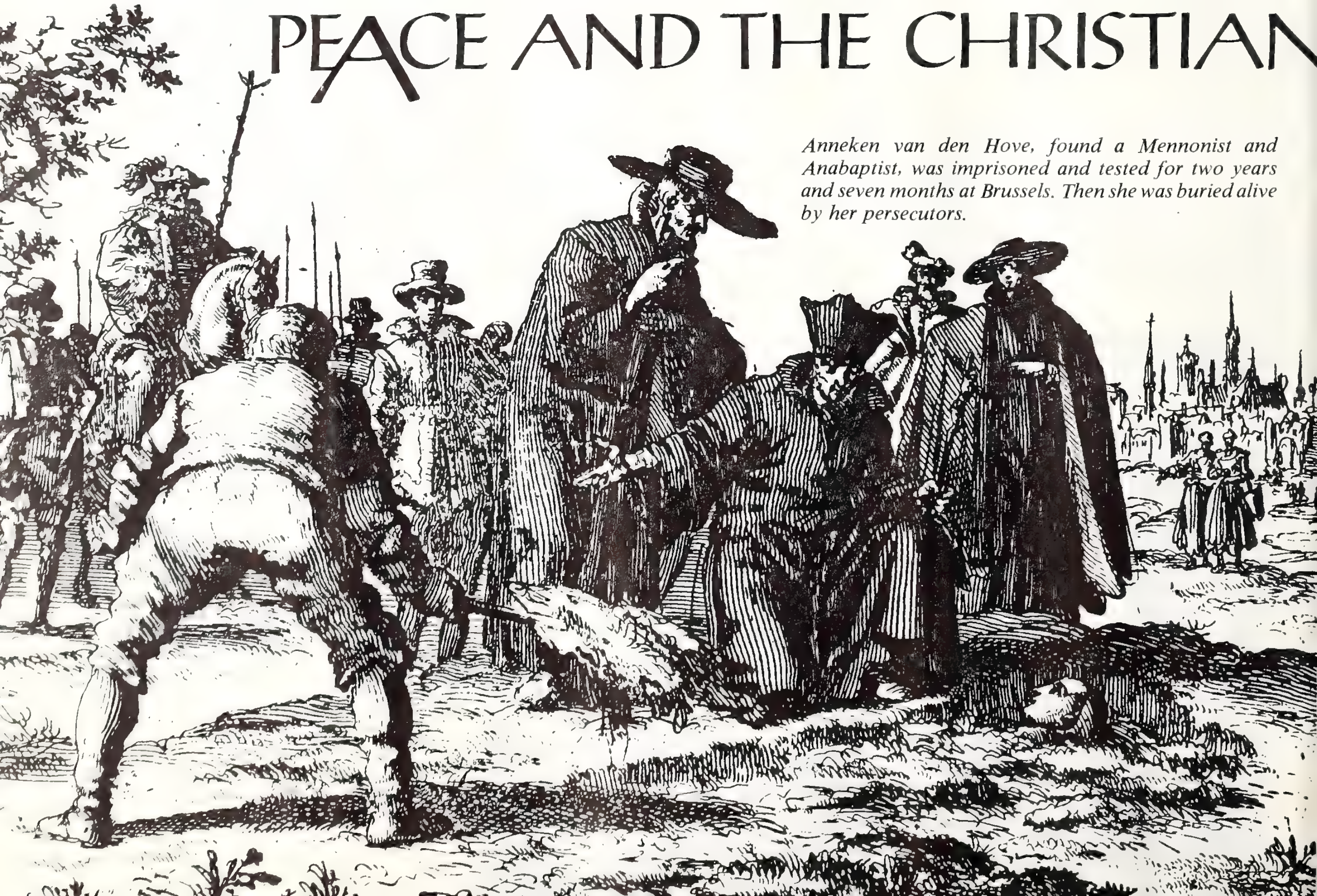
Property, power, and knowledge are, for the church, major obstacles to a truly lived peace, which tend to lead to the preaching of a shalom in the hereafter and to dispense with a struggle for humanity's here and now.

A church which is a true witness of peace and justice can only be a *poor* church, in the economic and evangelical senses of the word. The twentieth century expects a reform of the church, not a liturgical or pseudotheological one, but an ideological reform, sociological and anthropological.

The importance of these choices appears throughout the Bible. In Sinai, Israel receives the order never to produce a graven image of God, for human beings are the sole image of God that we are permitted to encounter. It is through its struggle for human beings—their freedom and their integrity—that the church struggles for peace.

These anthropological choices obviously involve political choices. Peace will not be

PEACE AND THE CHRISTIAN



Anneken van den Hove, found a Mennonist and Anabaptist, was imprisoned and tested for two years and seven months at Brussels. Then she was buried alive by her persecutors.

possible so long as wealth and power are held only by a few, so long as the values of society remain profit, individual social success, and private ownership of the means of production.

Of course, there exist Christians who are prepared to make such choices, or who have already made them, but these men and women find themselves, due to this fact, more or less alienated from the ecclesiastical institution. Everything is taking place as if the church institution had become, even in its structure, incapable of a reform in depth which would imply new commitments and consequently a disengagement with the present social order governed by money, and which would also imply a lucid, courageous exercise of the function of criticism.

It has been said that the church carries on its activities in the light of the Scriptures, but it is an important thing to know how these Scriptures are read. No Scriptures exist without readers, and the entire question is one of interpretation. Thus it happened that a preacher in the United States called on his co-citizens, with Bible in hand, to become converted and to support the war in Vietnam. Another preacher in the German Democratic Republic equally sincerely called on his congregation to follow the Bible and condemn the United States participation in Vietnam.

It has been said that respect for pluralism is a means of resolving conflicts, but this constitutes an additional ambiguity. One cannot, in the name of peace, accept false consensuses. A true pluralism must necessarily be oriented, because it is impossible in the name of pluralism to accept just any theory or ideology.

It has been said that the response of the church to the peace-seekers is to be found in its preaching of reconciliation, but this reconciliation must not be preached outside the historical, political, or cultural context of injustice and exploitation, if it is not to be merely a form of support of the strong against the weak.

Reconciliation is not a fact acquired once and for all, but a reality which is in the process of emerging: it exists in the realm of hope. The gospel, which tells us to love our enemies, does not tell us not to have any, or not to fight them.

It is all of these "revisions" that will permit Christians to be genuine, lucid artisans of peace.

Europe seems to be an exemplary terrain for such an experiment of renovation. It was from Europe that Christianity branched out (even though it had set roots in Palestine); it was in Europe that it was most closely linked with civilization, culture, and—alas!—also with power. It was in Europe that other sociological experiments were born, and yet until only recently Europe has not known peace; and what sort of peace does it know today?

The Christian church has a particular responsibility precisely where it is most solidly installed and where also, consequently, it has become the most worn and antiquated. This church, which calls itself universal, has the mission of rescuing Christians from a nationalism (and sometimes even a chauvinism) which impels them to espouse uncritically the views of their governments.

At this time, when the formation of a united Europe is taking a new turn with Europe's vote for universal suffrage, it is urgent to think about this question. Europe is purely Western and capitalist in nature; is this what we want? Have we evaluated its consequences from the standpoint of peace and justice? Has the church a word to say at this point? What sort of Europe are we building?

All this concerns, above all, the preconditions for peace. Our world can no longer content itself with fine words or pious exhortations . . . it is demanding an unequivocal commitment. Peace cannot exist so long as human rights are being trampled upon.

The church should remember that, according to the Bible, word and action are synonymous, and that a word which is not active is only idle chatter. It is necessary for the chattering church to be silent, and for the church of Jesus Christ to involve itself in a true struggle for peace.

CHURCH

Jacques Chauvin

> “According to the Bible, word and action are synonymous, and a word which is not active is only idle chatter. It is necessary for the chattering church to be silent, and for the church of Jesus Christ to involve itself in a true struggle for peace.”

THE MENNONITE seeks to witness teach motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit It is published weekly except biweekly during July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton Kansas 67114, by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kansas 67114, and at additional mailing offices Subscriptions in United States and Canada, $9 00 one year, $17 00, two years $24 00, three years foreign $9 50 per year Editorial office 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Canada R3P 0M4 Business office. 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114 Postmaster Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114

News

Kansas farmer wants reconciliation between US and Vietnam

Newton, Kansas (MCC)—Harvey Schmidt, a Mennonite wheat farmer from the Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church in Goessel, Kansas, experienced a unique opportunity for peacemaking May 13 to 27.

The fifty-five-year-old Kansan was part of a seven-person American delegation which visited Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) to present 10,000 tons of American wheat. The wheat was donated to the people of Vietnam through Church World Service (CWS) and the shipment included about 300 tons from Mennonite Central Committee.

Schmidt unhesitatingly states that he feels his trip was worthwhile. Most Mennonites have reacted positively to his goodwill mission to Vietnam, but a few have asked if he is not strengthening "communist interests so they can destroy us."

He responds: "I went to Vietnam with a clear conscience. The Bible says, 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him.' And I don't even consider the Vietnamese my enemies. I have no hesitancy to feed anyone, communist or not. I went with the intent of feeding the hungry and to be part of the reconciliation between the United States and the people of Vietnam."

The two-week visit held many surprises for Schmidt. During a 2½-hour session with the Americans, Vietnamese Premier Pham Van Dong announced that if he travels to the United States, he would like to visit Schmidt's farming operation in central Kansas. A surprised but delighted Schmidt told the premier, "The honor would be all mine."

Schmidt felt his farming background allowed him a special opportunity to relate to Vietnamese officials. Since food is a primary government priority, many questions were directed to Schmidt, who represented the CROP (Christian Rural Overseas Program) drive. Other delegates included an actor, an economist, and representatives of CWS, YWCA, and the United Church of Christ.

The Mennonite delegate said a high point of his trip was watching the ship Antiochia arrive with the CWS wheat. "I was the first one in when the captain opened the hatch." He emphasized that he did see wheat from the CWS bags ground into flour.

Schmidt was particularly interested in Vietnamese farming practices, as well as church and government roles.

Harvey Schmidt (left) greeting Premier Pham Van Dong of Vietnam. Looking on is the vice minister for foreign aid.

"Farming procedures are totally different. Everything is done by hand. The land is greatly scarred from the war and the task of the farmers is to level craters (created by the bombing) and remove dead vegetation wherever defoliants were used. It really made an impression on me to see an entire milo field prepared, planted, and thinned by hand." Men, women, and children work in the fields planting the staples—sweet corn, rice, squash, peanuts, sweet potatoes, and green beans.

Field workers still die daily from exploding ammunition hidden in uncleared fields although slowly such reminders of the war are being eliminated. The government's plan is to clear one million hectare (2.5 million acres) of land by the end of 1978 and to clear an additional four million hectare by 1983.

Agriculture is accomplished through collective farms, large "zones" where 7,200 workers farm 3,000 hectares (7,500 acres) of land. Administrators set a quota of crops which must be produced each year.

When the CWS delegation visited a Protestant Evangelical Church service and a Catholic mass in Hanoi, Schmidt reported "openness to both the Protestant and Catholic faiths" and a spirit of cooperation from the churches toward the government.

In visits to a hosptial, a rehabilitation center for 700 former prostitutes, and an orphanage, Schmidt witnessed some of the lingering tragedies of the war. One 1,000-bed hospital has 36,000 patients annually and a large number with cancer or deformities—the side effects of defoliants used during the war. At the orphanage, Vietnamese officials told the Americans that assimilation of the racially mixed children into Vietnamese villages is a major problem.

Schmidt's overall view is of an "underdeveloped country not yet back on its feet after the war, but showing signs of growth."

"My opinion is that Vietnam has a very humanitarian government. Food is rationed so there is some for everyone. The Vietnamese said if they could only trade with the United States they could better help themselves." American companies are eager to trade with Vietnam but the United States government maintains an embargo on trade with that country. *Griselda Shelly, MCC Newton*

Taiwan choir to share music and culture

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—A packed tour and performance schedule awaits the Taiwan Mennonite Women's Choir during their visit to Canada and the United States this summer.

The twenty-eight women in the choir, all members of the Lin Shen Road Mennonite Church in Taichung, are homemakers, mothers, and grandmothers. Besides singing, they will share cultural skills in Chinese brush painting, calligraphy, flower arranging, and folk dancing. Their music includes sacred and folk selections.

A main feature of their itinerary is two performances at the Mennonite World Conference in Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30. They will also demonstrate their artistic abilities at the conference, the tenth international assembly of Mennonites since 1925. It is expected the choir will provide a significant cross-cultural experience for the occasion.

In addition to their singing engagements in five Canadian provinces and eight American states, the choir plans to visit several tourist attractions before and after the tour.

Travel costs for the singing tour portion of the choir's visit, including food and lodging, are being underwritten by Women in Mission of the General Conference. The choir is paying for its travel from Taiwan and back, personal expenses, and travel outside of the tour dates.

MCC (Canada) upgrades personnel services

Winnipeg, Manitoba (MCC)—The personnel services provided by Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) are inadequate and need more staff attention, says Dave Dyck, director for voluntary service and personnel.

Personnel services at present include recruitment of personnel for MCC service and processing of applications.

The recent appointment of Waldo Neufeld to responsibility for the support services is one step to assist the improvement of the personnel services; another is the division of voluntary service and personnel services into two departments, with a full-time director for each.

One of the reasons personnel services need more attention is that personnel needs are shifting, Dyck says. For instance, more and more of the requests from overseas are for trained specialists.

Executive Secretary J. M. Klassen points out, in addition, that MCC is increasingly called upon to work in more complex relationships to local churches and their agencies.

Both of these developments call for more careful selection of personnel and therefore more staff attention.

Bangladesh absorbs Burmese refugees

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—Emergency relief for Burmese refugees streaming into Bangladesh has been initiated by Mennonite Central Committee.

More than 150,000 Burmese Muslim refugees have been frightened across the border into the Chittagong District of Bangladesh. As late as April Bangladesh authorities were attempting to stop the flow—several thousand per day—but they finally relented on humanitarian grounds. The Bangladesh Government regards them as Burmese citizens, although the Burmese Government says many are technically not citizens of Burma.

Why are they leaving? Some suspect that local tribal people are pushing out these refugees so their properties can be claimed. Others cite fear, since the Burmese Government is particularly concerned with insurgents.

MCC has given all emergency relief items stocked in its Bangladesh warehouse. This has included quilts, used clothing, milk powder, and materials for shelter. Food needs are partially met by the United Nations.

Most of the refugees are in six camps along the main road south of Cox's Bazar.

Two Project Teach workshops in August

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—Plans for two Project Teach sessions, one in California and the other in Ohio, have been announced. Both sessions are in August.

Pacific College in Fresno, California, is the location for the first workshop, August 14-18.

Resource persons for the week are George Konrad (Bible study), A. J. Klassen (Anabaptist history), Dean Kliewer (development of the person), Larry Warkentin (music), Lauren Friesen (drama), Marvin Bartel (art), and Nancy Williams (handicapped). Ideas for Christian education for the handicapped are a special feature of the California workshop.

Tuition, board, and room for the workshop is $100.

For information and applications write to Carol Fransen, 390 North Bush, Fresno, California 93727, or telephone 209-251-8094.

The second workshop is August 21-25 at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Resource persons for the week are Jake Friesen (Bible study), John Ruth (Anabaptist history), David Kapusinski (development of the person), and James Mohr (worship). A special feature of the Bluffton gathering will be an intergenerational class.

Tuition, board, and room for the Ohio workshop is eighty dollars. For information and applications write to Kathleen Kindle, 212 South Jackson, Bluffton, Ohio 45817, or telephone 419-358-5537.

Project Teach is experience-based learning in Christian education for church school teachers and superintendents from preschool to adult level. All participants meet jointly for Bible study, a course in Anabaptist history, and a course in development of the person. For all other sessions teachers are grouped according to the age of the students they are interested in teaching.

Goals for Spanish ministries formulated

A Spanish ministries committee met May 18-19 in Newton, Kansas, to think about how General Conference Mennonite churches might become involved in work with the twenty million persons of Spanish background living in the United States.

Members of the committee are Josue Abrue of Lansdale, Pennsylvania, John Miller of Reedley, California, David Whitermore from Chicago, Ernst Harder of North Newton, Kansas, and Roger Duarte of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Abreu is chairperson. Hector and Mary Valencia of Newton, Kansas, are advisors. Palmer Becker, executive secretary of CHM, is ex officio member.

The committee decided it would provide assistance in strategy to district mission committees, organize learning experiences about the mission of the church as it relates to different cultures, and develop literature resources.

Two priorities were recognized. The first was to guard against placing Spanish-speaking people in a box. There is a wide variety of religious and cultural expression among Spanish-speaking persons.

Secondly, leadership development is crucial. Beginning leaders need to be trained carefully. Pastors in English-speaking churches with potential for Spanish ministry need orientation to Spanish culture.

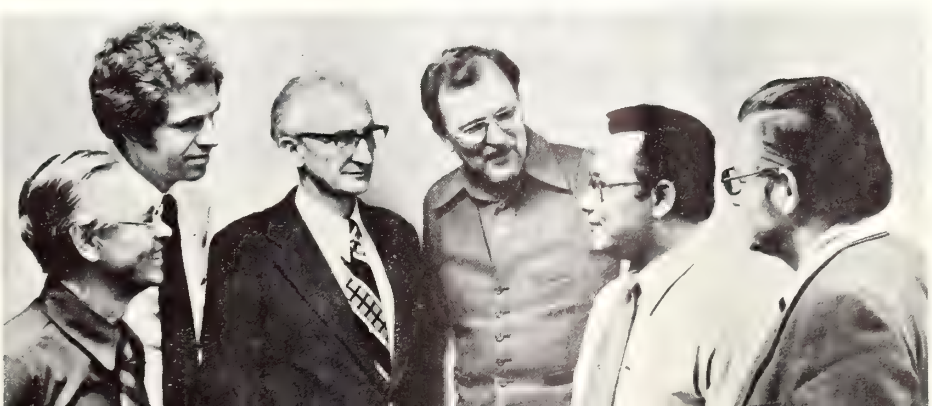
Before the committee meets again in Houston, Texas, during October, it intends to realize four goals. In addition to a Spanish translation of the pamphlet, "Who Are the Mennonites?" the group wants a Spanish piece on evangelism and discipleship.

Also in the area of education is the need for Spanish Sunday school literature, particularly for adults. A special consultation on Spanish literature needs will take place in San Antonio, Texas, before Mennonite World Conference.

Further, Abreu, in coordination with Mennonite churches and district organizations, will do exploratory work in Allentown and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as possible locations for Spanish ministries.

Finally, each committee member will explore with their respective district mission committee possible action in beginning Spanish congregations within established General Conference churches.

Members of the Spanish ministries committee are (left to right) Hector Valencia, Palmer Becker, John Miller, David Whitermore, Josue Abreu, and Ernst Harder. Roger Duarte was unable to attend.



World Conference heralds a new Mennonite peoplehood

Maynard Shelly

Mennonites trace their origins back to Europe. And it is the Germany of the Protestant Reformation that has given them their distinctive traits for 450 years. But new tides have swept through this world religious fellowship.

This will become evident as soon as the tenth assembly of the Mennonite World Conference opens in Wichita, Kansas, on July 25. "The gathering will come to have huge energy," says Takashi Yamada, a Mennonite pastor from Japan. He hopes that the force of the assembly will do more than digest a program of speeches and discussion.

Theme of the assembly will be "The Kingdom of God in a Changing World." The 16,000 delegates and visitors from Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in forty countries will study the Bible and search their own recent experiences for the meaning of this topic. But Wichita itself will be a time of changing.

"The tenth assembly," says Kabangy Kjeke Shapasa, a Mennonite leader from Zaire, "will be an event without precedent since the time of the Anabaptists."

If the Kansas meeting is to have much import, it will be due largely to the participation of 200 delegates who like Shapasa and Yamada will be coming from congregations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America that are non-German in ancestry and, for the most part, nonwhite.

These persons from the poorer nations will be raising issues that promise a change of direction for the kingdom of God as Mennonites have come to know it.

But the gap between American and Third World groups will need special attention. "The kingdom of God in the Mennonite church is pretty much separated," says Elmer Neufeld, Bluffton, Ohio. He (as well as Shapasa and Yamada) is a member of the executive committee of the Mennonite World Conference.

He notes the poverty of the churches in Zaire that are struggling to find funds to roof their church buildings with tin. "The mission boards are all over here," he says. "Here's where the money comes from. We have a long way to go."

But the distribution of money is not the only obstacle. The very weight and number of Western church activities have limited the growth of African, Asian, and Latin American churches.

Yamada sees the mission boards and agencies of the American churches making too many decisions for congregations overseas. Until now, these overseas churches have found it difficult to develop their own theology and thought. "It should be the task of Third World Mennonites to find their identity in their own frame of reference," says Yamada.

His fear is that Mennonites from the Third World will be lectured and admonished as in the past. "From theory to application," he says, "that is the way the Western mind works, giving instuctions from higher to lower."

Does this tension in the Mennonite fellowship imply a coming separation? Not at all. Both groups of Mennonites will continue to have a great need of each other. Mennonites in the Third World need spiritual support as they face persecution.

And the Mennonites in the United States and Canada need help in coping with an equal danger—their newfound affluence.

Neufeld admits that wealth has made deep inroads into Mennonite life, eroding spiritual vitality.

American and European Mennonites will find it hard to come to grips with such an issue. While Jan Matthijssen, an Amsterdam Mennonite leader, also a member of the assembly's executive committee, greets the theme of the Wichita meeting with enthusiasm, he has misgivings about changing present directions, predicting that refuge may be taken in a screen of religious words. "I fear," he says, "the painless, neutralistic otherworldliness without application of our social responsibility."

A Mennonite Brethren pastor from Hillsboro, Kansas, admits that though the Mennonite fellowship has its strengths, it will have a hard time openly facing the most crucial issues in its life. "There is still a lot of loyalty that comes from our common roots," says Marvin Hein, who is the group's first vice president. "The Mennonite World Conference is designed to keep the family intact, but it is tough. It is hard to talk to each other."

Hein identifies some of the issues that must be grappled with: peace, missions, relief, affluence, poverty.

As Third World Mennonites bring new urgency to the facing of these topics, the traditional Mennonites of Europe and North America may be able to help their fellow Christians. Many of them live under trying political and social conditions.

Speaking about these younger churches, Paul N. Kraybill, Lombard, Illinois, executive secretary of the Mennonite World Conference, says, "As I go to Rhodesia, Ethiopia, Somalia, Indonesia, and Paraguay, I find that our churches are in trouble, engaged in the struggle of black and white, of rich and poor.

"They are reaching out for support to people who know what it is to be a suffering minority. The leaders from these churches want to know what there is about the Anabaptist vision that can help them. They want scriptural background from people who are committed to serious discipleship."

The Mennonites, Kraybill believes, are committing themselves to a fellowship that is more than one based on its European ancestry. "There is a peoplehood emerging," he says, "that is deeper than blood and human relationships."

This fellowship rises above culture and nationality and becomes an experience of the kingdom of God—"a fellowship," says Kraybill, "of people who love each other, and who stand together in one kingdom against 150 kingdoms of the world as represented in the United Nations."

Writers' meeting before World Conference

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—George Neavoll, editor of the editorial page for the Wichita *Eagle* and *The Beacon,* will be featured speaker at a meeting of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ print communicators planned just before Mennonite World Conference.

The writers' meeting is scheduled July 24-25 at Century II Convention Center, Wichita, Kansas.

Neavoll, formerly of the Detroit *Free Press,* will speak on ethics and the press.

The Mennonite writers' meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m., Monday, July 24, with a sandwich supper and fellowship with international Mennonite journalists.

After registration at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, Neavoll will speak at 9:00 a.m. At 1:00 p.m., workshops are planned on "Truth and Institutions." "Should There Be an Independent Inter-Mennonite News Service?" "Layout," and "Writing Concisely."

All Mennonite and Brethren in Christ print communicators (writers, editors, news service personnel, free-lance writers, and journalism professors and students) are welcome to attend, whether or not they are employed by a church-related institution.

For more information, contact Bruce Leichty, 129½ West Sixth Street, Newton, Kansas 67114, or Lois Barrett, 1508 Fairview, Wichita, Kansas 67203.

Reservations for the Monday evening supper should be made as soon as possible with one of the above persons.

Tenth Assembly Mennonite World Conference Program

Theme: The Kingdom of God in a Changing World

Location: Century II, Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30

	25 Tuesday	26 Wednesday	27 Thursday	28 Friday	29 Saturday	30 Sunday
9:00 a.m.		**CONVENTION HALL**	**Worship Music**	**Theme Messages**	**Responses Singing**	
	Registration begins Monday at 3:00 p.m. Registration continues beginning at 8:00 a.m.	■ "Church Representing the Kingdom," by David Schroeder, Canada ■ Responses by Paul Hofer, Andrew Lu, Kilabi Bululu ■ Worship, Eunice de Hernandez, Puerto Rico ■ Dorothy Harding, Solo ■ Taiwan Women's Choir	■ "Kingdom Reconciling Humanity" by Paul G. Hiebert, United States ■ Responses by Charles Christano, Abram Neufeld, Kedir Dulchume ■ Cheyenne Singers ■ Worship, Mayambi Diakande, Zaire ■ Jamaica Ensemble	■ "Kingdom Confronting the Powers" by H. B. Kossen, Netherlands ■ Responses by Michio Ohno, Anna Juhnke, Ernst Weichselberger ■ Worship, Ted Risingsun, Cheyenne, United States ■ A Kingdom Story by John Ruth ■ Morris Hatton, Solo	■ "Kingdom Renewing the Environment" by Albert Widjaja, Indonesia ■ Responses by Toos Offerhaus, Menno Wiebe, Luis Correa ■ Worship, Ruth Wedel, Germany ■ Mennonite Children's Choir, Canada	WORSHIP IN LOCAL CONGREGATIONS AND CONVENTION HALL
10:45 a.m.		RECESS	RECESS	RECESS	RECESS	
11:15 a.m.		BIBLE STUDY	BIBLE STUDY	BIBLE STUDY	BIBLE STUDY	
		One hundred international groups of fifty persons each				
12:30 p.m.		LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH IN LOCAL HOMES AND CONGREGATIONS
		Simultaneous art, drama, and music events in Exhibition Hall and First Baptist and Metropolitan Baptist churches; film festival in Theater, 2:00 p.m.				
2:30 p.m.		WORKING GROUPS	WORKING GROUPS	WORKING GROUPS	■ Folk opera: "Singers Glen" in Convention Hall ■ "The Wedding at Cana" in First Baptist Church, 3:00 p.m. ■ Mennonite Children's Choir, Metropolitan Baptist Church, 3 p.m.	
		One hundred groups of fifty persons each				
4:15 p.m.		REGIONAL GROUPS Asia, Africa, Central and South America, North America	INTEREST GROUPS Artists, Charismatic renewal, Christian education, Church planting, History, Hunger, Justice, Life-styles, MCC alumni, Men and women in church, Peace, Pastoral leadership, Students, Radio/TV/Film, Umsiedler, Youth leaders, and others	INTEREST GROUPS		**4:30 p.m.** **CONVENTION HALL** **EXHIBITION HALL** **CONCERT HALL** **THEATER** ■ The Lord's Supper ■ "Kingdom Shaping the Future" by Donald R. Jacobs ■ "Thy Kingdom Come" by Esther Wiebe ■ "Koinonia" by Larry Warkentin ■ "Good Samaritan" by Jonah Kliewer ■ "All Creatures of Our God and King" by J. Harold Moyer ■ Report of the Assembly Findings Committee ■ Worship, Takashi Yamada, Japan ■ Recessional (6:30 p.m.)
		Simultaneous art, drama, and music events in Exhibition Hall; *Cheyenne Jesus Buffalo Dream* in Theater.			TOURS	
5:00 p.m.		DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	
		Simultaneous art, drama, and music events in Exhibition Hall				
7:00 p.m.	**CONVENTION HALL /**	**CONCERT HALL**	**Worship Music Testimonies**		**CESSNA STADIUM**	
	■ "Christ Establishing the Kingdom" by Million Belete, Ethiopia, president, MWC ■ Roll Call ■ Worship, Roy V. Sider, Canada ■ Eastern Mennonite College Choir ■ Processional	■ Life Experience Testimonies ■ Report from Soviet Union delegates ■ Mennonite India Choir ■ Hesston College Brass Ensemble ■ Offering	■ Life Experience Testimonies ■ Drama by Reba Place Group, United States ■ Forum: "Facing the Issues" led by Elmer Neufeld with delegates from Canada, France, Philippines, Rhodesia, United States, and Uruguay	■ Passion play in pantomime: "Ecce Homo" by Atelier du Geste, Switzerland ■ Music: "The Black Experience" ■ Offering	■ Sermon by Bishop Festo Kivengere, Uganda ■ Kansas Men's Chorus ■ Symphonic Band ■ Taiwan Women's Choir ■ Mennonite India Choir ■ Music Team, Kenya ■ Seferina de Leon, Solo	
10:00 p.m.	**YOUTH ACTIVITIES** Bethel College Campus, North Newton, Kansas Interchange with Assembly leaders and speakers; coffee house, music, films, recreation					

Words & deeds

A reunion for former Indianapolis 1-W workers is scheduled for July 29-30 at First Mennonite Church in Indianapolis. The reunion is also intended for any persons who have at some time been affiliated with First Church. Registration begins at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday. For housing reservations write to John Dixon, 160 West Epler, Indianapolis, Indiana 46217.

The communist parties in Europe are drifting away from Russia and developing a Euro-communism which is more amenable to Christianity than the communism of Russia, says Donald Jacobs, overseas secretary of Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions, Salunga, Pennsylvania. During April he visited Christian leaders in East Germany, Poland, Yugoslavia, Luxemburg, and France. As an example of this shift he noted that the East German Evangelical Church bishops met with the Prime Minister in April and issued a statement of accord which assures that the government is not antichurch. "Eastern European countries are allowing the church a place in human development alongside their governments," he said. Jacobs commented that the new stance is an opportunity for Christian churches in other countries to create links with churches in Eastern Europe.

Editor needed

Applicants are being sought for the position of *forum* editor to begin in August 1979. Published jointly by the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church student services, *forum* is a magazine of exploration, dialogue, and information for Mennonite students and young adults. The editor may serve up to one-half time. The office location is negotiable. Application deadline is August 1, 1978. To request an application write Eleanor Loewen, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH
Allentown, Pennsylvania
celebrates
seventy-five years in the city.
Anniversary and homecoming,
September 29-October 1

Guest speakers:
John Ruth
J. Winfield Fretz

Minneapolis—Evangelist Billy Graham has confirmed October 6-16 for his visit to Poland. It will be Graham's second preaching mission to an Eastern European communist country. It is expected that Graham will preach in several major cities in addition to Warsaw, both in churches and open-air meetings. His schedule will include visits to factories, institutions, and Auschwitz. The invitation for the visit came from the Baptist Union of Poland, but it is being supported by many denominations in Poland.

Amnesty International figures that as many as 100,000 political prisoners remain in Indonesian detention. Most have been held, usually without trial, since 1965 when the army rounded up members of the three million-member Indonesian Communist party. The country's security bureau, Kopkamtib, says that 10,000 will be released in each of the next two years. George Oliver of Gemini News Service writes that the release program is the result of pressure from Amnesty International, cuts in military aid from the United States, threatened reductions in the Food for Peace program, and the desire in Indonesia for more development aid from Eastern Europe.

Ministries for the deaf will be given new impetus by the Mennonite Church. A half-time director has been appointed to work out of Elkhart, Indiana, to help bring deaf persons together, and to create awareness for the deaf in the church. The long-range goal is to see programs established for deaf persons and to see deaf persons actively involved in the life and leadership of the church.

Music recitals in Cuauhtemoc, Chihuahua, Mexico, were a great attraction recently for children and young people since relatively few pianos and other instruments are used in village schools and churches. Jacob Heinrichs and Betty Epp are teaching students in violin, piano, accordion, and guitar. Heinrichs teaches at the Cuauhtemoc elementary school sponsored by the General Conference.

Sixty young people from Europe, South America, and Africa are expected to arrive in August for one year in Canada or the USA in the Exchange Visitor Program of Mennonite Central Committee. Participants in the program are primarily interested in practical vocational experience and the informal contacts made by living in North American homes or institutions. Most are single, and between the ages of nineteen and thirty. Families, businesses, and agencies are invited to participate in this opportunity to broaden horizons and share faith with Christians of another culture. The sponsor has the benefit of full-time work and in exchange provides forty dollars per month to the trainee, living arrangements, and $100 per month to MCC toward travel, medical, and other costs. Write to: Exchange Visitor Program, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501 or 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8.

Irene and Carl Smucker

Bluffton, Ohio—Carl Smucker (above), retiring Bluffton College professor of social work, was honored at this year's commencement for serving on the faculty since 1944. He was cited with his wife, Irene. Smucker helped establish the first curriculum with a major in social work among US Mennonite colleges and cofounded the Association of Mennonite Social Workers. In recent years he has given special attention to the field of gerontology (aging). The Smuckers will work as volunteers in this area with Mennonite Central Committee during the next two years

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Winnipeg, Manitoba—Canadian Mennonite Bible College graduated twenty-two students this year; nineteen received bachelor degrees in theology and three in church music. After the April 30 commencement exercises the CMBC Ensemble left for a tour of churches in Alberta and British Columbia in a bus recently donated to the school.

North Newton, Kansas—Beginning in August, Bethel College will initiate a missionary-in-residence program with Hugh and Janet Sprunger, General Conference missionaries from Taiwan. Although the Sprungers will have commitments during 1978-79 to the Commission on Overseas Mission for itineration, the college will serve as a base for them to take classes, participate in chapel, counsel, and assist in teaching a new missions course as part of the church work minor program.

Record

Calendar

July 25-30—Mennonite World Conference, Wichita, Kansas

August 21-25—Mennonite Voluntary Service orientation, Camp Mennoscah, Murdock, Kansas

October 26-28—Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship Assembly, Washington, D.C.; theme, "Unleashing the Powers"

Canadian

July 5-9—Conference of Mennonites in Canada annual sessions, Gretna, Manitoba

Central

August 21-25—Project Teach, Bluffton (Ohio) College

Pacific

August 14-18—Project Teach, Pacific College, Fresno, California

Ministers

Josue Abreu has resigned as pastor of Spanish ministries at Grace Church, Lansdale, Pennsylvania, after serving the congregation for seven years. He is currently serving as chairperson of the General Conference's Spanish ministries committee.

Joseph Biebl has resigned as pastor of Flatland Church, Quakertown, Pennsylvania, effective in June.

Marie Toews Cross was ordained to the ministry at Bethel Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on January 15. She is a graduate of Bluffton (Ohio) College and Presbyterian Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky. She is presently serving as director of Christian education at an Episcopal church in Louisville.

Brian Epp has resigned as pastor of the Halbstadt and Rosenfeld (Manitoba) Bergthaler churches effective in July.

Frank Horst terminated his services as pastor of the Warden (Washington) Church on May 28 after serving the congregation for ten years. His future plans are indefinite.

Rebecca Koerner will begin serving as assistant pastor for youth and Christian education at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio, beginning July 1. She is a 1978 graduate of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana.

Neville Peterson, pastor of Bethel Church, Wolf Point, Montana, was ordained to the ministry on April 9. He is a graduate of the New Zealand Bible Training Institute. From 1962 to 1975 he and his wife, Joan, served as church-planting missionaries in Laos.

Braun

Harper

Neufeld

Prieb

Workers

Alvina E. Braun, Winkler, Manitoba, began two years with Mennonite Vountary Service in March, working as a secretary at Tinley Park Workshop in Markham, Illinois. She is a graduate of Garden Valley Collegiate, Winkler. Her parents are William and Mary Braun of Winkler.

Brian Davis, Hugoton, Kansas, began two months of voluntary service June 1 with the General Conference Mennonite Church as a tutor and recreational leader in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He has attended Wichita State University and has worked in the admissions office of the university, in lifeguarding, and in maintenance. His parents are Wesley and Jean Davis of Hugoton. His home church is Hugoton United Methodist.

William Harper, Coatesville, Pennsylvania, began one year with Mennonite Voluntary Service in February working in home repair in Wichita, Kansas. He has attended Pennsylvania State University and has worked in assembling computers. Friendship United Methodist Church is his home congregation. His parents are Almon and Elizabeth Harper of Coatesville.

Dale Neufeld, Kempton (Pennsylvania) Fellowship, began two years with Mennonite Voluntary Service in January working as a furniture coordinator in Arvada, Colorado. He is a high school graduate. His parents are Albert and Tina Neufeld of Hamburg, Pennsylvania.

Carolyn Prieb, Chicago, Illinois, began one year of voluntary service with the General Conference Mennonite Church in January as a counselor in Fremont, Chicago. Carolyn received the BSW degree from Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kansas, in 1976. Her occupational experience is in social work. She is a member of the Hillsboro Mennonite Brethren Church. Her parents are Wesley and Lucile Prieb of Hillsboro, Kansas.

The Rosthern Mennonite congregation invites all past members and friends of Rosthern Mennonite Church to its

SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
HOMECOMING CELEBRATIONS,
July 1-2 at Rosthern, Saskatchewan.

Overnight facilities are available at the Rosthern Junior College dormitories and the Regional Park campground.

Pictures of the past are needed for a display. Please label these and bring them along.

July 1—5:30 p.m., barbecue supper
8:00 p.m., program of reminiscing
(Saturday events at Rosthern Junior College)
July 2—10:30 a.m., worship service of praise and thanksgiving
12:00 noon, dinner at church and visiting
2:30 p.m., worship service and program with guest speaker Gerhard Ens, editor of *Der Bote*; a mass choir; and past ministers
(Sunday events at the Rosthern Mennonite Church)

Letters

Change from within?

Dear Editor: We are often encouraged and urged to change our system by working within our system. Finally one is forced to ask this question: Does a system that is corrupt enough to require a change truly ever willfully allow itself to be exposed to the type of opposition and exposure that would force it to change?

The fact that our leaders are spending over $100 billion annually for armaments and cold-bloodedly training some of our young people to use them heartlessly and efficiently induces one to assume that they do not intend to change our system, in which the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

Surely our leaders do not need these armaments to change our system, but rather they are using them as a threat to prevent a change, and if threats will fail, we have the right to assume that these armaments will also be used to prevent a change. In other words, the leopard has not changed its spots, and in order to prevent a change it is poised and ready to use its armaments.

"Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver have rusted, and their rust will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure for the last days. Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. You have lived on the earth in luxury and in pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. You have condemned, you have killed the righteous man; he does not resist you" (James 5:1-6). *Vernon Stucky, Hesston, Kansas 67062*

May 10

SUMMER
FAMILY
MUSIC CAMP

Enjoy a week of music making, worship, fellowship, and fun with your family and friends.

July 23-29
at Camp Squeah, Hope, British Columbia
with Alice Parker and others.

For further information and applications, write to:
Mrs. Holda Fast
6295 Doman Street
Vancouver, British Columbia V5S 3G8

Gay and Christian

Dear Editor: As a gay Christian, and an ex-Mennonite who still is very Mennonite, I wish to thank you for your coverage of recent dialogues involving Mennonites and others on the subject of homosexuality. Only those who have known oppression can fully understand the longings of the gay Christian to be understood, accepted, and loved, as Christ taught us. God knows we didn't choose to be gay, few of us know why we are, yet we all have had to learn to live with it. Many of us have forgotten God in the process.

For many years I fought my gayness. Only when I came to terms with it did I find peace. God, through my Mennonite church, continued to use me at the local, state, and district levels. One day the door to my closet was opened and I found I had suddenly become as the unwanted stepchild. I was still the same person in my and God's eyes, but I was only tolerated by my church.

I left my Mennonite community and started a new life. I know that God has always been with me and that he has blessed me richly. Yet I still find very few evangelical Christians who will accept me as a gay Christian. Except in rare instances, I must tread lightly to save unduly hurting myself and upsetting others. I must stay on the perimeter of the church. All I ask is to be loved and allowed to live and love, as Christ has taught. It is my prayer that out of dialogues such as you have recently reported some understanding may begin to take place about the gay Christian brothers and sisters in our churches.

If you choose to print this letter, I request you do not use my name even though this is usually against your policy. I have friends and relatives in many Mennonite churches and I don't wish to put anyone into an embarrassing position, or open any old wounds. All I ask is that you, the church, allow your gay brothers and sisters to be loved, and to love in return, as Christ has taught us all to live. *Sincerely, in his love, name withheld* May 15

Jesus-way or bombs-way?

Dear Editor: Thanks to John Stoner for writing his letter (April 25 issue). His point is one that has needed to be expressed for a long time. I quote, ". . . that those who counsel against tax refusal and civil disobedience would be much more convincing if they were leading out in other visible kinds of response to the nuclear crisis."

My question is a basic one. Do we as a church believe that war is sin? Are we really uncomfortable, sorrowful, or repentant that we (as a nation) train for and are committed to dropping atomic bombs on people in other countries? I'm not sure we are. If we are sorry, repent, and desire forgiveness, we must change our ways. We cannot support such training and preparation. We must change our actions, just as we would expect change from a prostitute who repents and seeks forgiveness.

I watched the TV series "Holocaust." How can such horrors happen, we wonder. It was all legal. So is the building of thousands of atomic bombs. The whole world is threatened with extermination now and we are as *silent* as the German church then, and as cooperative, too! We can't serve two masters. Which will we choose—Jesus' way of love and life or the bomb's way of legalized death and destruction?

In the May 2 issue, Carl Lehman's letter seems to cloud the issues. Money is indeed a medium of exchange, but as Christian stewards of God's gifts we must be concerned about the things for which that money is invested, donated, or paid. Money is often what we give back to God for the Lord's work, so we would expect that it wouldn't be used to print pornography. That would be supporting sin, just as giving money to produce bombs is supporting sin.

Whether war tax resistance comes from our heritage of faith is continually debatable. The sixteenth-century Anabaptists debated it, some paid and others didn't. Richard K. MacMaster writes of many Mennonite discussions in early America resulting in differing pay-or-not activities ("Christian Obedience in Revolutionary Times," a booklet available from Mennonite Central Committee). And it continues today, thanks to people like our sister Cornelia Lehn, whom we wish to support in her witness for Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace who has overcome the world and vanquished the powers of sin and death. I pray that we, as the body of Christ, may seek to be secure in God, our Father, not in armed might—that we may be more like his son Jesus, our Lord, who gave himself up for us and for the world. *John Swarr, 1723 Newton Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20010*

May 16

Editorial helped me

Dear Editor: Thank you for printing my "Mennonite Psalm of Praise" (May 2 issue). I truly feel that God put the words into my heart, mind, and fingers.

The reason for my writing is really because your editorial "Keep Your Eye on the Doughnut" (May 2 issue) is a gem; it is a minisermon which really speaks to me in every line. It indicates that you know people and their problems for what they really are.

If we could keep our eyes and lives on the fact that in Christ our lives have great value, we would not become so discouraged with all the events and reverses that come cycloning across our paths and we could continue to be the light to others who are looking to us.

Thank you for not only giving me the thrill of seeing my own writing in print, but right on its opposite page of giving me the inspiration I need so much to keep my love and energies going as I teach school. *Pauline Badertscher, 2359 South Kohler Road, Orrville, Ohio 44667*

May 19

Sometimes hard to read

Dear Editor: In the April 18 issue, I found the print over the illustrations and photographs exceptionally hard to read. Cast my vote against this type of printing. *Rachel I. Albrecht, 1605 South Main Street, Princeton, Illinois 61356*

May 20

Homosexuality workshop

I wrote earlier about our Wichita campaign to repeal the antidiscrimination legislation against homosexuals.

Now I note that one of our churches (May 2 issue) is sponsoring a workshop on homosexuality. I have lost sleep over this and feel compelled to write.

The Bible portrays the complete life-style for humanity, spiritual as well as physical. For our spiritual welfare John 3:16-18 and Romans 10:9 are two of many to note.

For our physical life-style Genesis 2:24 reads, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." (Not two Adams or two Eves). This life-style is underscored through the rest of the Bible. Our style of life while on earth certainly should be creative, practical, and logical.

Is it just possible that the gay life-style has come up with solving the problem of world hunger? There would not be anybody around to be hungry.

I can't imagine gays on a farm with only stallions, bulls, rams, boars, and roosters. Gay life-style isn't even for the birds.

Actually the too-polite name of "gay" is a misnomer and is better pictured as freakish, queer, or sodomistic, according to the American College Dictionary.

Our greatest resource is our children and of particular concern for a long time has been the reporting of physical and mental abuse they suffer in our permissive society. In this regard we are not singling out gays. However, their life-style is certainly a negative contribution.

Our society's great strength is the family unit. Homosexuality contributes to the breakup of the family unit.

Reluctantly, I suppose, we should thank Madalyn O'Hare and the gays for alerting us to the danger of their philosophies.

Noting that the workshop is to be a forum on the philosophical, psychological, and theological understanding of homosexuality, I make one comment. You may somehow get along with the first two aspects but I wonder about the theological aspect. The dictionary defines theology as "based upon the nature and will of God as *revealed* to man." I hope that the one and only area of agreement between gays and nongays is that we cannot ascribe to God our creator as *revealing* or imposing a gay life-style on his creation.

I intend to offer prayers for gays. *A. W. Ratzlaff, 702 South Lorraine, Wichita, Kansas 67211*

May 23

Plow prophets to Bible

Dear Editor: I beg to differ with Donald R. Steelberg's "Plowing the Prophets into Mission" (May 16 issue).

Our basic Mennonite-giving problem is that of placing our main emphasis on "plowing our prophets" into "causes and concerns—calling people to simple living and peace," rather than placing our main emphasis on the same main emphasis of the Bible—"calling them to Christ!" *Barbara L. Bloomquist, 9131 Markworth Road, Blaine, Washington 98230*

May 26

About letters: To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Brevity is encouraged. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations. Editor

Beside my Bible

Mary F. Heisey

Encounters with Christ

This week's paperbacks beside my Bible are each "a good read." Like the Scriptures, they offer information, direction, and peace. They tell of close encounters with Christ via biblical prophecy, marriage, and his time-honored name.

Bible Prophecy: Questions and Answers, *by Paul Erb (Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and Kitchener, Ontario, 1978, 208 pages).*

This well-written testament to prophetic truth and divine revelation raises ninety questions you may have about biblical prophecy. Positive but not dogmatic, this work should strengthen faith in Bible prophecy, prompt open-minded discussion, and encourage greater Bible study.

Marriage Encounter: A Guide for Sharing, *by Don Demarest, Jerry and Marilyn Sexton (Carillon Books, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1977, 241 pages).*

If the quality of caring has cooled in your marriage, study this guide before, during, and after your vacation. Actually, it's a Marriage Encounter weekend between covers (no pun intended).

Learning how to share feelings—unmasking—requires the totally honest dialogue of both partners. The pain of revelation can restore growth to the stalemated relationship that hungers for fulfillment.

I especially appreciated the quotations of Father Gabriel Calvo, founder of the Marriage Encounter movement.

Jesus as They Saw Him, *by William Barclay (SCM Press Ltd., 56 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1, 1977, 429 pages).*

"His name is wonderful" declares a contemporary chorus, and this long book echoes that endless theme. "Jesus of the many names"—over fifty different appellations for him are used as chapter headings—becomes more real today as we study these New Testament interpretations of his life and ministry. "The good shepherd," one of the self-interpretations of Jesus, is beautifully clarified.

Christians and world events—a comment

The Middle East, 1977-78 (King James Version)

And when the time had come to pass, behold there was a new leader in the Sanhedrin. The Pharisee Menachem Begin had taken over from the Sadduceean leader Rabin. And the people of Israel rejoiced because the Pharisees promised to be faithful to the Israel of old. Once again the Pork Law was enacted (that no one may sell pork within the land of Israel). The law regarding the Sabbath was also strengthened. He also spoke words of peace unto them. "Let us put an end to the bloodshed that is abhorrent to us and sit down at the negotiating table in sincerity and seriousness" (*Time*, July 1977). He looked unto his neighbors, the pharaoh of Egypt and the kings of Jordan and Syria, and asked them to meet him.

And behold, the pharaoh of Egypt arose, and said he would come to wave the flag of peace. He came to Jerusalem on a chariot of the heavens, and all the world was glad. "I have come seeking that peace," said he unto the Sanhedrin, "which passes all understanding. I believe that you the people of Israel have the right to exist." The rulers listened and clapped. Unto themselves they said, "Here is one who understands us."

Sadat, however, had more to say unto them. "But so also do the people of this land, the Palestinians have a right to exist as a nation." And the leaders' hearts hardened. Surely he speaks only rhetoric. He will surely change his mind. "God's chosen people will perish if those terrorist people are allowed to create their own land," said Begin unto them.

O Begin, thou who hast stained thine hands with the blood of terrorism in the past. Indeed, as a man of war you cannot understand the way of peace. Hearken the words of God unto David: "Thou shalt not build a house in honor of my name (house of peace?), for thou hast been a fighting man and thou hast shed blood" (1 Chronicles 22:8).

Nevertheless, the talks of peace continued. The people of Palestine, however, became more and more desperate. The words of peace were not spoken for them. And a number of their youth arose, and went unto the sea, until they came to the road which leads to Jerusalem. There they took unto themselves a chariot and slew by fire those who were aboard. And all the world mourned.

Begin arose once again in the house of the Sanhedrin and said, "We will not forget this deed. Ye have heard that it has been said, 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.' But I say unto you, 'Eyes for an eye, and teeth for a tooth. Vengeance is mine.' " And he sent his chariots of war into Lebanon to slay the enemy and make refugees of their wives and children.

But God rose up among the people of Israel some prophets, wild youth with unkempt hair and clothing made of blue denim. They shouted from the highways and the mountaintops for peace and reconciliation. But Begin did not hear the words of the prophets, and the planners of Israel continued to settle more Jews on the lands of the Palestinians. The agricultural minister said unto the Jews of the diaspora, "Come unto the land of your heritage." Some came, others sent their silver and gold, and still others influenced the kings of other lands to send chariots and swords to Israel.

O Israel, thou hast suffered much. Repent and turn to the Lord your God. Trust him and not the weapons of destruction. Do not inflict on others that pain which has been thrust upon thee. Listen to the words of one who loved thee greatly, and even waits now for your true liberation.

"And when he (Jesus) came near he beheld the city (Jerusalem) and wept over it saying, 'If thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes . . . thou knewest not the time of thy visitation' " (Luke 19:42, 44b).

Harold Fransen is a summer pastoral assistant at First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, Alberta.

Meditation

To celebrate the Fourth

"Operator. I'd like to place a collect call to Norman Pearson in Kewanee, Illinois." The thin, reedy voice shook.

"Is this Mrs. Pearson? I took your other calls. I hope your son is home now."

"Oh, so I got you again? Please ring once more."

"Sorry, they still don't answer. You're calling from the bus depot here in Davenport, aren't you? Are you all right?"

"Oh yes, thank you. I can't imagine what can be keeping them."

"What time did you arrive?"

"About 2:30. Normans are always so prompt. I'm a little worried, you know, about the Fourth of July traffic and all."

"It's almost five. You must be tired."

"Well, yes, it's a long trip from the retirement home, and these benches do get hard. I'm eighty-one and I can't sit like I used to. And there's nobody to talk to . . . ."

"Do you know a neighbor we could call?"

"No. No, I was here in January when they moved in. But I don't recall meeting any neighbors."

"Do they belong to a church?" the operator persisted.

"Well, yes, of course, they belong to . . . there is a parsonage next door . . . and a church. Which church? I don't know as I remember. I did meet the pastor . . . a very nice young man."

"Do you remember his name? Or the name of the church?"

"I can't recall." She sighed wearily. "Maybe . . . it might have been Congregational . . . ."

"I'm checking the church listings now. Shall I ring him?" (She was already ringing.)

"Rev. Anderson? This is the telephone company. I'm trying to reach Norman Pearson for his mother."

She heard him answer, "I'll check for you, hold on please." Long moments dragged. "No, no one answers the door, and the car is gone."

Mrs. Pearson forced herself to be brave. "Thank you, operator. They must be on their way."

A few minutes after six o'clock, a woman in her late thirties entered the deserted waiting room, glanced around, and walked over to the tiny silver-haired woman.

"Mrs. Pearson? I'm the operator who has been taking your calls, I thought I'd come and wait with you."

"How nice. But don't you have other things to do? It's a holiday."

"Never mind; I was worried about you. Tell me about your trip."

They talked, with Grandma Pearson telling of her life as a farmer's wife, her husband's death three years ago, and her decision to move to the retirement home.

As the time passed, the telephone operator stood up. "It's nearly seven. We should get something to eat."

"I am a little hungry. But I hate to leave. What if they come?"

"We could leave a message with the agent."

Grandma Pearson looked doubtful. "Let's wait a few more minutes."

The door opened. "Mother! You here already? The bus isn't due until 7:30 tonight."

"Already? I've been here since three o'clock."

"Three? How could you? We called and they said there was only one bus and it got in at 7:30. We came early to be sure you didn't have to wait."

Norman questioned the ticket agent. "The only regularly scheduled bus does come at 7:30, but the three o'clock bus drops off passengers if there are any."

Hugging her son again, Grandma Pearson said, "We kept calling and you weren't there and I thought . . . oh, I forgot, this is the telephone operator who kept helping me. We should take her with us to dinner, Norman."

"You came here after work to wait with Mother? How nice of you! Thank you, and of course we'd like to take you."

"I can't. It's been nice meeting you, but I must be getting home."

"Oh, come on now. You don't want to eat alone on the Fourth of July."

The operator moved to the door, laughing. "I won't. I have a husband and two boys and two girls waiting at home for me. So I must go help them celebrate." *Pat Pearson*

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CONTRIBUTORS

Marvin Hein, 212 South Washington, Hillsboro, Kansas 67063, is pastor of the Hillsboro Mennonite Brethren Church and is first vice-president of the Mennonite World Conference.

Jacques Chauvin, 41 rue Ronsard, 59200 Tourcoin 6, France, presented his article at a seminar of the Evangelical Academy in West Berlin, February 1977.

Our meditation writer this week is Pat Pearson, 4016 Phoenix, Ames, Iowa 50010.

CREDITS

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Martyrs Mirror

Independence Day . . . July 4. Canada Day . . . July 1. Fireworks, popcorn, water-skiing, fishing, boating, baseball, barbecues, soft drinks. Red-white-and-blue . . . the Stars and Stripes waving proudly in the breeze. The good old maple leaf—red on white—faltering just a little.

Surely we are entitled to celebrate our countries at least once a year—proud to be citizens of the United States, honored to be Canadians. Scripture teaches us that government is of God and that "every person" should "be subject to the governing authorities" (Romans 13:1).

Why then are there so many "banana republics"? Why so many coup d'etats? How do you explain the "revolving door" governments of Italy and France? Was Watergate just the product of a bad press? Is Quebec separation only a scare tactic?

At least part of our frustration with governments today is also found in Romans 13. Paul says, "For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad . . . Then do what is good, and you will receive his (the ruler's) approval . . ." (13:3).

Has Idi Amin given approval to what is good for Uganda? Are the disappearances of many thousands (*Sojourners,* December 1977, page 9) in Paraguay, Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay due to the support of "good conduct"? What about Amnesty International's (1977 Nobel Peace Prize recipients) estimates of fifty to one hundred thousand political prisoners in Indonesia (the majority held without trial for twelve years)? Did Steve Biko die because of bad conduct?

Many governments today set themselves up as gods. They decide what is right (rarely according to scriptural teaching) and what is wrong (more likely to be anything that threatens vested interests).

Partly we must blame ourselves for this dilemma. We'd all like to pay little or nothing in taxes and have our own lives interfered with minimally by government regulations; but we continue to *demand* ever more services from our governments. Because of our turning more and more responsibilities to central care, actual government becomes secondary to services that we expect from our elected leaders. That is our own problem and fault. We need to think and pray about that.

On the other hand, the pages of history flow crimson with the blood of those who have tried to follow Paul's call to "do what is good" and have dared to expect their rulers to approve.

The 1977 edition of *Martyrs Mirror* (Herald Press, 1,157 pages) just arrived on my desk. Its stories, first compiled by Thieleman Jansz van Braght in the Dutch language, 1660, tell of Christian martyrdom from the time of Christ until the date of the book.

Martyrs Mirror, while not a scholarly work in today's sense of sophistication, is generally considered reliable. It tells account upon account of persons who committed their lives to Jesus Christ and tried to live both obedient to God and to those authorities which "approved the good." When they had to choose between serving God or obeying an authority (political, civil, or ecclesiastical) which was a "terror to good conduct," they gladly suffered abuse, torture, and death in being true to their Lord.

From thirteen-year-old youngsters to aged saints, van Braght summons these martyrs before us. He calls forth Pionius, bishop at Smyrna who was nailed to a piece of wood and burned alive in 254 A.D. Of Pionius it is testified, "He strengthened the brethren and encouraged them . . . even unto the end" (page 135). Of Leonhard Keyser, a priest converted to the Anabaptists, *Martyrs Mirror* says that in 1527 "he was taken to the fire by three executioners, bound crosswise on a ladder, and thrust into the fire. When he called upon Jesus Christ the ropes fell from his body and were burned . . ." (page 422).

Mennonites like to read the classic story of Dirk Willems (see cover). In his flight, the pursuer fell through the ice. Willems turned around and saved the man's life. The burgomaster pronounced sentence regardless, and in 1569 Dirk Willems was put to death by a lingering fire (page 741).

The *Martyrs Mirror* should be in every Mennonite home. We, both young and old, could do well to take it out at least for a few minutes (maybe after the celebrations) on our great patriotic days and read to our families one or more of these incredible demonstrations of faithfulness to Christ.

At the least, it will remind us that the call to follow Jesus is a call to give our first allegiance to God's kingdom. *Bernie Wiebe*

Following our summer biweekly schedule, the next issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated July 11.

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:27 JULY 11, 1978

Liberation theology: A solution?

Orlando E. Costas

There are and have been in the last decades various theologies that sound alike. For some, liberation theology looks very much like the social gospel. Others identify it with the theology of revolution, which made headway in some European and North American circles in the latter sixties as an attempt to build a theory of social revolution with theological categories and tools. Yet others say that it is but another expression of Western political theologies in the line of Niebuhr, Barth, Brunner, Tillich, Bonhoeffer, and recently, Moltmann and Metz.

If the theology of liberation is any of these, then it doesn't have much to offer. If it is but an old line with a new name, then it is a no-solution solution.

But is it the social gospel with a new face? Can we identify it with revolutionary theology? Is it a North Atlantic-type of political theology? I say no. And anyone who makes such a quick identification doesn't really understand what it is about.

What then is the theology of liberation?

It is a Latin American theological movement. There are non-Latin American theologies of liberation: black, women's, African, Asian, white, and so on. But liberation theology in Latin America is more than a systematic reflection of a school of thought; it is a theological movement. In its Roman Catholic and Protestant expressions, it began to take shape in the middle of the sixties. Its roots can be traced back to the days of Bartolome de las Casas in the sixteenth century.

The latter constitutes a critical time in Latin American history, for it marks the initial stage of critical reflection in the

In highly repressive countries it functions as a theology of resistance in captivity; where there is relative freedom, it functions as a theology of solidarity with all those around the world who are engaged in the struggle against economic exploitation, political oppression, and social marginalization.

struggle for the liberation of the disenfranchised—the Indian aborigines—conquered and domesticated in the name of Christ and the gospel. This process was soon stopped by the forces of colonial Christendom. It was revived somewhat in the nineteenth century when Protestants began to arrive under the protection of liberal politicians, creating a polemic confrontation with Catholics that had as one of its leading characteristics a criticism of the social and political conservatism of post-colonial Christendom.

It was not until the early 1930s that Catholic conservatism began to be cracked open. A massive exodus from the country to the city produced by the world economic crisis changed the physiognomy of Latin America. The concentration of poor masses around the urban areas accentuated the economic gap between the ruling oligarchies and the displaced majorities. The urban experience shook the traditional categories, and thus the conceptual and psychological grip of the clergy on the masses. A political awakening began through a growing labor union movement and the emergence of various forms of nationalistic populism, some of Marxist inspiration. The Protestant Pentecostal movement, which had remained relatively small, found its place among the displaced urban masses and began to expand at an incredible speed. The Catholic Church began to suffer a setback not only numerically but politically and intellectually.

To deal with this situation, the Catholic Action movement, which had started in Italy and France, was introduced in Latin America by the Catholic hierarchy. Educational institutions were started, labor organizations were formed, and a lay political action movement (the Christian Democratic movement) began to penetrate the continent. A new Catholic elite emerged in the various spheres of society. Yet, by the middle of the fifties it was obvious that this new approach could not contain the process of de-Christianization among the masses, the growing influence of Marxism and the advance of Protestantism, and the pastoral needs of the urban Catholic church.

In 1955, the Episcopal Conference of Latin America (CELAM) was formed to bring about a continentwide pastoral coordination. It began with the recognition that Latin America was still in a state of mission, that the majority of Latin Americans were not, as had been supposed for several centuries, all Christian, that there was still a tremendous evangelistic work to be done, and that in order to accomplish it there had to be a pastoral renewal. The Latin American Pastoral Institute (IPLA) was formed in the late fifties to stimulate such a renewal.

But as with Protestants, it soon became obvious among Roman Catholics that the evangelization of Latin America could not be done in a vacuum, that it could not be a mere spiritual endeavor, that the pathetic social and economic situation of the continent could not be overlooked any longer. Meanwhile, Pope John XXIII called for the second Vatican Council to enable the church to cope with the problem of the day.

After 1965, it was felt that a special conference was needed to deal with the implications of the Council for Latin America. Preparations began to take place amidst a concern over the increasing gap between rich and poor. In 1966, CELAM held a meeting in Buenos Aires around the question of development. In the same year, the World Conference on Church and Society was held in Geneva, with a leading role taken by Latin American Protestant theologians. A year later, Pope Paul published his encyclical *Populorum Progressio,* where he called for the integral development of the poor and disenfranchised nations of the world.

It should not be any surprise, therefore, that by the time the Catholic Episcopal Conference came around to celebrate its continental meeting to look at the implication of Vatican II for Latin America, the most pressing issue to be dealt with was the growing impatience over the social and economic disparities between the haves and the have-nots. Thus, the topic of the meeting, held in Medellin, Colombia, in August 1968, was "The Presence of the Church in the Present-Day Transformation of Latin America." It was Medellin which coined the word *liberation* as the new term for what *Populorum Progressio* called integral development.

After Medellin, there followed an avalanche of articles, books, and documents which brought forth a new—and original for Latin America—type of theological reflection, a reflection on the continental struggle for liberation.

Because of its strongly political and socialist commitment, the theology of liberation became (particularly after the Chilean coup d'etat of September 11, 1973) the target of conservative, right-wing church leaders, politicians, and theologians. Today it takes various forms. In highly repressive countries it functions as a theology of resistance in captivity; where there is relative freedom, it functions as a theology of solidarity, not only with the thousands of women and men who have been and are being tortured, imprisoned, or thrown out of their countries for their participation in the struggle for justice and liberation, but with all those around the world who are engaged in the struggle against economic exploitation, political oppression, and social marginalization.

The theology of liberation is a theological method. Traditional academic (Western) theology has been notorious for its abstractness, being a reflection upon itself without any reference to concrete problems. At Medellin, this approach to theology was challenged. Theological reflection followed the analysis of the social, economic, and political reality of Latin America. How could there be a theological reflection on "The Church in the Present-Day Transformation of Latin America" without a clear analysis of the continental situation?

Thus, before *hearing* what God's revelation had to say about present-day Latin America, the church, it was felt, had to *see* (understand) the concrete reality. Moreover, it was not enough for the church to hear the Word in the light of what it saw, but to commit itself to *do* what the Word commanded for that hour, *See, hear,* and *do* are the three words that characterized Medellin's theological method.

It has been said that the theology of liberation is not a new theology, but rather a new way of tackling the theological task. It is theology done in the praxis of faith, in dialogue with other disciplines, in view of the transformation of reality. The theology of liberation has sought to liberate theology from its academic ivory tower.

It sees the theological task as inseparably bound to the obedience of faith (Romans 1:5). It insists that Christians can *think* their faith only as they *practice* it. But since the practice of faith can only take place in society, the process of reflecting on the faith (theology) needs the help of those disciplines that are responsible for interpreting the social reality. The social sciences are thus brought into the theological task by the theology of liberation as mediating instruments. Through them, theology gains a concrete understanding of the world in which the faith is lived, and, therefore, of the questions which it must respond to in order to enable Christians to test and strengthen the efficacy of their obedience.

The Christian faith, understood as the body of beliefs which are centered on the person and work of Jesus Christ, has an ethical thrust: commitment to love God and neighbor, trust in God's transcendent power, and hope for the coming of his kingdom. Love, trust, and hope are all action verbs. As ethical imperatives they underscore that to be Christian is to be engaged in the transformation of history.

Because the Christian faith has an ethical thrust, theology must make a critical use of the social sciences. The theology of liberation does not advocate the indiscriminate use of these auxiliary disciplines. It knows that there is no such a thing as a neutral science. Accordingly, it calls for the critical use of those disciplines which can best interpret the concrete reality of the oppressed majorities. Why them and not the others? Because the gospel is particularly concerned with the poor and the disenfranchised (Luke 1:51-53; 6:20), and because the theology of liberation emerges as a theological reflection of Christians who represent oppressed people.

Being, therefore, a theological reflection from an oppressed continent, it is natural that it would want to look at history from the perspective of what Fannon called "the wretched of the earth," and that it would want to underscore the biblical insight of the gospel as good news for the poor (Luke 4:18). For a long time, theology has been done from the perspective of the powerful and mighty. It is time that it be done from the perspective of the weak and downtrodden. For far too long the poor have been hidden from the eyes of theology; it is time that they be rescued as a fundamental category of the gospel and as a place from which to reflect on the faith.

The theology of liberation constitutes, in the third place, a program. It wants to lead Christians to experience their faith from within the history of exploitation and oppression of the majority of human beings around the world, especially in Latin America. In this respect, it wants to put theology in the frontiers of world history by stirring up the social conscience of Christians, by calling them to commit their lives to the poor and downtrodden of society, and enabling them to participate in their struggle for liberation.

This new mode of being in the world is complemented by another goal: leading Christians to interpret their faith in the light of the aforementioned struggle. Thus, economic, social, and political questions are given priority over personal, psychological, and philosophical problems, since the struggle for liberation is primarily (though admittedly not solely) a social-economic-political matter.

In the process of reflecting on the faith in the light of the collective fears and hopes of the poor, personal, psychological, and philosophical concerns take on a new dimension. Thus, sin, conversion, reconciliation, and sanctification, among other themes of the Bible, are interpreted in relation to the larger problems of society, rather than in the perspective of a private, individual, isolated self, as so often happens in evangelical circles.

Our topic asks whether the theology of liberation is a solution. The answer is yes, but not a solution to every problem of Latin America. Rather it represents a solution to the problem of articulating a theology from the perspective of the nonpersons of society. Whatever our judgment of the theology of liberation, one thing is indisputable: its commitment to the poor and its articulation of their deepest concerns.

Beyond this, the theology of liberation represents a solution to the sterility of academic theology. The theological task becomes a creative enterprise in this theology, and not a repetitious exercise.

Finally, the theology of liberation is a solution to the ethical impotence of the contemporary church. Once again theology is brought into the frontiers of history as a prophetic voice in the church's mission. Paraphrasing one of Karl Marx's theses against Feuerbach, "Heretofore philosophers have interpreted the world; the point is to change it." Liberation theologians would say, "Heretofore theology has reflected on the predicament of human history; the point is to help the church participate in its transformation."

Sin, conversion, reconciliation, and sanctification, among other themes of the Bible, are interpreted in relation to the larger problems of society, rather than in the perspective of a private, individual, isolated self, as so often happens in evangelical circles.

Emergency relief provides a hungry child with food for today. But what about tomorrow?

Two worlds help a third

Connie J. Olson

"Sir, I'm hungry," pleaded a five-year-old boy on a city street in Nigeria. The relief worker dug into his pocket and pulled out a coin for the child to buy a morsel of food. The child was satisfied, but the next day his hunger returned.

Emergency relief is essential, but it provides only a short-term answer. For the child, who typifies the millions of starving people in underdeveloped nations, the most realistic long-range solution is self-help education. Inadequate logistics and a lack of available finances to feed the world rule out alternative solutions.

Persons with a desire to serve, and who have training in agriculture, engineering, nutrition, public health, teaching, and community development, are needed to provide this education.

Out of an awareness of these needs, a new cooperative educational program has been born between interested independent colleges, mostly church-related, and Kansas State University.

The cooperative dual degree program has developed from an inquiry by KSU to representatives from four Mennonite colleges seeking a way to provide agricultural training for their students. As the agricultural program has taken shape, interest has developed for a similar program in home economics.

The program, now in its first full year, includes sixteen independent Kansas colleges. Initial funding has come from Kansas State University, Mennonite Central Committee, and the United Methodist Church.

"There is great demand for graduates with this type of training to serve abroad with church-sponsored development programs and with the Peace Corps," said Evelyn Senecal, associate dean of home economics at KSU and secretary of the dual degree advisory board.

Research shows that private liberal arts colleges, where most missionaries are produced, do an excellent job of educating their students in liberal arts, which includes a sensitive world view. At the same time the tax-supported land-grant universities are

Many solutions are simple. Extending the length of a hoe handle or building an earthen dam to catch and hold the monsoon rains until the dry season can make a big difference in yields.

THE MENNONITE seeks to witness, teach, motivate, and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published weekly except biweekly during July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton, Kansas 67114, by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kansas 67114, and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions in United States and Canada: $9.00 one year; $17.00 two years; $24 00 three years; foreign: $9.50 per year. Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Canada R3P OM4. Business office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114

Dana Neff, left, junior at Bethel College, discusses the KSU cooperative dual degree program with Dwight Wiebe, Manhattan, coordinator of the program.

providing high-quality occupationally oriented education. The cooperative dual degree program seeks to combine the best of these two worlds to help the Third World, according to Dwight Wiebe, coordinator of the program.

"In its truest form, liberal arts prepares an individual for life," Wiebe said. "It is the development of personality and character rather than preparation for a specific job or vocation."

"Liberal arts education makes the student aware of problems around the world and raises the question of responsibility for action," he continued. "This action may be prompted by a personal concern for survival due to an awareness of interdependence, or a sense of moral responsibility for one's brother as the result of a humanitarian understanding of humankind."

The state universities have the solutions to some of the problems, but not as much of the awareness, Wiebe added.

While the emphasis of the program is training students for work abroad, students may enroll in any of the twenty-one agriculture options or the eighteen home economics options. Most of the students have chosen the education option.

The variety of courses that agriculture or home economics education majors are required to take draws students to the new program, according to Frank Carpenter, associate dean of agriculture and a member of the dual degree advisory board. Because of the rigid class sequences in some of the more specific areas, such as animal science and industry, a longer time on the KSU campus is required in options other than education, he explained.

Currently fifteen students are involved in the program; twenty-nine others are taking dual degree courses, but haven't officially joined. Because the dual degree curriculum can be added at any time, several students are already on the KSU campus, even though the program is only a year old. The earlier a student enrolls in the program, the less likely he will lose credit hours for classes already taken that do not meet the program's requirements.

Students entering the program attend their independent college for 2½ years before transferring to KSU for a year of intensive agricultural or home economics study. They return to their home college for the final semester. Students should be able to complete the program in four years, at which time they receive a degree in liberal arts from their home college and a bachelor of science degree from KSU.

The dual degree program is the first of its kind in the nation and the first time in 100 years that independent colleges and a land-grant university have combined their efforts in one program. Several other states have shown an interest in developing similar programs.

Agriculturalists are needed at home to teach vocational agriculture in high schools, and abroad to teach better methods of farming and how to take care of livestock. As scientific knowledge and technology are applied to improving productivity in the developing nations, food supplies will increase.

Many solutions are simple. Extending the length of a hoe handle or building an earthen dam to catch and hold the monsoon rains until the dry season can make a big difference in yields.

Likewise, home economists are in demand at home and abroad to help people meet the challenges of a changing society. Diminishing resources, single-parent families, working women, aging, and the world's food supply are just a few of the areas needing attention from trained home economists.

"There are attractive occupational opportunities in teaching and in other areas for these graduates," Senecal said. Graduates of the dual degree program can "help make everyday living easier and happier for families, whether in this country, or in the countries of the Third World," she continued.

Hunger is just one factor in a complex network of problems plaguing underdeveloped countries. These complexities can be corrected when someone has the will, the commitment, and the training to help correct them. The cooperative dual degree program provides an opportunity for those with such a commitment.

Festival hears clarion call for explosive missions

Three hundred and fifty registered participants and many guests gathered together with outstanding mission speakers and an impressive array of workshop leaders for the Tri-State Festival of Missions held June 16-18 in Bluffton, Ohio.

John R. W. Stott—keynote speaker and rector emeritus of All Souls Church in London, England—challenged Christians to a personal response to missions. "I'd guess some of us need to repent," he said. "Is there anybody who has resisted the missionary dimension of the church's life . . . who has dismissed the Christian mission as though it could be dispensed with? Has anybody patronized it rather smugly with a few coins from time to time or with a few perfunctory prayers? . . . Then we need to repent."

"The religion of the Bible is an explosive centrifugal force," he declared. "It pulls us out of our narrow self-centeredness and sends us into God's world to witness and to serve the Christ."

The church must embody the gospel it is preaching, Stott says. "The church must *be* the new community that it talks about—a center of love and reconciliation." We berate the outside world, he observes; but, "How about criticizing ourselves? The state of the nation reflects the state of the church."

Stott called Christians to a "holy worldliness" that recognizes the twofold nature of the church: living *in* the world while remaining distinct *from* the world. "As salt, we are to maintain within secular society the incorruptible standards of Jesus. We are to be rubbed into society, to be moved into secular positions where we can be an influence for Jesus Christ and stand firm for him and for his standards: truth, honesty, justice, purity, dignity, freedom, and compassion." It worries him, Stott confessed, that so many Christians have no idea of the influence they can have for Jesus Christ in social and socio-political circles.

Donald R. Jacobs, overseas director of the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, spoke on two themes: "Jesus Christ—Relevant" and "Jesus Christ—Revolutionary."

Speaking of the revolutionary Christ, Jacobs maintained that Jesus calls his people not only to wholeness but also to take up the cross . . . and to suffer if need be. The Holy Spirit is revolutionary—a change agent. And there is still a place for *Martyrs Mirror* in today's homes, he said. There is going to be resistance to change and where Christianity is maturing, there is suffering. He sees the test of faith as a grand test; martyrdom is still the model for Christians, he declared.

W. Robert Hess, professor of philosophy and history at Malone College and former missionary to India, used Jonah as a comparison and contrast for the missionary model of the 1980s. Missionaries of the future, he said, must have an intimate knowledge of God and a responsive obedience. They must know, feel with, and understand the people of the world.

All peoples around the world (not just those with a Judeo-Christian heritage) face the reality of moral law and a moral conscience. Hess admitted that the theme of judgment is not a popular one; "but it is," he insisted, "basic. We cannot face the reality of this world without facing the reality of moral law. It is not that God is punitive; he is *just*."

Thoughtful missionaries will be very concerned to know and share the essential Christian message as it is separate from their own cultures and backgrounds, Hess said. And they will be conscious of the difference between arrogance and Christian assurance. According to Hess, one of the great weaknesses of the "I'm OK; You're OK" philosophy is that often this philosophy lends relaxed acceptance, without a cross and without a transformation.

Thirty-five workshops considered various Christian responses to competing world ideologies, population pressures and food shortages, economics and world trade, nationalism and struggle for power; and examined mission strategies in the contemporary world.

The Tri-State Festival of Missions was organized by Brethren in Christ, Mennonites, and Quakers. *Ruth Naylor*

Northern District decides on church planting strategies

Holding a peace pipe, symbol of the Northern District Conference, President Ben Sawatzky opened the eighty-fifth session of the conference meeting at Glendive, Montana, June 15-18.

The overall theme of the conference was "World Missions: Interpretations '78." Speakers Howard Habegger, executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission, and Peter Kehler, COM secretary for Asia, each gave two addresses dealing with changes in missions and the outlook for missions today.

Habegger stressed that although times have changed dramatically in the last seventy-five years, the gospel is unchanging. The great change in missions today is that we now have opportunity, because of our affluence in North America, to do mission work with overseas churches who are now becoming sending churches. Habegger also pointed out that overseas Mennonite churches are growing at a much faster rate than North American or European Mennonite churches. Within seventy-five years the Mennonite church has become a global church and there could be one million baptized Mennonites by the year 2000.

In speaking about missions in Asia, Kehler pointed to the problems of population, poverty, education, and urbanization in this area of two-thirds of the world's people. How can the church speak to these needs? Kehler emphasized that new patterns of ministry must be found for Asia.

The most significant action of the conference was approving several recommendations by the home missions committee concerning church planting. There are over sixty cities in the Northern District with a population of 10,000 or more with no Mennonite church. The recommendations include conducting statistical surveys in each of the cities within the district during the next two years; considering various strategies for church planting; and planning for a minimum of one new church fellowship per year for the next ten years.

A strong affirmation was given to the conference's program of bookrack evangelism; $8,450 was budgeted for this purpose.

Among new officers elected were Myron Schrag, Minneapolis, Minnesota, vice-president; and Palmer Graber, Freeman, South Dakota, secretary.

The conference was climaxed on Sunday evening by a picnic and closing worship service amid the badlands of Makoshika State Park near Glendive with the Northern Cheyenne churches in charge. The singing of Cheyenne hymns and the testimony of Ted Risingsun demonstrated in a vivid way the unity of the Spirit as the Northern District churches were challenged by Ted to work together at the common task of mission. *Myron Schrag*

Conscription coming, predicts NISBCO

Washington, D.C.—The National Interreligious Board for Conscientious Objectors (NISBCO) says the House and Senate Armed Services committees are planning to reactivate conscription.

On May 6 the House Armed Services Committee issued a report stating, "Selective Service must be extricated from its present deep standby status with a return to registration and classification." They recommended a budget allocation of $17 million for 1979, up $10 million from 1978. In a similar vein, the Senate Armed Services Committee stated: "Given the strain necessary to attract the current numbers of recruits and . . . of increasing force levels, it should be clear that the all-volunteer force is a peacetime concept."

Included among the future potential activities of Selective Service is a national service program. A study released April 20 by a member of the House Armed Services Committee, congressperson Robin Beard, states that three major alternatives exist for the US army—maintain the status quo, provide additional funds for recruitment, or return to the use of some form of national service. The report continues, "A program of limited national service requiring the registration of all males and females aged seventeen to twenty-six years during fiscal year 1980, followed by the annual registration of all eighteen-year-old citizens, is recommended for wartime mobilization."

NISBCO says two alternatives exist for persons opposing a national service program. One is to oppose increased funding for Selective Service because it increases the likelihood of peacetime registration, classification, and conscription.

A second response is to encourage youth to file their beliefs on war with the church or with NISBCO. This process will prepare youth to defend their position of conscience. Doing this now is important suggests NISBCO because the Selective Service system allows little time (ten to fifteen days) to file for exemptions under proposed new regulations. Further, early filing will help in establishing credibility.

Forms for filing have been prepared by NISBCO. Their address is 550 Washington Building, 15th and New York Avenue, Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Emergency shipment to Zaire

About ten Mennonite volunteers sacked and loaded 300 bags of wheat for Angolan refugees in Zaire at the Whitewater (Kansas) mill on June 20. Two visiting Russian agronomists, currently studying American agriculture, observed and conversed with the volunteers.

Rocky Flats: "It has reduced the fear of the state . . ."

People continue to come to blockade the railway leading into the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant. And they continue to be arrested.

The Rocky Flats protest, begun April 29, is a determined effort at conscience raising on nuclear arms and environmental hazards associated with nuclear weapons plants and nuclear power stations. Rocky Flats is fifteen miles northwest of Denver, Colorado.

"We intend to maintain a steady vigil on the tracks at all costs," states Corey Ryder, a musician and member of the Rocky Flats Truth Force.

To date, eighty-five persons have been arrested 108 times. About seventy of these were arraigned May 27. Some pleaded guilty to charges of criminal trespass on federal property and are on eight-months probation with the condition that they not return to Rocky Flats. Most, including Peter Ediger, pastor of Arvada Mennonite Church, pleaded not guilty and are free on personal recognizance bonds. A pretrial conference is set for August 1.

Since May 27 more arrests have occurred. Currently about ten persons are on the tracks, camping in tents and a tepee. Whenever a train is moved into the plant they are arrested. Amazingly, more people—mainly from the Boulder-Denver area—reoccupy the tracks after each arrest.

Ryder comments, "We are an actual visible light. We are determined to stand against nuclear madness. We are a symbol. We are a focal point. We are causing debate, and even discomfort. Some people are thinking for the first time." A former Presbyterian, he said his convictions about the nuclear menace find their spiritual underpinnings from Eastern and Western religious principles.

Peter Ediger is also a member of the Rocky Flats Truth Force. He is concerned that his participation in the protests of the past two months be understood as an act of faith. "I am exercising my faith in God. I am not a political activist. The basic issue in nuclear weapons is a faith issue."

Ediger says that his experiences at Rocky Flats have wrought changes in his thinking. "We have illusions about our religious freedoms. We can say all kinds of words, but as soon as we try to put those words into action we are severely restricted."

"Furthermore," he declared, "it has reduced the fear of the state, but also made me aware of how people are captive to the powers and principalities." When he asked one police officer, "What do you think of Rocky Flats?" the officer replied, "Ask me when I'm not in uniform."

Is the protest getting anywhere? Ediger thinks that the current dissent movement on nuclear weapons production is at the same stage as dissent to the Vietnam War was in 1963-64.

John Stoner of Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section thinks the Christian church could be mobilized around the issue, although he worries that the church has lost its capacity for moral outrage.

The protesters at Rocky Flats believe they are taking a risk other than that of being arrested. Since the plant has leaked plutonium—the most lethal substance known—there is a chance that they could be contaminated. Even miniscule quantities are cancer producing. "I am willing to take this risk," says Ryder, "because I believe the world will come to an end if we do not stop nuclear technology."

The Rocky Flats Truth Force is encouraging people from across North America to come to Rocky Flats to spend time camping on the tracks. There is the risk of a citation, of course, but first and second offenders have been treated lightly by authorities. With third and fourth arrests there is a possibility of jail. Training in nonviolent civil disobedience is required before participation.

The group maintains an office, courtesy of St. Thomas Aquinas Church in Boulder, at 876-14th Avenue, telephone 303-443-9887. *Vic Reimer*

Culture, hospitality, and the marketplace to blend

Tired of talk? Attend the MWC floor show

Lombard, Illinois (MWC)—Convention Hall in Century II will be the center for the official programs of the tenth assembly of the Mennonite World Conference when it meets in Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30.

But Exhibition Hall will compete with it as the place for the smaller and more intense meetings of the 16,000 delegates and visitors expected to take part in the international event. It will be the happening place and the meeting place for the cultures of Mennonites from forty nations.

Craft and folk art items will be on display from Africa, Asia, and from North and South America. Choral, instrumental, and dramatic groups will be presenting programs and concerts.

Mennonite institutions from various parts of the world will be telling the story of their witness in a large graphic display in the center of the hall. A guidebook will supply a description of each institution's work in the official languages of the assembly. The book will also be a key to the many other attractions in the hall.

For it will be to Exhibition Hall that people will come to register for the assembly, to get information and messages, and to meet other people. With a number of hospitality centers, the hall will become a place for people to relax. And for those who need to eat, food will be served on the mezzanine.

Folk art will be a highlight of many attractions. Artisans will be on hand to demonstrate their work.

Native groups from both North and South America will display the handiwork of their people, with rugs and sand painting from the Navajo, and jewelry, pottery, weaving, and baskets from the Hopi. The Cheyenne will set up a tepee, where they will also display beadwork, leather, moccasins, and shawls.

The Cree and Saulteaux of Canada will bring quillwork baskets plus leather and beadwork. Featherwork will be shown as one of the special crafts of the Lengua and Chulupi people of Paraguay along with weaving and braiding.

Folk arts reflect the soul of a people, that spirit that surges ever upward to give expression to its inner life. The most genuine of the folk arts are those that are learned in the family, and passed down from generation to generation.

Quilting is perhaps the best known and most widely practiced folk art among North American Mennonites of northern European descent. Quilts from various parts of the United States and Canada, including an Amish quilt, will be displayed. Persons practiced in quilting will demonstrate their art.

Visitors from Japan, Taiwan, India, and the Philippines will be bringing folk art items. Calligraphy, brush painting, and paperfolding will be among the arts from Japan.

Taiwanese flower arranging, which follows the Chinese rather than the Japanese tradition, will be demonstrated by members of the Taiwan Women's Choir, who will also give demonstrations of the folk dances of their country.

Storytellers, poets, folksingers, and musicians will also ply their arts in Exhibition Hall during the afternoon hours.

Faith and Life Bookstore, Newton, Kansas, and Mennonite Brethren Bookstore, Hillsboro, Kansas, will feature works by Mennonite writers and publications relating to the theme of the assembly. Also on sale will be craft items from the Mennonite Central Committee's Self Help program.

Sixty-six artists—from Canada, England, Germany, Switzerland, and the United States—who identify themselves as Mennonite have each submitted an item for a display of the visual arts in a nearby exhibit area. The variety of their styles and methods of expression will surely confound those who will try to find the essence of what is Mennonite in their art.

Among the kinds of work accepted for display are: sculpture with wood, stone, metal, and bronze casting—some pieces large and free standing; ceramics, both functional and nonfunctional; painting with oil, watercolor, and acrylic; prints, both woodcuts and intaglio; drawings, including illustrations from graphic artists; photography; architectural design; and fibers, including weaving, batik, and stitchery.

India ensemble to sing and dance

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—Mennonite churches in India are sending a sixteen-voice choir and drama ensemble to the Mennonite World Conference in Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30. The group will tour both before and after the conference.

Since they come from different cultural and language settings in India—Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and West Bengal—their repertoire includes distinctive hymnody, dramatizations, and folk dancing.

Of the twelve men and four women, seven are from the Mennonite Brethren conference, six represent the General Conference, one is from the Mennonite Church conference, and two are associated with the United Missionary Society.

After their arrival in New York on July 12, they will be accompanied on their tour of Canada and the United States by Mr. and Mrs. Alden Poetcker of Edmonton, Alberta.

They will perform in the following centers and areas: Ohio—July 13, Columbiana, July 14, Kidron, July 16, West Liberty and Bluffton, July 18, Archbold; Indiana—July 19, Berne, July 21-23, Goshen-Elkhart; Kansas—July 25-30, MWC, Wichita, July 31-August 4, Newton-Moundridge; Manitoba—August 6-11, Winnipeg; Ontario—August 12-13, Kitchener-Waterloo.

The choir departs from New York on August 14. ■

Registration for MWC possible during sessions

Lombard, Illinois (MWC)—Persons from thirty-five nations have preregistered for the Mennonite World Conference opening July 25 in Wichita, Kansas.

While it is no longer possible to preregister, organizers promise every effort will be made to accommodate those who come without prior registration. However, nursery and children's activity programs are filled and no additional registrations for these activities are possible. Persons arriving without prior registration are asked to register and then consult the housing desk for accommodations.

Registration begins at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, July 24, and continues Tuesday in the Exhibition Hall of the Century II Convention Center in Wichita. Persons planning to attend more than one of the four days Wednesday through Saturday are urged to register on a weekly basis, rather than a daily registration. Registration is not necessary for the evening sessions or the closing session on Sunday.

The opening session begins at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday in Century II. The closing session is at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, also in Century II. ■

Words & deeds

Resource persons for a graduate seminar August 15-20 at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ontario, have been named. Papers by several graduate students will address three questions: What does my Christian faith contribute to my academic field? What contributions has my academic field to make to the Mennonite church? What vision has my academic field given toward building a more just and humane society? John Miller, associate professor of religious studies at Conrad Grebel will lead Bible studies on wisdom, and Conrad Brunk, assistant professor of philosophy, will lecture on the dilemma of the Christian professional working within societal institutions and yet not wanting to be molded by them. Organizers hope the seminar will attract students from a wide range of academic pursuits. Cost for the seminar is forty dollars. Travel assistance is available. For registration information contact Summer Seminar, Box 370, Elkhart, Indiana 46515.

Anne Loewen (above) was honored recently by the Altona (Manitoba) Bergthaler Mennonite Church for fifty years of service to her congregation as organist and pianist. In reminiscing about changes in church music, she recalled the years when instrumental accompaniment was not accepted during the worship service, but only for Sunday school, young people's meetings, and choir. The congregational singing was led by choristers (Vorsaengers).

Ten thousand tons of rice for Laos will be sent by the United States. Until the May 31 announcement, US Government officials had said no to the humanitarian request. The turnaround in government policy, says Mennonite Central Committee Asia secretary Vern Preheim, "is partially a result of the timely efforts of concerned and informed persons." Linda and Murray Hiebert, after three years with MCC in Laos, returned to the US in February and contacted government officials to talk about critical food shortages in Laos. During the summer the Hieberts have a special assignment with MCC and the American Friends Service Committee to maintain contact with government leaders, including encouragement to the US Government to give reconstruction assistance and to resume normalization of diplomatic relationships.

Debts owed by developing nations to private banks and other governments now total more than $200 billion and are growing by about $30 billion yearly. Sweden, Canada, Switzerland, and the Netherlands have canceled hundreds of millions of dollars worth of debts owed them. But US officials reject liquidation partly on the grounds that debtor governments need to be prodded into making tough economic decisions. Debt forgiveness might relieve this pressure. As a percentage of gross national product (GNP), American foreign aid has slipped from 0.75 percent in the early 1960s to 0.25 percent in 1976. Sweden, the Netherlands, and Norway give more than the 0.7 percent of GNP which is the United Nations' official target.

MCC representatives arrived in Hanoi, Vietnam, July 1. They will stay until July 11. The trip was originally scheduled for May. The primary goals of the five-member delegation are to make contact with church leaders there, to visit the irrigation project MCC assisted in 1977, and to negotiate a project for 1978.

A fund-raising drive among General Conference commission members and staff persons has realized about $18,500 for this year's budget. Dubbed the "I Care" campaign, the drive sought to encourage extra donations to General Conference programming. Its purpose was to allow for public expression of support by board and staff personnel, and was in direct response to a shortfall of $340,000 in donations to the 1977 budget. Donors were asked for "extra" gifts so that giving to local congregational ministries would not be affected. Seventy-eight board and staff people made pledges which total about $18,500. Approximately $6,000 has been received in cash to date.

During the next five years Mennonite Mutual Aid of Goshen, Indiana, intends to expand investment management services (particularly in real estate), extend stewardship and estate planning education, and provide more adequate personal financial planning services. Meeting May 12-13, the board of directors also appointed Dwight Stoltzfus as the new president of MMA, and encouraged him to appoint managers for financial services and mutual aid services. William Dunn and William Zuercher continue as chairperson and vice-chairperson, respectively.

THE CHRISTIAN AND CIVIL RESPONSIBILITY

Two study guides have been prepared as process aids to help congregations study the issues involved and consequently to develop their own position. They could be used by a group for up to 13 sessions or as short as three sessions.

THE RULE OF THE SWORD, *by Charlie Lord*
In this first volume the writer speaks to the issue of "technological-industrial militarism. Five lessons $1.00

THE RULE OF THE LAMB, *by Larry Kehler*
In volume two the writer deals with the Christian citizen's responsibility in a technological-industrial military society. Eight lessons $1.10

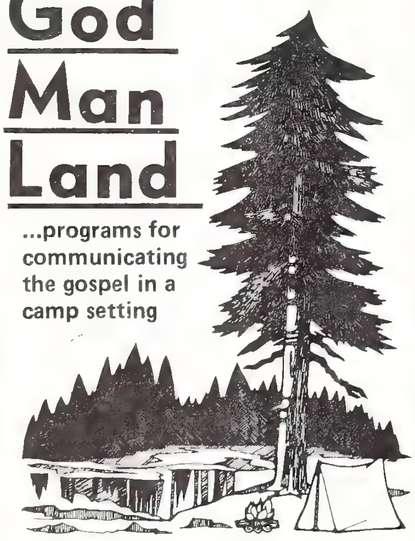
Both books for the complete study $1.96

FAITH AND LIFE PRESS, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114

Record

Workers

Nancy Funk, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kansas, began work as a secretary and filing clerk with the Commission on Overseas Mission at the General Conference's central offices in Newton, Kansas, on June 12. She studied professional secretarial courses at Hesston College for one year. Her previous work experience is with a manufacturing firm in Hesston. Her parents are Melvin and Norma Hiebert of Goessel. She replaces *Carol Buller* who has resigned effective July 25 after five years of service.



God
Man
Land

...programs for communicating the gospel in a camp setting

This unique book of ideas and graded lessons, plays and skits is the compilation and integration of ideas and dreams for camping programs. It's an attempt to add the "something's missing" dimension. It is written by Paul Paetkau with Gary Harder and Don Sawatzky.

The approach is a unified development of an explicitly Christian approach to camping. The result is both educationally and theologically sound.

Useful for youth programs, summer Sunday school and family worship.

Spiral binding, 155 pp., paper. **$5.25**

Faith and Life Bookstores
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302 Kennedy, Winnipeg, Man.

Gordon Houser, New Creation Fellowship, Newton, Kansas, has been appointed editorial assistant of *The Mennonite.* He will assume responsibility for copy- and proofreading of *The Mennonite* and its regional editions beginning August 1. His work will also include styling, layout, filing, and record keeping. Houser is a 1976 bachelor of arts graduate in English and linguistics from Wichita State University. He has also attended Kansas State University in Manhattan and Calvary Bible College in Kansas City, Missouri. He has been employed as a stock clerk and a carpenter. He replaces *Sue Schumacher* who will leave at the end of July after four years of service.

Houser

Hughes

Patricia Hughes, Somerville, New Jersey, began a two-year term with General Conference voluntary service in St. Louis, Missouri, on February 6. Her assignment is nursing in the Edgewood Children's Center. Patricia graduated with the associate of arts degree in nursing in 1973, and has worked as a nurse in both home and hospital settings. She is a member of Grace and Peace Fellowship in Roselle, New Jersey. Her parents are George (deceased) and Stephanie Hughes of Somerville.

Editor needed

Applicants are being sought for the position of *forum* editor to begin in August 1979. Published jointly by the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church student services, *forum* is a magazine of exploration, dialogue, and information for Mennonite students and young adults. The editor may serve up to one-half time. The office location is negotiable. Application deadline is August 1, 1978. To request an application write Eleanor Loewen, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

Rick Mojonnier, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has been appointed by Mennonite Board of Missions as interim secretary of student services, replacing *Hubert L. Brown* for a one-year leave which begins September 1. Mojonnier holds a BA in communications from Temple University and has had four years' experience with Philadelphia area student services.

Joann Regier, Hesston (Kansas) Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, began work with the Commission on Overseas Mission at the General Conference's central offices in Newton, Kansas, on May 22. Joann is a 1978 graduate of Hesston College, having earned the associate of arts degree in professional secretarial studies. Her previous work experience includes secretarial positions with Hesston College and an insurance firm. Vernon and Hilda Regier of Hesston are her parents.

Harold Schultz, president of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, will begin a five-months sabbatical in August to take additional coursework at Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, California, and to complete the third revision of his *History of England* college textbook. Academic dean *Marion Deckert* has been appointed acting president of Bethel during Schultz' leave of absence.

I. Unger

M. Unger

Ivan and Marge Unger of the Wanner Mennonite Church, Cambridge, Ontario, are serving under the Commission on Overseas Mission at Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hwalien, Taiwan. During their two-year term Ivan will replace *Roland Brown* as general surgeon at the hospital. Marge is an operating room technician. Ivan is a graduate of the College of Medicine of the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. Both have attended Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Roland and Sophie Brown are returning to the United States for furlough and health reasons. Ungers left July 2.

Herald Press: Publishers of the Anabaptist/Mennonite world-view

Paul and Alta

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is living wisdom spoken memorably by two eighty-year-olds, Paul and Alta Erb. Much is written today of growing older as decline, depression, hopelessness—here is a Christian couple who have grown older with grace, love, and hope. Much is being written of "the simple life"—here are two who have lived the simple life together for over sixty years. Spicy, full of stories, pride.
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makes available in English the primary works of this major Anabaptist leader. Here are recorded the thoughts and the commitment of the early Anabaptist church. Hard, $24.95

A Russian Dance of Death; Revolution and Civil War in the Ukraine
by Dietrich Neufeld translated and edited by Al Reimer

is a well-told, tragic chapter out of modern Mennonite history. Taken from Neufeld's personal diary, this firsthand story of the destruction and plunder of the Russian Mennonite colonies is told vividly.
Paper, $6.30

Bringing Our Perspective to Life's Issues

Divorce and the Faithful Church
by G. Edwin Bontrager

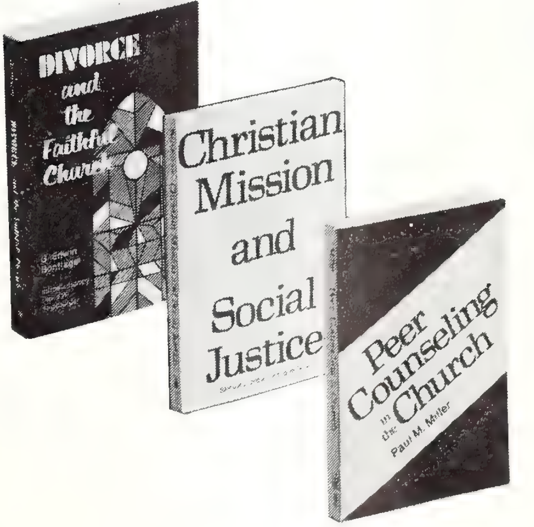
recognizes the crucial importance of binding and loosing within the body of Christ. It helps communities of faith which are seeking to be faithful to each other and to the presence of Christ in their midst while working through painful decisions on divorce and remarriage.
Hard, $7.95 Paper, $4.95

Christian Mission and Social Justice
by Samuel Escobar and John Driver

is a call for the Word and deed to go together. Missions are looked at from both the perspective of its biblical basis and its historical development. Escobar and Driver call us to have Christian mission *and* social justice in our worldwide ministries. Paper, $3.95

Peer Counseling in the Church
by Paul M. Miller

describes the attitudes and skills laymen in the church can develop to assist one another in growth-type counseling—helping one another with vocations, preparation for marriage, and problems within marriage. Paul Miller has the conviction that Christians with ordinary common sense and tact can readily master the skills needed to help each other solve ordinary problems in living. Paper, $4.95


DIVORCE and the Faithful Church

Christian Mission and Social Justice
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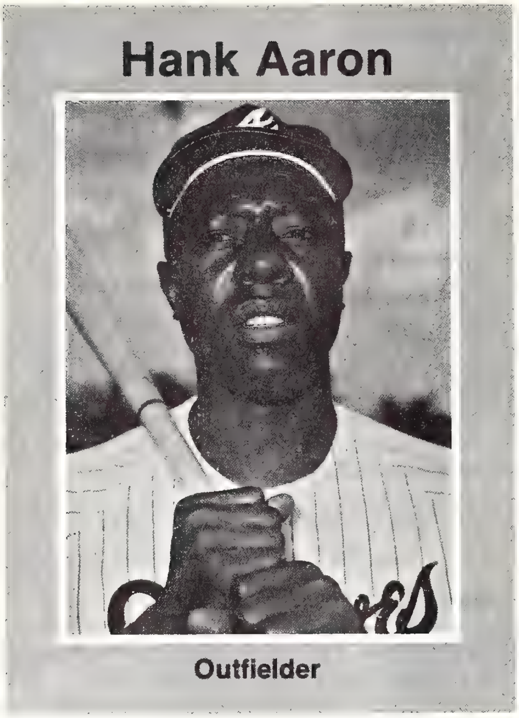
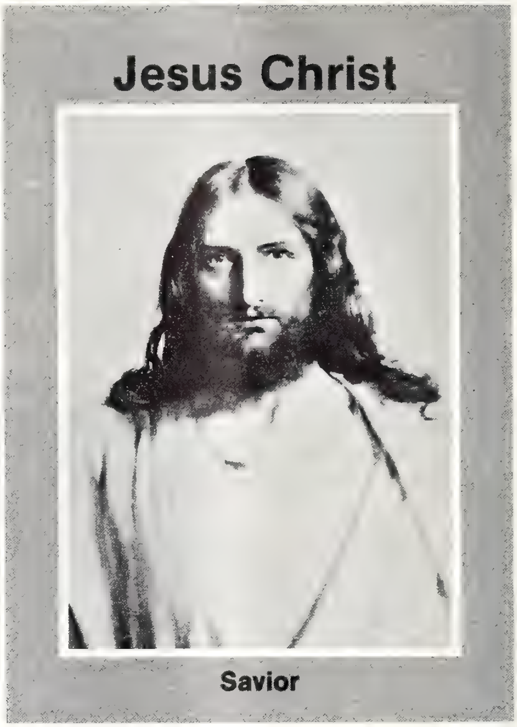
Do you know him?

Nelson Price





"Say—you're from Atlanta?"

"Yeah, man."

"Do you know Henry Aaron?"

"You mean 'The Hammer'?"

"That's right. Hammering Hank. Do you know him?"

"The home run king, the dude with a .305 lifetime batting average who broke Babe Ruth's home run record by belting 755 out of sight?"

"That's the one. Do you know him?"

"Know him? I got an 8-by-10 glossy of him hitting that magic number 715 and it's signed, 'To my friend Nelson, Hank Aaron.'"

"Fabulous! Do you really know him?"

"Let me tell you about an experience I had with him. One of my friends who pitched for the Braves invited me into the clubhouse one night after he'd pitched a no-hitter. There was my man Hank, three lockers down. He was just sitting there wearing his socks and a smile."

"That's close. Do you really know Henry Aaron?"

"Well, actually, I know a lot about him, but I really don't know him."

"Do you know Jesus Christ?"

"You mean the Savior? The God-man who smoothed the waters and healed the crippled?"

"That's him. Do you know him?"

"The King of Kings and Lord of Lords—the Son of God?"

"That's right, God the Son. Do you know him?"

"Know him? I can even name the twelve apostles and all the books of the Bible."

"Terrific! Do you know him?"

"Let me tell you about an experience I had with him. I have a ten-year perfect attendance record in Sunday school. Do you want to see my attendance pin? I joined the church and was baptized when I was ten."

"That's close. Do you really know Jesus Christ?"

"Well, actually. . . ."

To know about a person is not the same as to know a person. To really know a person you must encounter him or her personally, spend time together, talk, share experiences together, and meet the part that enables you, also, to know yourself.

Do you know Jesus?

Letters

Plea to help young people

Dear Editor: With growing apprehension I have read the articles on abortion. In the May 2 issue there is finally a letter I can agree with written by Steve and Connie Buller. I just cannot comprehend how we Mennonites, who believe in nonresistance—that it is wrong to kill a person who tries to kill or torture us or a loved one—cannot make up our minds that it is wrong to destroy an unborn child because it is not wanted for one reason or another.

No one can honestly believe that a fetus which, even at one month's pregnancy, already has all its limbs and features and moves about in its amniotic fluid—even though the mother might not be aware of it—is not a human life.

This is a plea to our churches to stop vacillating. We cannot expect our young people to sort out all the thoughts and opinions that are forced upon them without help. I know that as a young mother of several small children I might have been—if caught in a weak moment—persuaded that an abortion would be better than having another child. I also know I would have regretted it ever after.

If we do not help our young people face the fact that only God has the right to end a human life we must also share their guilt. A woman should certainly have the right to decide whether she wants another child or not, but that means to avoid conceiving and not destroying. If conception takes place against her will, for one reason or another, we should help her accept this life. If she really does not want the child, there are always couples waiting to adopt. They sometimes have to wait for several years before a child becomes available.

We have two beautiful adopted grandchildren and are expecting one more.

As to the problem of overpopulation, if people had worried about that several centuries ago, a large part of the world would never have been inhabited. Western Canada, for example, was considered useless territory not very long ago. I'm sure many of the areas now considered useless could be used if we put our minds to it. Besides that, new islands have been created, even in our lifetime. Also, with our space flights I see no problem for God to create other worlds for us if and when we need them. If we really look around us, we must see that limiting population growth creates more problems than it solves.

For one thing, what do we do with an overabundance of old people? But then, if it is permissible to destroy an unwanted child, why not destroy the useless old people as well? They are not really living any more when they're all mixed up. Or are they? Where will it end? *Elizabeth Enns, 384 Lanark, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3N 1L4*

May 19

Sovereignty of God

Dear Editor: In the January 17 issue you published a brief piece we did on reactions to Billy Graham's Metro Manila campaign. Lawrence A. Bartel, April 25 issue, challenges the wisdom of foreign church workers becoming "involved in foreign domestic strife."

The question is a good one and challenges the heart of the Christian commitment. The early church faced it. The Anabaptists faced it. Christians today face the same question again. How far can the Christian acknowledge and abide by the sovereign rule of any state?

The answers are never cut and dried. They must be lived after reflection on the Bible and Christian experience through the centuries. Exposing sin in the state or anywhere in society can be the beginning of salvation. Sweeping it under the church's carpet is hardly biblical. Foreign Christian missionaries, service workers, businesspersons, and tourists do not stop being concerned and prophetic when they leave the borders of their countries. The sovereignty of God does not recognize transient national borders except as temporary means by which humans organize themselves.

In one church office in the southern Philippines the following lines are inscribed on the wall: "The social influence of the church is a fact. Not to exercise this influence in favor of the oppressed is really to exercise it against them." When evangelists and church workers try to gain color and legitimacy for the gospel by consorting with violent and corrupt chiefs of state, the faith vision and repentance to which people are called is not the life of service but rather that of oppression and manipulation. Is this the gospel of Jesus Christ?

The salvation of the Bible reaches to the heart of people's problems and society's sickness. But the powerful pharaohs of our time will do everything within their power to keep religion in its place. Biblical faith is a real problem for them because inevitably it challenges their role as absolute sovereign, especially when their policies destroy human life rather than build it up. *Gene Stoltzfus, Mennonite Central Committee, Philippines*

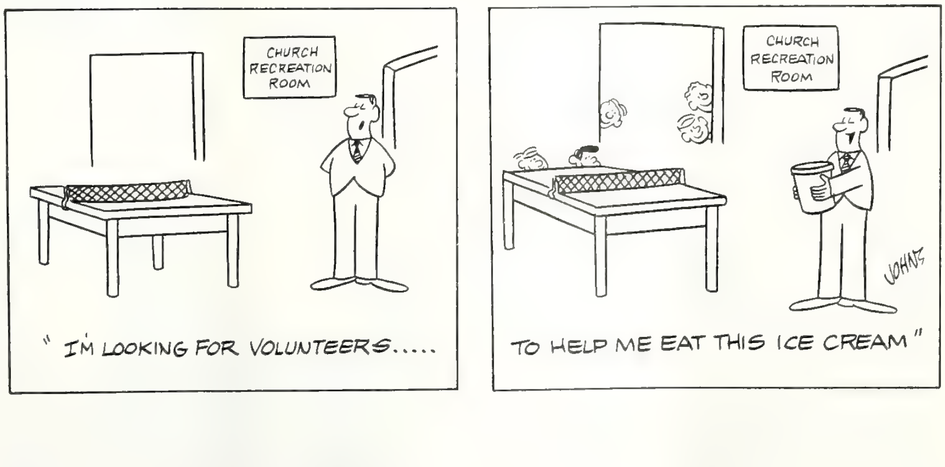
May 29

Biblical salvation

Dear Editor: I was much impressed with the David Virtue article, "The Bible and Modern Media" (May 16 issue).

We are quite heavily involved in the media and would appreciate any other ideas that David might have. We agree that it is high time to preach the *biblical* definition of salvation. *Michael Nachtigal, Box 7222, Salem, Oregon 97303* June 5

About letters: To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Brevity is encouraged. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations. Editor


CHURCH RECREATION ROOM
" I'M LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS.....
CHURCH RECREATION ROOM
JOHNS
TO HELP ME EAT THIS ICE CREAM "

Meditation

The ex-con and Jesus

Based on Luke 10:25-37.

Everyone remembers the blizzard of '78. The usual crowd at the local coffee shop was joined by others who were snowbound. A lively discussion developed as they had their second and third cups of coffee. The topic was "Faithfulness to Jesus and World Hunger."

The participants were polarized, with each side becoming more convinced of their own views. One group said: "The responsibility of the church is to preach the gospel. All this talk about meeting human need has nothing to do with our Christian mission. Let the state take care of human need, that is why we pay our taxes."

Another group said: "We are called to be examples to the world. We should stay in our communities and live quiet lives of prayer and devotion."

A third group said: "Action is what is needed. There is too much preaching and not enough action. The cup of cold water given to the needy person is, in itself, an adequate message."

The discussion had developed into quite a hassle when a miracle took place. Jesus appeared in their midst. Now this made everyone quite nervous. They didn't know what to say. Some were ashamed of their petty arguments. Some felt guilty that their main concern had been to win the debate instead of trying to be faithful to Jesus.

Finally, one who had been very outspoken, stood up to speak. Actually he was quite proud of himself, that he was the first to have the presence of mind to think of such a good question for Jesus. "Lord," he said, "what does it mean to be saved?"

Jesus knew how to deal with people who asked questions. With divine insight he replied: "You've been in Sunday school since you were a child; you know the answer."

The man replied to Jesus: "Well, you said that we should love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love our neighbor as ourself."

Jesus answered: "Yes, that's what it means to be saved, that's what my style of life looks like. Do this and you will truly be my follower."

Now Jesus' reply made the questioner somewhat uneasy, especially the point about loving your neighbor as yourself. He was quite satisfied with himself and his comfortable, affluent style of life. Also, everyone had heard him say earlier that as Christians, we should just preach the gospel. Now Jesus was bringing a whole new set of issues into the picture. This made him uncomfortable and he was about to leave.

Then, desiring to justify himself, he said: "But Lord, you don't realize we are living in 1978! There are so many people in the world. There are so many people who obviously do not deserve to be loved like you say we should. So what you really mean is that the neighbor we are to love is our fellow Christian, our kind of people. After all, who is my neighbor?"

Jesus replied with a story: "There was a severe famine in India. This famine was brought into living rooms across North America through television.

"The Jones family was watching the special. Mr. Jones said: 'My, isn't it too bad that those poor people were not born here in God's country where the Lord has blessed us with good crops, enough fertilizer to make things grow, and people who are willing to work hard? It's too bad about those people who were not born in God's country.' Mr. Jones shut off the TV set and forgot about the whole matter.

There was a severe famine in India. This famine was brought into living rooms across North America through television.

> **“But if any one has this world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him?”**
>
> ***Jesus***

“The Smith family also was watching the special. They saw the same hungry faces and bodies wasted away by hunger. Sorrowfully, Mrs. Smith said: ‘My, I wish we could do something for those poor people. We have so many leftovers. But that doesn’t do them any good. I wish there was something we could do.’ Mrs. Smith turned off the TV set and forgot about the whole matter because she was convinced that India was too far away for her to be able to help.

“The Browns were watching the TV special. Mr. Brown was deeply moved. He said: ‘Let’s pray for those poor people. Let’s pray that God’s Spirit will move mightily among them and bring them salvation. Then they will be able to get their act together. Then things will be better for them.’

“The Thompsons were watching the TV special. George had a special feeling as he was watching. The program became more than a TV show. He sensed God speaking to him. He turned off his TV set and opened his Bible. His Bible opened to 1 John 3 and by coincidence (or was it coincidence?) his eyes fell on verse 16: ‘By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us.’ George could not read further; he stopped to breathe a silent prayer of thanksgiving to God for sending Jesus to die for him.

“Then he read: ‘And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But if any one has this world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth.’

“After reading this, George said: ‘I will pray for my brothers and sisters who are hungry. I will pray that God’s love and compassion will touch their lives as his love touched me through the volunteer who came to visit when I was in prison.’

“George would have understood the lack of concern that had been shown by the other families. He had experienced the same thing as a prisoner and now as an ex-con. But he was not bitter, for he had asked Christ to enter his heart and remove the bitterness. Daily he prayed that Christ would help him to be a channel of divine love.

“After praying for the hungry people of India, George was still not satisfied. He realized that God was still speaking to him. He and his wife sat down to look at their food budget to see where they could cut corners so they could give more money to their church to help feed the hungry. He was also concerned about recent news from the mission board about having to cut programs due to insufficient funds. So George said: ‘I believe God is asking me to give more to missions.’

“The message from 1 John did not leave George. We should ‘love in deed and in truth.’ George thought about this. ‘How can I identify with the hungry and suffering people of the world, just as Joe identified with me by visiting the state penitentiary and then becoming my parole sponsor?’ he wondered. ‘I can’t go to India. I know. I’ll find a local need in which to become involved. I am sure there are others at church who will help identify local needs.’

“Then George thought of one more thing which he could do. ‘John and Sue have just the right skills for overseas service through our church agency. I’m going to encourage them to give a couple of years of service.’”

Jesus finished telling his story. He turned to his listeners: “Which of these four do you think was a neighbor to the people on the other side of the world who were hungry?”

They answered: “The last man.”

Jesus said: “Go and do likewise.”

Roger Siebert

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CONTRIBUTORS

Orlando E. Costas, Apartado 1307, San Jose, Costa Rica, is director of Latin American Evangelical Center for Pastoral Studies (CELEP).

Connie J. Olson, 401 Putnam Hall, Manhattan, Kansas 66506, is a student at Kansas State University.

Ruth Naylor’s address is Route 2, Box 151, Bluffton, Ohio 45817.

Myron Schrag’s address is 2211 28th Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55006.

Roger Siebert, Box 387, Pandora, Ohio 45877, is pastor of the Grace Mennonite Church. His parable grew out of a task force on hunger which sponsored special studies on the subject.

CREDITS

Cover design, John Hiebert; cover photo, Robert Maust, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801; 435, Lynn Loucks, MCC; 436, John Taylor, WCC; 437, Joe Sullens, *Newton Kansan;* 439, Vic Reimer, GCNS; 444, Topps Chewing Gum, 254 36th Street, Brooklyn, New York, and “Come Unto Me,” Carl Heinrich Bloch; 445, Johns, Box 1300, Pebble Beach, California 93953; 446, World Vision.

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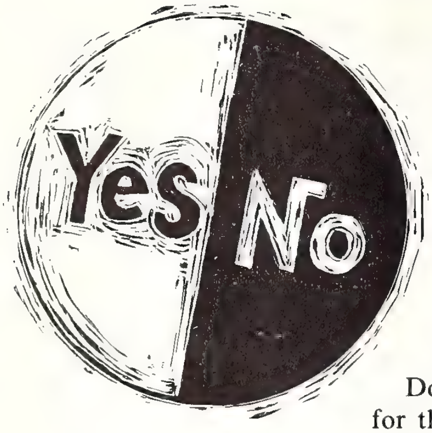
The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Irene Friesen Petkau, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.



Could I be wrong?

Do Christians err? Did I not go to school for twenty-two years (studying symbolic logic, systematic theology, Greek exegesis)? Don't I pray regularly for the Holy Spirit's guidance for all that I write or say? Haven't I been studying the Bible in German, English, Greek, Hebrew (even a few dabbles of Low German and Aramaic)?

But a sister in Christ told me, face to face, that I was wrong, and she stomped away in the opposite direction. My own insides were churning (if I blushed, I would have turned crimson).

It raises some serious issues. Can Christians maintain constructive and caring relationships to persons they strongly disagree with? (I'm not thinking now about loving my fellow Christian who prefers apple pie even though I know that blueberry is the best. The issue here is an understanding of a basic church policy.)

The question is not academic. We have seen whole denominations ripped asunder and congregations plagued with a variety of minischisms because of two Christians who disagree.

Neither is the question new. Paul had a "sharp contention" with Barnabas (Acts 15:39) and opposed Cephas "to his face" (Galatians 2:11).

Jacob Arminius in 1606 wrote *On Reconciling Religious Dissentions Among Christians*. He urges prayer, patience, humility, and a willingness to admit error in our own thinking and discernment. If a consensus of views cannot be reached, he encourages Christians to "acknowledge differing persons as fellow Christian believers, maintain warm fellowship in the faith, and mutually pledge to abstain from all bitterness, evil speaking, and railing."

That's quite a mouthful (plus a test of our heart and mind).

Christians are plagued with a nonnegotiable spirit. We have lived through the permissive sixties and we're fed up with wishy-washy waffling.

Our attitudes are becoming more and more like cement. I'm right. You're wrong. There are, after all, only two possibilities—black or white—and no more pussyfooting with the lukewarm shades of gray in those tough ethical situations. (Revelation 3:16 has strong words against that kind.)

We know that absolutist attitudes perpetrate victors and serious casualties or losers. It makes those who disagree with me into my enemies with gulfs that cannot be bridged unless they come my way.

There is a brittleness among Christians because we cannot be wrong. After all, two people truly filled with the Holy Spirit will not disagree on essentials, right? Wrong. Two of us, convinced that Jesus' atonement has covered our sin, have a strong difference of opinion.

We can ignore each other, stop drinking coffee together, or not mention it. Many Christians switch churches.

Should we negotiate? Can Christians discuss and debate?

Isn't it clear that Begin is right and Sadat is wrong? Obviously you can't believe in both Trudeau *and* Levesque. Surely a born-again Carter is better than a Ford who married a divorcee. Certainly free enterprise capitalism wins it "hands down" over any form of socialism. (What's that, you sometimes wonder why the streets of Moscow are safer than the streets of Washington?) And Christians who don't accept or use my vocabulary may be suspect.

That's probably enough disturbing thought for one issue. If I don't look out, somebody will write and tell me that I might be wrong. (Maybe, as a last defense, I could argue that Paul told women to keep silent in church.)

Interesting, isn't it? Paul, the guy who had strong quarrels with other Christian "giants" like Peter and Barnabas, somehow seems to have grown in his relationships to these persons.

The blame game has no winners, only losers.

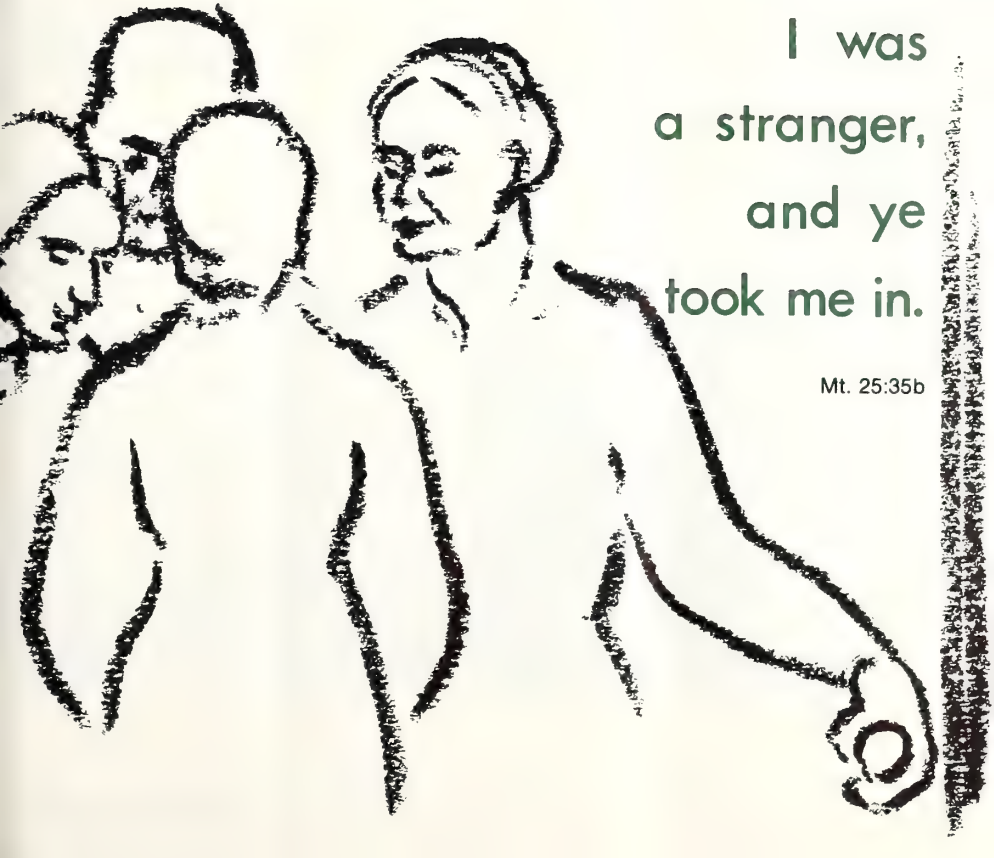
Differences, if we expect them, welcome and share them, and creatively accept their stimulation, can strengthen our Christian character and foster maturity in the church. *Bernie Wiebe*

Following our summer biweekly schedule, the next issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated July 25.

The Mennonite, WM Edition

JULY-AUGUST-
SEPTEMBER 1978

Window to Mission



I was
a stranger,
and ye
took me in.

Mt. 25:35b

the open window

Will you open wide your windows and doors to opportunities for sharing your love, your plenty, your concern, with the less fortunate, the unloved, the "stranger"? Or, will you pull the blinds, secure the lock on the door, and make sure no one invades the safe world of your home and life?

These are troubling questions for us who profess to follow Christ. We have heard many times the disturbing words of Matthew 25, and wonder whether we will one day be among those on the Lord's right hand to whom he will say, ". . . I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me" (Mt. 25:35-36 RSV).

Recently when I went with a friend to her new home I was surprised by the unique lock on her front door. There were several rows of buttons with numbers on them. To unlock the door she carefully punched the right succession of numbers. Then we entered.

Hopefully, as you read this issue of *Window to Mission* you will be encouraged to open up the window blinds, and share the numbers to unlock the doors of your life, to let in the fresh air of God's love so you will see the needs about you and reach out in loving concern to the "stranger" in your midst.

—Jeannie Zehr

COVER

This sketch by Anne Dyck sets the stage for our 1978-79 WM program theme, "I was a stranger and ye took me in" (Mt. 25:35b).

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REACHING OUT THROUGH FOSTER CARE

Edna Krueger Dyck

I REMEMBER VIVIDLY the little boy with sad brown eyes who came to live with us in my parental home some twenty years ago. Ron, or Ronnie as we called him at that time, was a foster child. Although nine individuals have been added to our extended family since that time, Ron, who is now an adopted member, is still the only one with brown eyes. His uniqueness was soon evident in other areas as well and he was and is unconditionally loved and accepted by members of our family as a very special person.

It is indeed an indictment on our society that countless children do not find a loving and nurturing atmosphere with their natural parents and must be placed in substitute homes. I recently communicated with four foster mothers. Two, in the past, opened their homes to teenagers and young adults who had emotional problems and had been released from Prairie View, a mental health center in Kansas. One, a Canadian friend, responded to an advertisement in a paper two years ago and invited a teenage girl into their home. A fourth friend advised me that it wasn't foster "parenting" but that the whole family cared for fourteen children ranging in age from five days to twelve years, during the last twelve years.

Motivation for foster parenting is perhaps best summed up in the words of my Canadian friend, "We wanted to help in a small way, to meet some of the needs of society's forgotten ones." She also wished to grow in her capacity to give love and concern to someone on a twenty-four-hour-a-day basis. "We hoped to give acceptance, and stability—to be good role models," another said. Call it compassion, love, responding to a need, or whatever, the act of giving one's time and energy and home to the care of children who are often labeled "problem children" must certainly be called service to God and humanity.

"Well, you certainly don't do it for money," all seemed to agree. No one could ever pay for the hours of agony that my parents spent when Ron contracted polio at the age of two and had to be hospitalized where they could not regularly visit him. When he later had to undergo a series of leg operations they did not receive any payment for their concern and care.

If a new-born baby cries constantly for two and a half months with withdrawal symptoms due to its mother having been a drug addict, can the social service agency ever pay for the loss of sleep the parents experience? Although remuneration in different parts of the country varies, an approximate figure is seven dollars a day, or as one friend put it, "thirty cents an hour." "It just doesn't begin to pay for the wear and tear," she said.

"Is it worth it? How do you feel about the experience as a whole?" I asked. One friend had reservations, saying that her husband was able to cope with emotionally disturbed children better than she could. There was more success with some than others. Glowingly another replied, "Oh, yes, very positively, we all learned so much." The foster mother with twelve years experience said, "Although it is sometimes hard on our family to assimilate another person full-time, we have all experienced great satisfaction in seeing children respond positively to love and good care. Our own children have received a broad education in learning to understand what can happen when people live out of harmony with God."

On the whole all the mothers mentioned that assimilation with other children in the family was a positive experience. One natural daughter had always wanted a sister and has become close friends with her older foster sister. One mentioned that they had come to know and appreciate the foster child's natural mother. "She was very appreciative of what we were trying to do with her boy."

Are foster parents extraordinary people? Perhaps. Judging from the prerequisites suggested by my friends, it would seem so. "It's certainly not for everyone. You need to be willing to give of yourself when you often receive very little in return," one commented. Several spoke of having to accept the children, especially teenagers, where they are and appreciate them for what they are. "One thing we've had to cope with in fostering a teenager is that her values were largely formed by the time she came to us. We've had to accept her smoking and dating, since no matter how much we offer our views on the subject, she insists on being free to make her own choices and mistakes."

Perhaps the toughest prerequisites came from the foster mother involved the longest with the most children. She said one would need a willingness to be misunderstood by your foster children, and sometimes by your friends and your church, and have a willingness to see beauty in all persons and to love them.

My parents and my four friends became involved in foster care through social service agencies in their communities. The demand for good foster homes always exceeds the supply, so they encourage any of you readers who are interested to become involved.

"Actually we foster parents would like to see ourselves without a job," one mother writes. She believes that if proper education in parenting were given to all children in the home as well as in school (from kindergarten through high school), this might be an attainable goal. Certainly the church must be involved in the careful nurturing of children and the education of parents.

LITTLE FOSTER SISTER

stranger
fearful, frustrated
fighting, crying, sulking
suspicion, test, care, trust
communicating, learning, confiding
responsible, helpful
friend

—Mary Rempel

Life is fragile—
handle it with
prayer

TEACH A CHILD TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT PATH

Lora Oyer

EVERY CHILD IS A GIFT from God, a gift to be loved. True love instinctively expresses itself in terms of giving—material necessities of course—but much more importantly, by giving, sharing, Christian values that bring meaning to life. Genuine love is not a possessive love that creates dependency, but rather one that is given in order to strengthen another person.

Jesus placed high value on children, pleased by their curiosity, their directness, responsiveness and sincerity. You can tell what a nation is, and also what people are, by their attitude concerning children. Needed in today's world are persons who guide and counsel in love, who sympathize and try to understand the other's point of view, who strive to keep open the lines of communication.

As children we learned Ephesians 6:1, "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right,"—a reminder to respect our parents. Reading as an adult from The Living Bible, we find in Proverbs 22:6, "Teach a child to choose the right path and when he is older he will remain upon it,"—an admonition to us as parents.

Have parents let this verse become an undue burden? As human parents we can guide and counsel. We will desire to serve as good models, with Christ as our model. As we gradually help personality develop in our children by encouraging *independence* rather than dependence, *strength* rather than weakness, we will try to nurture their ability to make good choices and accept responsibility for themselves. We should not, and dare not, expect them to be carbon copies of their parents, for God made each person an individual with free choice.

God does not force His will on His creatures. As we strive to become more like Christ, we recognize how imperfect we are, partly because in our humanness we don't always do what we know we should do and because we don't always understand His way. What seems clear in God's Word to some is not always understood in the same way by others. Yet, how patient God has been with His children through the ages. He continues to love and accept us in spite of all our failures. Thus it behooves us to love, accept, and trust our own children as well.

Have parents interpreted this verse too narrowly? Social historian Christopher Lasch states that "the family has been slowly coming apart for more than 100 years" as a result of the Industrial Revolution. Recognizing the many influences and demands society today exerts on children, should parents *alone* accept full responsibility (good or bad) for their children? Parents need to rededicate themselves to the sobering and important task of the Christian nurture of their

Continued on page 13

PROGRAM RESOURCES
1978/79

Our 1978-79 Women in Mission program theme is "I was a stranger and ye took me in" (Mt. 25:35). Below is a listing of the various program-lessons that will appear in the Guide to Christian Living section of Window to Mission *and also a theme sketch which you may want to trace or copy for your program booklet covers.*

JULY-AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1978
Program 1: "Foster Care"—different kinds of foster care are explored

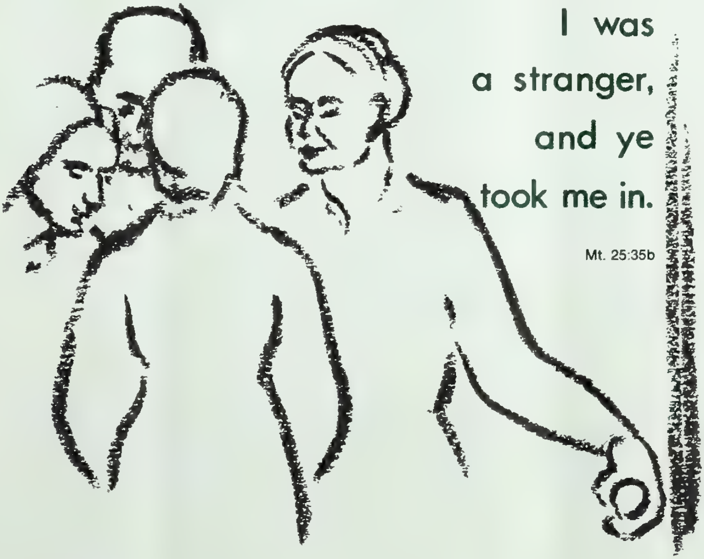
OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 1978
Program 2: "Media, an Arm for Evangelization and Understanding Christian Values"—some things our conference is looking at and doing in radio, TV, etc.

DECEMBER 1978 - JANUARY 1979
Program 3: "What's New in Overseas Mission Work?"—glimpses around the globe at issues and innovative way our COM missionaries are communicating the gospel

FEBRUARY-MARCH 1979
Program 4: "Imparting Christian Values in a Confused World"

APRIL-MAY 1979
Program 5: "Missionary Reentry Blues"

JUNE-JULY 1979
Program 6: "Women in Christian Vocations—Reality or Pipe Dream?"



PROGRAM 1 Foster Care

Kay Ann Fransen

"True evangelical faith cannot lie dormant . . . it clothes the naked,
it feeds the hungry
it comforts the sorrowful
it shelters the destitute
it serves those that harm it
it binds up that which is wounded
it has become all things to all men."
Menno Simons, 1539

This quote from years ago speaks well today. One way we can live this faith is through foster care. Many women today are housebound with families. Mission fields seem distant, so that we do little about them except give money, roll bandages, write letters, and pray. All of these things are important and necessary, but seem removed from our daily life and sense of total involvement.

People are in need everywhere—in your province or state, in your city or county, even on your street, perhaps. You may ask, "What can I do? How do missions 'out there' become missions 'here and now'?" Perhaps one or two ideas in this lesson may fit your life-style, family situation, or your personal sense of mission. Perhaps this could serve as a springboard for your own ideas of mission, to germinate and blossom into a flower of joy and love for you and for someone in need of your support and concern.

The Elderly

Loneliness is widespread among the elderly. It can become a crippling disease leading to early death. In some areas there is a formalized foster care program where an elderly person who no longer can live alone, but who is not ready for a nursing home, is placed in a foster home on somewhat of the same basis that child foster care is done. A home is provided allowing a live-in arrangement and the benefits of caring support and loving concern along with the basic essentials of a private bedroom and nutritious family meals. The family also benefits by bringing a "pretend grandparent" into the home.

This arrangement could also work well with a single person. I was told of a single lady who lives with an unmarried niece in a farm setting. Elderly people who live in a nursing home but do not need bed care come to live with her. She capitalizes on the interests of each individual who lives with her. For one gentleman she set up a woodworking shop. With another lady she goes on bus trips since they both enjoy travel. The meeting of needs for family and community are met for both the person providing foster care and for those needing it, in this unique set-up.

Services can be brought to the elderly person who wishes to stay in his or her own home. In Saskatchewan one person is giving such care by cleaning house weekly for a blind, elderly neighbor who otherwise cooks his meals and fends for himself. This arrangement allows him to remain independent in his own home.

Other services could be provided depending on the person and situation. Perhaps it is meals that need to be brought in part-time or transportation provided. Read to them, write letters for them, or simply give such a person a telephone call or drop in for a weekly visit or invite them to your home.

Foreign Students

Students coming from another country have many adjustments to make. With so much that is new and different around them they tend to be cautious and often uncomfortable. A warm home can become an oasis, a "home away from home" for weekends, vacations, and holidays.

Law Offenders

In Ontario as well as in other parts of North America the M2-W2 Program is one excellent example of showing interest in the welfare of the offender. Inmates from correctional institutions are paired off on a one-to-one basis with volunteers who offer their friendship. Since its beginning the program has grown and has become a very useful tool. After release from prison there is usually some difficulty in becoming an integral part of the community. "Foster care" can be given by offering friendship, a job, perhaps room and board during this transition time. Being aware of the person as a person of value and worth, even as Christ is aware, can make the difference between his/her becoming a useful part of society or being returned to live behind walls.

Handicapped Persons

Everyone has a handicap in some way or another; it's just that some are more noticeable than others. A physically or mentally handicapped person often needs a support group. Looking beyond the handicap and dealing with the person as a worthy individual is essential in establishing a "foster care" relationship.

The "citizen advocacy" program has been established in some areas of Canada and the United States. A citizen volunteers to represent the interests of another citizen who is in some way disadvantaged, such as a mentally retarded adult, and whose needs are not being met. The volunteer befriends the impaired person and tries to help in whatever way needed.

In families where there is a handicapped child, the parents may need a break from the specialized care of the child. Taking the child for a weekend, or staying with the child, can provide the parents the chance to take a needed break.

Susan Willoughby Rocheleau, R.N., is a pediatric nurse in Tewksbury, Mass., who provides care for children with special needs. She works at the hospital during the week, but on weekends she takes into her home special-needs children so their parents can take a break. This is known as respite care.

Persons living with a lot of stress can become emotionally handicapped—divorce victims, unwed mothers, grief-stricken families, the chronically poor, the jobless, etc. Sometimes offering your help can be as simple as lending a listening ear and an empathetic attitude. At other times certain actions can be taken to help alleviate some of the pain, such as sharing your home and family life.

Parents of mentally retarded adults would be relieved if someone stepped forward in concern and would agree to look after their son/daughter's welfare after they are gone.

Mothers of Young Children

My two daughters were born twenty-three months apart. During this time my husband was involved in very time-consuming training. I well remember the frustrations—the dreariness of the diaper routine, the constant demands of the infant and toddler stages, the lack of time to myself, the absence of a good night's sleep. I definitely needed a strong support group, and I was most appreciative of a couple of understanding friends. Perhaps there is such a mother in your neighborhood. Taking the little ones for a period of time, or inviting her in for "tea" can provide an oasis of renewal for the mother.

Children

In today's complex world there are many children who are for various reasons unable to remain with their natural parents. These children are placed in foster homes until the natural parents are able to again take care of them, or if this is not possible, they are placed for adoption. Placement of children in foster homes is handled by an agency such as the Children's Aid Society in Canada or a Child Welfare Service in the United States. (For more thoughts on foster care of children see page 3.)

Another way of helping disadvantaged children is to become involved in a Big Brother or Big Sister program where a child who is without a father is befriended by a young adult male, or a child without a mother is "adopted" by a female adult. They do special things together and develop a warm relationship, thus realizing a new dimension of life.

Caring for neighborhood children, who seem to be neglected, as they gravitate to your home to play with your children on a continual basis, is its own special type of "foster care."

Conclusion

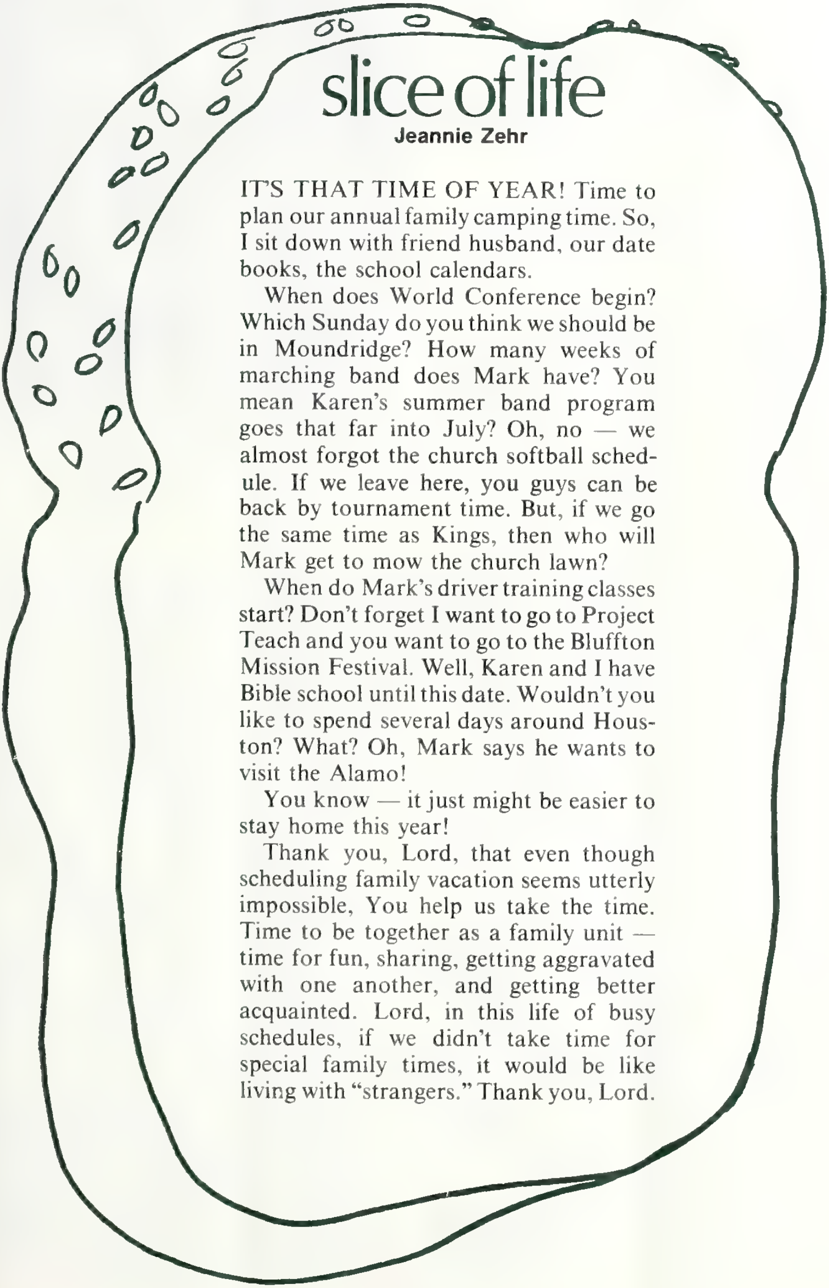
How can we bring missions closer to home? It's not all that difficult. Open your eyes, your minds and your hearts and follow the teachings of Christ as he instructed in Matthew 25: "I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me a drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me" (TEV).

Program "How-To" Ideas

1. Read the lesson. Ahead of the program time assign individuals to research agencies in your area to learn of foster care possibilities through the existing agencies. Also probe other foster care ideas on a less organized level.

2. Are there those in the fellwship who are presently engaged in a foster care program of some type? Ask them to share their experiences.

3. Divide into small groups. Have each person in the group tell how they could (or why they feel they couldn't) become involved in some type of foster care as an "at home" mission outreach. Then reassemble into the larger group and have a brainstorming session, listing the ideas on the chalkboard.



slice of life

Jeannie Zehr

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR! Time to plan our annual family camping time. So, I sit down with friend husband, our date books, the school calendars.

When does World Conference begin? Which Sunday do you think we should be in Moundridge? How many weeks of marching band does Mark have? You mean Karen's summer band program goes that far into July? Oh, no — we almost forgot the church softball schedule. If we leave here, you guys can be back by tournament time. But, if we go the same time as Kings, then who will Mark get to mow the church lawn?

When do Mark's driver training classes start? Don't forget I want to go to Project Teach and you want to go to the Bluffton Mission Festival. Well, Karen and I have Bible school until this date. Wouldn't you like to spend several days around Houston? What? Oh, Mark says he wants to visit the Alamo!

You know — it just might be easier to stay home this year!

Thank you, Lord, that even though scheduling family vacation seems utterly impossible, You help us take the time. Time to be together as a family unit — time for fun, sharing, getting aggravated with one another, and getting better acquainted. Lord, in this life of busy schedules, if we didn't take time for special family times, it would be like living with "strangers." Thank you, Lord.

Eleventh in a Series:

A WOMAN IN MISSION:

Naomi Lehman

We are women in mission like
our counterparts in Scripture
We serve with vigor and enthusiasm
with courtesy and kindness
with love and compassion
making Christ known throughout
the world

Pictured above on the right is Naomi Lehman being presented a special remembrance from the WM Council by Lois Deckert. The quote may be found at the top of page 13.

Phyllis Baumgartner

IN THE PARABLE of the talents, Jesus did not praise the one who hid his money cautiously, but was concerned more with the servants' attitudes toward their talents. This parable relates to us with the talents symbolizing our abilities and our natural gifts and how we use them.

Naomi Lehman is one who possesses many gifts and abilities and has been willing to use and share them. Her name means leadership in the General Conference Women in Mission as she has ably served as president the past seven years. Besides giving sound counsel in decision making, she has attended and conducted WM Council sessions and served as a representative on the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission Board. She has attended many of the district and province WM sessions, and has been the featured speaker on numerous occasions. She has urged others to more active participation in WM.

Naomi was prepared for the G.C. position by serving as president and program chairman for several terms in her home society of the First Mennonite Church, Berne, Indiana. Her leadership continued when she served as Central District adviser.

In many districts and provinces during the past few years, Naomi has presented an address, "We Build the Church Together." Referring to Genesis and the Creation, and relating the teachings of Jesus and Paul, Naomi states that God has given equality to men and women. She comments further that they should not compete, but rather complement each other in the work of the church.

Presently, one of her greatest concerns focuses on seminary trained women's acceptance into pastoral roles. She lends support and encouragement to these women and challenges others to give positive support.

Naomi's eloquence is evidenced on the local church level by her teaching and writing. She has taught Sunday school for twenty-five years, twenty of these with a married couples' class. Delving into Bible study and teaching it in midweek services has been another way of sharing. She has coauthored an adult Sunday

"We are women in mission like our counterparts in Scripture. We serve with vigor and enthusiasm, with courtesy and kindness, with love and compassion, making Christ known throughout the world." — Quotation from Naomi Lehman which was lettered and presented to her as a farewell gift of appreciation for her years as WM president. (See photo on page 12.)

school quarterly, and written two church-related pageants, the latest pertaining to the India Mission Jubilee.

Last spring Naomi was recognized for her twenty-one years of writing and coordinating the local church radio programs. In relinquishing one position she accepted another, that of editing the church newsletter. Her innovative style has helped make the newsletter more personable. She has also served on the pulpit committee and enjoys singing in the chancel choir and Mennonite Choral Society.

Upon entering Naomi's kitchen, one sees a large bulletin board filled with pictures of happy faces, sad faces, and "pixie" faces. They are pictures of her family, for she is a wife, mother, and grandmother. Leslie B. Lehman and Naomi were married forty-one years ago this August. They are the parents of four children: Tom, Neil, George, and Mary Yoder, and the grandparents of five grandchildren.

The love that the family members have for one another is evidenced in the way they have encouraged and supported one another. Naomi has always been very supportive of Les's occupation as a businessman and banker, as well as his many church-related activities. No doubt many times the school-age children came home to find the dining room table filled with books, papers, and other materials as Mother was writing the city's Centennial pageant, a mission pageant, or was involved in some other preparation. The family's supportive gift to Naomi was their encouragement for her to serve with her gift of writing.

Hospitality has been another feature of the Lehman home. Weekly book groups with prayer and sharing times have met there. Naomi always seems to find the time to entertain neighborhood newcomers as well as friends, relatives, and missionaries on furlough. Also, entertaining her Sunday school class of fifty or more members is not an unusual fete at Christmastime. Trainees of the Mennonite Central Committee Exchange Program have been welcomed as members of the family for six-month periods.

In honoring Naomi as a "Woman in Mission" I want to close with the following quote from Joseph Murray which tells well Naomi's pilgrimage of service. "The more you do, the more you will be asked to do. That is the blessed penalty for willingness. The more you do, the more you will be able to do. That is the blessed law of effort. The more you do the more it will mean to you. That is the blessed promise of reward in the Master's service. They know Him best who serve Him most."

Teach a Child to Choose the Right Path

Continued from page 6

children. At the same time, it is also crucial that *all* adults work to eliminate those societal and cultural trends which undermine Christian concepts and values.

"God give us, not the defeatism which accepts things as they are, but the divine discontent which in the life and strength of Jesus Christ will (strive) to change them."

WM office jottings from Joan

Summer is an ideal time for collective family involvement in raising money for a favorite mission project. Good stewardship role modeling by adults can add a vital dimension to a child's life. What creative ideas can your family discover for income which could be shared?

"Where's Us Guys?" is a nineteen-minute filmstrip with cassette giving background information on the Cheyenne Indian people and their present needs for Christian literature. The filmstrip features the Wayne Leamans who are working with Ted Risingsun, Joe Walks Along and others in retranslating the Bible into contemporary Cheyenne language. This professionally done presentation is available for showing on a freewill offering basis from the Cheyenne Mennonite Church, Box 37 Busby, Montana 59016

Looking for a special project? The new CHM and COM Project brochures are available upon request from our office.

Secretaries of WM groups can help us save postage (otherwise known as money) by keeping their Window to Mission subscription list current. If you have *individual* subscribers who have moved, been deceased, want to have their subscription canceled, or are getting their *Window* in *The Mennonite*, please inform us to that effect.

to help you serve

- The Pastors' Wives' Personal Growth Fund is an attempt to affirm the "partner in ministry" who is often overlooked in areas of personal growth and enrichment. Budgeted: $2,000.00 (New item in 1978 budget)
- American Bible Society contributions help to meet the need around the world for Scriptures at a price people can afford and in a language they can understand. Budgeted: $1,000.00
- The need for funds for the institutional care of Martha Caro and Shiela Thiessen are still current. Children's Sunday school classes and Young Mission Workers are also encouraged to continue to contribute to this project. Budgeted: $1,000.00
- The Commission on Home Ministries has 140 volunteer workers in twenty-two units showing Christ's love to those around them. Total 1978 WM budget for this and other CHM needs: $31,000.00
- The annual amount of $16,000.00 is needed to maintain a missionary family of four overseas. Total 1978 WM budget for various COM projects: $100,000.00

Send contributions to Women in Mission, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114

response

"Thank you for that story 'Light of My Eye' by Wang Yang. The emotions in it took me by surprise and I found myself crying. Sometimes we need to cry.

"I enjoy *Window to Mission* very much—especially since I am unable to attend our mission society meetings this year. The topics covered are so pertinent to our needs."

Helen Epp, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

contributors

Anne Dyck (artist, cover and pp. 3, 7) works part-time at Sunnybrook Medical Center in Toronto, Ontario, as an instructor of arts and crafts in a recreational workshop with veterans. The rest of her time is spent in weaving, drawing, and other artistic activities.

Edna Krueger Dyck (Reaching Out Through Foster Care) works part-time for Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kans., as a copy editor. She was one of the writers for the new Foundation Series curriculum. She and her husband and four children make their home at 1505 Hillcrest, Newton, Kans., and are active in the Faith Mennonite Church.

Mary Rempel (Little Foster Sister) edits the blue *Encompass* insert in *The Mennonite*. She is active in the Newton Creative Writers group. She and her husband, Dick, and family live in Hesston, Kans., where they are involved in the Inter-Mennonite Church.

Cathy Coon (artist, p. 5) is a senior in high school. Her family lives in Cordell, Okla., where her father pastors the Herold Church.

Lora Oyer (Teach a Child to Choose the Right Path) and her husband, Russell, are the parents of three sons. They live in Chenoa, Ill. Lora is our new president of the General Conference WM. She assumed her presidential duties as of July 1. Lora's hobbies include reading, music, gardening, and nutrition. She also keeps busy with involvements in her church in Meadows, plus various district and community responsibilities.

Kay Ann Fransen (Program 1: Foster Care) lives with her husband, Werner, and two daughters at 2 Ridemont Road, Normal, Ill. She serves on the WM Literature Committee and until recently served as the editor of the Central District women's page.

Jeannie Zehr (Slice of Life) and her husband, Marv, have two children. The family lives at 4226 Maplecrest Rd., Fort Wayne, Ind. Jeannie edits *Window to Mission* from her home.

Phyllis Baumgartner (A Woman in Mission) is Central District WM adviser. She and husband, Howard, are the parents of five children, two of whom are married. Phyllis is active in her community and church in Berne, Ind.

credits

ART WORK: Cover, p. 3, p. 7, Anne Dyck; p. 5, Cathy Coon.
PHOTO: P. 12, Vic Reimer
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Edna K.
Dyck

Mary
Rempel

Cathy
Coon

Lora
Oyer

Kay Ann
Fransen

Phyllis
Baumgartner

forecast

The October-November issue of *Window to Mission* will present a program-lesson on "Media: An Arm for Evangelization and Understanding Christian Values." Diane Umble, General Conference staff person for radio and TV, will present some aspects of media for you to consider. Also, in the issue will be some reflections on personal thankfulness.

Printed in U.S.A.

WOMEN IN MISSION: A PAGE OF NEWS AND IDEAS

ON JULY 1 Naomi Lehman, Berne, Ind., turned over the responsibilities of the General Conference Women in Mission presidency to Lora Oyer, Chenoa, Ill. Lora hopes you will remember her in your prayers during her years as WM president.

Beginning with this issue you will note a different way of dating the issues of *Window to Mission.* Hopefully you will now have the issue in your hands before or at the beginning of the two-month period for which it is dated. This issue is dated for three months in order to begin the new system.

Western Washington Mennonite Women held their annual fellowship meeting in April aboard a specially reserved section of a ferry boat. While enjoying the view of islands and waterways on the two-hour excursion from Seattle to Bremerton, the group also renewed acquaintances and heard Martha Nickel share about her experiences in India.

Copies of a birthday list of our missionaries and their children (up to the age of twenty) are available from the WM Office, 722 Main, Newton, KS 67114.

Also available from the WM Office is the new 1978 Devotional Packet. The cost is 50¢ per packet.

What program ideas has your group tried for mother-daughter events? One group had each family either bring something they do such as crafts, hobbies, etc., or present something musical, poetical, or inspirational. It provided a very varied, interesting program for all ages to participate in and enjoy. Why not write to us and share your ideas.

In the not-too-distant future we will no longer prepare layettes for Zaire. This has been a meaningful project for many years. Here is a poem written by Martha Liechty, Berne, Indiana, as a birthday remembrance for her grandmother several years ago.

I saw you
walking
down
the street
so prim
carrying material for layettes
not for your babies, but for babies who will never know that hands worked so lovingly on their tiny seams,
and never know
how beautiful
my grandma looked
walking
down
the street —
pink material
against a pink dress
and pretty pink cheeks.

We extend a special thank-you to all the grandmothers and other women across the conference who have lovingly sewn many layettes for Zaire through the years.

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:28 JULY 25, 1978

A wheelchair trip in most of our cities can readily become a terror trip.

Inside:
Love knows no handicaps
Persons with handicaps
Your estate and the kingdom
Pacific District Conference

Love knows no handicaps

(A true love story)

“Every day is a celebration for us: of the love we have found and of our gratitude to the God who intervened in our lives and brought us together.”

Priscilla Wilder Raymond

Priscilla Raymond and Phillip Lull. In the foreground is one of Phillip's paintings in acrylics called Forest Fire.

When I met Phillip Lull he was in a wheelchair and suffering from cerebral palsy. And I, nearly deaf since 1972 and partially lame since 1948, was suffering from a nervous breakdown brought on by the death of my mother.

That was five years ago. Today, Phillip is still in a wheelchair and I am still partially lame and deaf, but we are no longer suffering. Instead, every day is a celebration for us: of the love we have found, and of our gratitude to the God who intervened in our lives and brought us together. (Phillip and I are now married.)

I saw Phillip for the first time on July 9, 1973, when I asked if I could use his telephone. His first remembrance of me is that he “saw me crying my eyes out.”

I was a new resident at the Denver Life Center and I missed my friends in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I craved love, and it was this great need to love and be loved that really brought us together. I had been seriously ill for many years, and I did not want to live after my mother died.

Phillip Lull was born in Denver in 1926, feet first. This resulted in an injury to the brain, causing cerebral palsy. He had a lot of toys, but he remembers sitting by a little red wagon, watching his brother pull it and wishing that he could pull it too. That was when he was five years old. At age seven his mother took him weekly to a doctor at a chiropractic hospital, but it didn't seem to do much good. When he was sixteen his mother was still feeding him.

Then he went to a cerebral palsy Boy Scout camp. A friend of his tied an apron around his neck and handed him a spoon, saying: “I'm not going to feed you. You'll have to feed yourself or go hungry.” And Phillip did what he had thought impossible. It was a great accomplishment.

Four years ago Phillip moved away from home for the first time. He was forty-six years old. He had spent all his life at home and so, even though he'd been cruising around by himself in his electric wheelchair, living alone seemed strange. Phillip was lonely; he was used to having his parents and brothers and sisters around. But he was hoping to meet an interesting girl (when he was living at home, he was not permitted to go out with anyone). He wanted to feel like a man. He realized that his parents did what they thought best for his protection, but he wanted to be independent.

Phillip and I felt drawn to each other the first time we talked. We discovered that we had similar problems: we were overprotected, our parents didn't want us to leave them, and we were not allowed to date.

I had felt rejected all my life. Phillip was empathetic and he felt that I empathized with him. Gradually we discovered we had a lot in common: we liked the same TV programs, the same jokes; he told me I was beautiful and I told him he was handsome. I learned that he was honest and trustworthy and extremely intelligent. He has lots of insight and understanding.

Phillip would like to be an artist. He began to take a course in acrylics at Emily Griffith's Opportunity School, where he has now painted twenty-nine pictures—a beautiful painting of a Christmas tree surrounded by lots of different colors, his interpretation of Hawaii, Boulder Dam, a sunrise, a sunset, and many others. Due to his cerebral palsy he has great difficulty controlling his hands, but he is making steady progress.

Phillip was invited to Boulder, Colorado, to exhibit thirteen of his paintings in the 1977 four-day Art Festival for the Handicapped, which was called "A Very Special Day in May." He and six others were chosen to represent Colorado at the National Arts Festival for the Handicapped in Niagara Falls, New York, July 7-11, 1977. Phillip hopes very much to sell some of his paintings.

Through the Cerebral Palsy Organization he has learned to type. And he has written a poem to me . . . "Sweetheart, sweetheart / You melt my heart / Like a lark / I love you very much!" I've told Phillip that I love to write and wish to be a writer, and he's encouraged me. So I've taken a course in creative writing and enjoyed it immensely. Last year I took a course in cooking and received a certificate. Phillip is probably the better cook, though; he remembers a lot from watching his mother. Even though he can only use one hand, he's able to teach me.

I work part-time at the University of Colorado Medical Center as a secretary and messenger. I type evaluation reports for the nurses and run errands for the pharmacy, media production laboratory, central supply, and general stores. I also deliver mail and sometimes answer the call lights. Occasionally I feed patients.

When there are problems, Phillip is a great comfort to me. Once when I had an excruciating toothache, due to an abscess, Phillip sat up all night with me. He was so kind and affectionate he took my mind off the pain.

Phillip has learned to walk in a walker. He walked 130 feet one day, but it was difficult for him and perspiration poured down his face. But he didn't give up. He puts himself to bed and he gets up and dresses himself (with one hand).

Phillip makes me feel special and safe. We were sitting on a bench in front of Speer's Chiropractic Hospital when suddenly there were great flashes of lightning, loud thunder claps, and rain that came down in torrents. I was scared that we would be struck by lightning, but Phillip calmed me down and encouraged me to run back to the Life Center while he pushed his wheelchair backwards through great puddles. We finally made it. He was cool, calm, and collected throughout the episode.

I feel free and happy since I have known Phillip. I used to daydream all day long—withdrawn from reality. But I have come out of my dream world. Phillip has given me the most important thing in life—love. This has done more for me than all the efforts of my doctors, nurses, hospitals, friends, and family put together. He makes me feel glad that I'm a woman, and he says I make him feel like a man.

About a year ago, after saving our money scrupulously for a year, we went with his family to Hawaii for three wonderful weeks on Waikiki Beach—swimming, sunbathing, and sightseeing in Pearl Harbor and the Polynesian Center. This trip brought us even closer together.

We can be seen going down to the Pizza Oven on East Colfax Avenue once a week, he in his motor wheelchair and I on my bicycle. The manager and waitress always welcome us with open arms.

Our doctors and families approved of our getting married, although we had a lot of financial problems—among others—which had to be settled first. But I feel positive in my heart that it was part of God's great plan that Phillip and I should find each other. We pledged ourselves to each other in the Life Center Chapel and were married in Christ Episcopal Church, Denver. We feel that God brought us together to prove how important love is, and that he wants us to spend the rest of our lives together, helping each other find happiness by sharing it with one another and with many others.

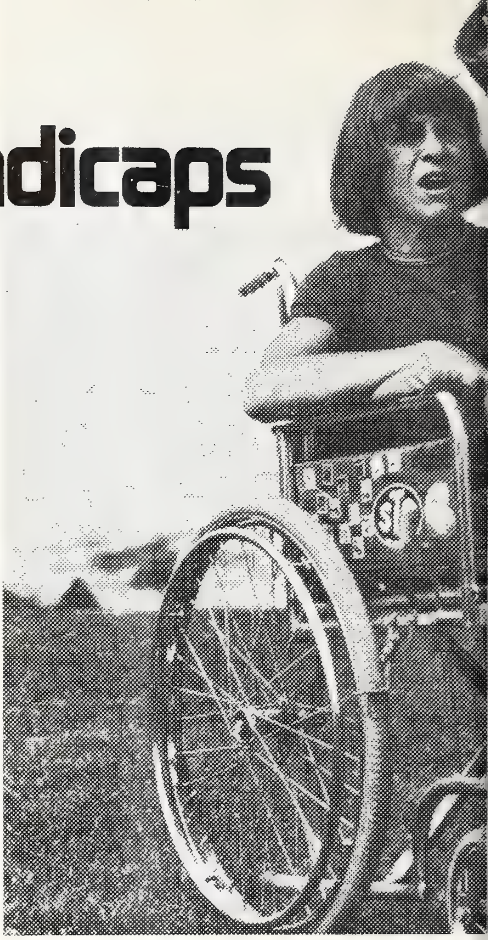
Persons with handicaps

Jim and Sally have cerebral palsy, a condition affecting the motor system of the brain resulting in poor muscle control and distorted facial features. Jim has a staggering gait and Sally is confined to a wheelchair.

Ralph and Joan are a married couple. Ralph has polio and is in a wheelchair. Only his legs are affected. Joan is not physically handicapped.

The interviewer is a philosophy student who has taken a class on discontent. He is interested in discovering how persons with handicaps relate to discontent.

This is a fictitious account told by a person with handicaps to present some truths for our consideration.



Interviewer: I'd like to find out if people with handicaps have different frustrations than people without handicaps.

Ralph: I've often wondered whether some people can believe that I have the same basic human needs that they have.

Interviewer: Why?

Ralph: When I told people I was dating they thought I was off my rocker. Then when we were contemplating marriage I was scared to mention it publicly.

Joan: Some of my friends who didn't know Ralph couldn't understand how he was going to help support a family. When I told them he was an accountant they were utterly amazed.

Jim: I think many people equate physical handicaps with mental retardation. Although this is sometimes the case, it is wrong to make generalizations.

Ralph: Supporting a family is only one aspect. Love and sex play an important role in marriage, and I think a lot of people have trouble loving a person with handicaps. We are conditioned to believe that only the "physically perfect" are lovable. The movies and commercials portray couples who are without blemish.

Jim: If a problem crops up they get a divorce. It's very misleading. I wish more emphasis would be put on human relations. I'd like to go on a date just for the sake of having a good time. But on several occasions I'd call up a girl to ask her out, and she would refuse because she didn't want it to develop into anything.

Interviewer: How did that make you feel?

Jim: Initially, it was a letdown, rejected type of feeling. Then I began to wonder, Was it because of my handicap, or was it because of my personality?

Joan: Everyone gets turned down at one time or another.

Jim: I know, but I always wonder if I'm being rejected because of my handicap, which I can't do anything about, or because of my personality, which I am able to change.

Joan: You're not being yourself if you change your personality just to please others. You have to accept yourself as you are. If others don't accept you, that may be their problem, not yours.

Jim: I never thought of it that way. I guess a love relationship needs to grow naturally. I wish I could have gotten some good information on the facts of life and how I could anticipate coping with my sexuality.

Sally: So do I.

Interviewer: Was it not talked about?

Sally: Only to a limited degree. I got the biological facts, but that's about all. The psychological aspects were avoided like the plague.

Interviewer: Can you think of any reasons for that?

Sally: I suppose most parents find it hard to "teach" sexuality. Parents of children with handicaps usually have an additional guilt complex to overcome. Maybe it takes some of the beauty out of sex for them.

Jim: Parents also tend to be overprotective.

Ralph: Attitudes toward the handicapped are gradually improving. Years ago we would have been locked up in an institution.

Sally: I'm still in an institution, and it really bugs me sometimes, but I've got nowhere else to go. My parents are both dead and I can't live on my own. The government is not that willing to look at the housing needs of the handicapped.

Interviewer: What are those needs?

Sally: I see housing needs falling into three categories. For the very severely handicapped a type of institutional setup is a necessity. I mean a place where each resident would have a private room with staff on hand for personal support services such as dressing, cooking, and cleaning. Group homes would be the ideal thing for the moderately handicapped. They would have the benefits of home as well as share the responsibilities in running a household. Several nonhandicapped could live here as well to help with things that can't be done by the handicapped. Low rental apartments with easy accessibility would meet the needs of those wishing to live on their own.

Jim: Independence is important to all young adults. I see my friends moving away from home, but I can't. I'd like to learn things like cooking, but my mother sees that as a threat. She feels a responsibility to look after me. The more I learn to do for myself the less she feels needed. When I was born doctors told my parents that I would never go to school and that I should be put in a home. My parents weren't ready to accept that. They wanted me to stay with them. My accomplishments came as surprises. They're scared when I try new things because they feel I might fail and become discouraged.

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(not handicapped people)

Gilbert Fast

Sure, the handicap is there, but it's secondary to being a person who also bears the image of God.

But I'm the type of guy who likes to try anything. I think a group home would give me that opportunity.

Interviewer: How do you gain your independence while you are living at home?

Jim: As long as you're living at home you pretty well have to accept your parents' value system and it doesn't give you the chance to develop your own.

Sally: A lot of my friends with handicaps get most of their decisions made for them, not only by parents, but also by agencies working with the handicapped. They think they're doing a good deed by throwing Christmas parties and Halloween parties, taking us to the circus, and on it goes. I often feel treated like a little kid.

Interviewer: Then why do you go?

Sally: Usually because I've nothing better to do.

Jim: I think there are two philosophies on recreation for the handicapped. On the one hand, people are saying that the handicapped should integrate with the rest of society (normalization), while others say there should be special groups. We're caught in the middle. Most of us grew up together, went to the same special school, and are now attending a social club for adults with handicaps. It's hard for some of us to get involved in other activities.

Sally: Some lack confidence. Cities aren't built for people in wheelchairs. Most public buildings have lots of steps and big heavy doors. And even if they were accessible, I can't drive a car and I can't use public transit.

Jim: Yeah, they have buses for people who are capable of walking or driving. Let's face it, you have to be able to walk to use the bus. Meanwhile, there are senior citizens and people in wheelchairs sitting at home.

Sally: My concept of a public transportation system is a door-to-door dial-a-bus equipped to handle wheelchairs, thereby making it usable for handicapped and nonhandicapped alike.

Jim: I believe that quite a few of the handicapped have to build up their confidence. We've been sheltered, pitied, and sometimes even ignored. It's time to let people know we exist. Nothing bugs me more than going into a restaurant with a friend and having the waitress say to my friend, "What does he want?" That really makes me feel like a nothing.

Sally: Public education is really difficult. Most people aren't interested because they don't often come in contact with people who have handicaps. What they forget is that they could become handicapped as the result of an accident, or that they could have a child with a handicap. That's when shock sets in and they don't know how to cope.

Jim: Another problem with public education is that the same handicap affects people differently. I think each of us must educate the people with whom we associate, making it clear that every person should be seen as an individual. Sure, the handicap is there, but it's secondary to being a person who also bears the image of God.

Ralph: That's important for counselors to learn. I knew ever since ninth grade that I wanted to be an accountant, but guidance counselors kept telling me I was aiming too high. "Accountants have to be mobile." "There's too much pressure involved." It was a constant struggle to prove to them that I could achieve my goal. Rather than trying to help me reach my potential, they were trying to limit it.

Jim: I had a rough time at high school too. I couldn't get motivated because I saw no future after graduation. My guidance counselor suggested work in the local sheltered workshop. That didn't turn me on because the jobs involve mainly craft work, and I thought that surely I could do something more stimulating with a high school diploma. I decided to take several university courses. That gave me a whole new outlook.

Sally: The severely handicapped face a real problem with regard to employment. I'm thinking of people who are unable to use their hands for the workshop and who aren't capable of higher education. That's where I see the agency playing a vital role by providing programs on a weekly basis.

Jim: It's difficult to know the right thing to do for these people. Maybe they're happy staying at home. It might be we who are putting values on them. Integration is difficult in some cases. It comes back to the principle of treating each person individually.

Interviewer: I haven't had much contact before with people who have handicaps. An important thing that I've heard from you is the dependency we all have on the people around us. But there is a standard expectation that people must move at a rapid pace, get an education, get a job, get married, have healthy kids, and so on. If people can't do these things, we treat them as less than human.

On the other hand, nobody's perfect. We all have handicaps. The question is, How do people with more visible handicaps become more fully a part of society? They shouldn't be rejected, because the handicap isn't their fault. In the process of integration both handicapped and nonhandicapped must work together.

It seems to me that public education is a slow process. From what you have said, government must respond more to the housing and transportation needs of the handicapped. Employers must realize the capabilities of those who are able to join the work force.

Obviously, churches can do more. Attitudes of sympathy and tokenism must be replaced by respect and dignity for people loved by God as much as anybody else.

The best way for some changes to happen is for the handicapped to make themselves heard. As citizens, you have civil rights. As time goes on, I have hope that you will be seen as persons with handicaps rather than as handicapped people.

Pacific District stresses leadership concerns

Challenging talks, a one-act play, ministerial ordination, and a visit to the Hopi Indian community at Oraibi, Arizona, highlighted the seventy-ninth session of the Pacific District Conference (PDC) in Flagstaff, Arizona, June 15-18.

Guest speaker Erland Waltner, former president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, told the delegates that adequate attention to leadership has not been given in the believers' church over the last two decades.

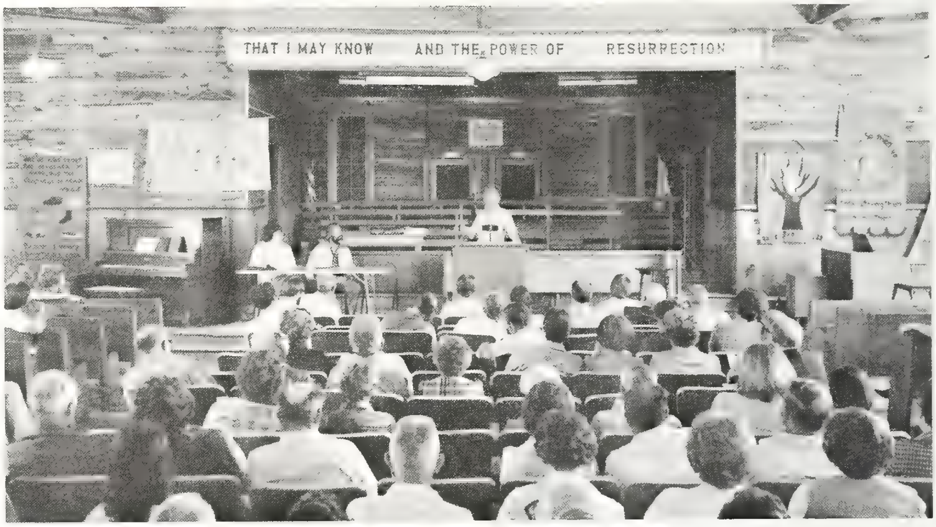
Basing his first talk on Ephesians 4:11-12, Waltner stressed that leadership is essential, but Christian leadership is different from secular management. Menno Simons said it well that leaders are to be "watchmen and trumpeters, spiritual pillars, messengers of peace, shepherds, spiritual nurses and fathers, spiritual mother hens in Christ, ministers."

Ephesians 3:1-4, 16 reminds us to take seriously Christ's love in us and exercise those gifts which are serviceable to the Lord. According to Waltner, there is a leadership shortage in our conference because some congregations expect too much of one person, and because congregations do not take seriously their own calling to discern people with leadership gifts and encourage them for the ministry.

Waltner encouraged PDC congregations to reinforce dialogue between pastors and people; to reactivate gift discernment as an active process (such as the Paul-Timothy program); and to break through some of the stereotypes, such as the monopastoral system. He suggested a shared or team ministry, calling out people in midcareer, considering women ministers, and weighing full-time versus part-time options. Some Christians pray, "Lord, use me." Waltner urged more to pray, "Lord, make me usable."

Is There No Peace?—a one-act play written by South Seattle Mennonite pastor Lauren Friesen—challenged viewers to examine values related to peace, nonviolence, and justice. A middle-class Mennonite family agonizes over these issues when their daughter is held for ransom on a hijacked plane. The parents volunteer to become voluntary service workers in the home country of the terrorist, who finds this offer difficult to cope with. The hostage also volunteers her skills to the underprivileged in his country.

The ministerial committee said that it is a problem for them to have licensed a minister who then proceeded to lead a PDC church out of the conference (John Nagle at Immanuel Church, Downey, California). Licensing really calls for General Conference membership and appreciation. The committee urged churches to be more careful in their selecting process and also to involve the committee, and conference ministers, in the process.


THAT I MAY KNOW AND THE POWER OF RESURRECTION

Elmer Friesen, president of the Pacific District Conference, leads the delegates in session. Seated at the table are acting secretary Barbara Kassebaum, and then still vice-president Floyd Quenzer.

Homer Andres, conference treasurer, reported that the PDC had a $5,000 surplus at the end of 1977. A 1978-79 budget of $66,045 (a 4 percent increase) was readily adopted.

On Saturday afternoon, two busloads plus numerous cars drove to Oraibi and visited the community, church, museum, and mission school. A Hopi banquet was served to the guests, followed by a time of informal sharing, singing, and a devotional message by Hopi pastor Karl Johnson. One reason for the visit was to acquaint PDC members with the Hopi mission, another was to symbolize an invitation for the Indian churches to join the PDC.

The fellowship was most congenial. One delegate commented: "This visit alone has made the 1978 PDC an historic and unforgettable occasion." My response as a first-time visitor to Oraibi is that this cross-cultural fellowship in Christ was the climax of the whole conference.

At the close of the business sessions, Elmer Friesen, outgoing president, turned the gavel over to newly elected Floyd Quenzer, pastor at Fresno, California. *Bernie Wiebe*

Reduced giving to MCC continues in USA

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—MCC contributions from United States churches were about $150,000 less for the first half of fiscal year 1978 than for the first half of 1977.

Treasurer Norman Shenk noted, however, that the gap is not as wide as had been projected only a month earlier when contributions were $265,000 behind last year. Currently there is an upward trend and "for that we are deeply grateful," Shenk said.

Canadian Mennonites did have a strong constituent contribution the first half of 1978. Total Canadian income, including constituent contributions and other funds, was considerably above last year's level. The increase in overall Canadian income may be somewhat misleading. A larger proportion than usual of the CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) funds were received in the first six months.

In order for total contributions for the year to be higher than last year, contributions from churches will need to continue at the present level or improve. ☐

Parents of retarded want congregational help

"We tend to limit the progress of the retarded by putting them in a box and thinking they can't progress any further, when maybe in reality they could if we gave them a chance."

This was one of many comments made by parents who attended a mental retardation family retreat May 27-29 at Camp Mennoscah in Kansas.

Frustrations about the church's response and worries about the future were the most sensitive issues.

"We have had to work for everything we wanted for our retarded child" expressed a group concern. The parents faulted the church community for being insensitive to the special needs of handicapped persons and their families. Among these was the need for retarded persons to be active in the life of the church, and the adaptation of materials so that they could be part of regular classes, including catechism.

An insistent concern is the care retarded persons will receive as they get older and parents are unable to provide care. The parents at the retreat were particularly worried about secure emotional environments for their children, something which is not characteristic of state institutions. "If the church was more actively involved in ministries to the retarded, parents could be more relaxed about the future," observed one parent.

New wing opened at MCC headquarters

Akron, Pennsylvania—An open house on June 25, attended by about 500 persons, marked the completion of a new addition and general renovations to Mennonite Central Committee headquarters. Ground was broken for the 5,200-square-foot addition in April 1977. With the continuing increase in staff, the building erected in the early 1960s had become too crowded for office personnel to work efficiently. One visitor commented that the headquarters seemed to consist only of offices, desks, and typewriters. William Snyder, executive secretary of MCC, responded that the Akron center is not the key to the MCC program; it is merely the link between the churches and programs. "The real activity doesn't occur here. We facilitate the activities," he said. About seventy-five people, Canadians and Americans, representing fourteen Mennonite and Brethren conferences and Protestant denominations are on the Akron staff.

Family clustering: A new model for Christian nurture

"There is a lot of hurting and despair within American families," laments Margaret Sawin.

Sawin, a Baptist minister, is pioneering a different model for religious education which she calls "family clustering." She conducts workshops on the concept, and spoke to the family life committee of the General Conference Mennonite Church during a visit to Newton, Kansas.

During an interview she said, "We need to help families do their job better. The family is the best place for nurture and relationships."

She visualizes family clusters as groups of four or five complete family units who contract to meet together periodically for educational experiences related to their problems, hopes, joys, questions, and beliefs. "It is not therapy," she says. "It is enrichment. It is an activity which is meant to make family life even more satisfying."

What is a family unit? She includes single persons, widows and widowers, divorcees, any group of persons living together, as well as the nuclear family.

"Segregating ages is pitiful."

Sawin

Sawin began to work with family units in 1970. Since the church is the only institution which gathers family units, she sees family clustering as an important mission of the church.

Her doctoral research led her to believe that it is time for the church to take a searching look at how people are nurtured in the faith. "People do not become Christian," she asserted, "by didactic methods. Rather, individuals must learn experientially what faith means." This happens best, she claims, in intergenerational groupings where the common pilgrimage of adults, youth, and children can provide vision and faith patterns. "Segregating ages is pitiful," she commented.

Some of her research on how persons are nurtured in the faith evaluated Sunday school teachers. The results were disappointing. In two crucial characteristics—succorance and nurturance—Sunday school teachers scored much lower statistically than the control group. Sawin defined succorance as "I like people to care for me," and nurturance as "I like to help people."

From this interdenominational study she concluded there was need for change. The family cluster program she is promoting is intergenerational, provides opportunity for consideration of serious topics, allows families to model aspects of their family systems for each other, and provides perspective for children and parents.

Sawin has an office in Rochester, New York, but uses much of her time in training leaders for family clustering. Her address is Box 18074, Rochester, New York 14618. *Vic Reimer*

Lutheran leader attacks "Bible smugglers"

Geneva (EPS)—Paul Hansen of the Lutheran World Federation's department of church cooperation has attacked certain "East missions" in the United States, West Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, and Holland as being responsible for smuggling Bibles into Eastern European countries and illegally importing into the USSR rubles bought at cheap rates in the West.

The people who illegally take Bibles into the Soviet Union regard themselves as "God's smugglers," said Hansen. These people should realize that the vast majority of people in the USSR do not understand this. "They look upon the smugglers with disgust, as a kind of criminal, and this attitude is immediately directed also towards those Christians who have contact with the smugglers and unfortunately in many cases also towards Christians as a whole.

"Every time an attempt to smuggle in Bibles and other religious literature is discovered and reported in the press, whenever the mass media show films of such episodes at the borders, the militant atheists get new 'ammunition' for their antireligious propaganda, and much irritation and hostility against everything which has to do with the church and religion are generated."

Hansen also stated that anyone in the Democratic Republic of Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia who really wanted a Bible could get one.

He attacked those who only painted a grim picture of life in socialist Eastern Europe. "While not playing down the difficulties experienced by churches and Christians in some socialist countries, or remaining silent about the fact that there have been severe clashes between religious groups and police, much more should be reported about the life of the official churches and congregations, which include the overwhelming majority of Christians in Eastern Europe and the USSR," Hansen asserted.

"Great numbers of Christians participate regularly and undisturbed in an active congregational life. For every picture of a persecuted individual or family reproduced by the East missions in their publications, we can show photos of thousands of Christians who are not being brutally persecuted by the communist authorities. For every story about congregations which come together secretly in the woods, we can tell about thousands of others which gather in their church buildings, with state permission, and whose members are just as committed and faithful as those in the forest."

In summing up his charges, Hansen concluded, "The vast majority of Christian congregations in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union are not being helped by the activities of East mission organizations."

Professionals ask: How much Mennonite commonness is needed?

Editor's note: Although this report is dated the issues discussed are not.

The young Mennonite professionals who attended a conference called "Professionalism: Faith, Ethics, and Christian Identity" in Philadelphia March 3-5 came to perpetuate a stereotype. The main question the conference dealt with was, What are the ingredients of that stereotype?

We all assumed that the mental pictures of the eighty-five participants, whose median age was about twenty-six, had much in common. We all knew the routine of weekly sermon-listening and Sunday school discussions, hem length squabbles and arguments over pacifism.

Mennonite Student Services representatives Arden Shank (Washington, D.C.) and Rick Mojonnier (Philadelphia) called the conference to deal with the fact that a new generation of Mennonites, wooed away from the farm and small town and into the "secular city," now hold a lot of mental images not shared by an earlier generation. Is there a conflict between our upbringing and our secular education and urban lifestyle? How can we keep what we value and identify, and reject those traits which threaten our faith?

The student services organizers chose a contrasting pair of resource people to suggest some answers: John Eby, sociologist, and Gordon Kaufman, theologian and professor.

John Eby capitalized on our need as Mennonites for an identity distinct from our professional milieu. Professions by definition, said Eby, have fatal flaws. They license and limit one's skills to only a small slice of life's problems; they demand conformity to the profession's norms, and thus divide our loyalties; they rule out practice by nonmembers in order to keep their power and prices high; and they deal with people in trouble, and thus tamper with lives at their most vulnerable point. Furthermore, joining a profession is almost like voting in favor of the values our society is built on.

Eby's speech became a rallying point for participants who have struggled to witness through their professions. Teachers wanted to know how to defend victimized students; lawyers were trying to minister a bit of psychological healing to broken families. In short, participants wanted to reinforce each other's attempts to be that pinch of salt that makes the world palatable.

Theologian Gordon Kaufman supplied the term that describes this sense of uniqueness: *sectarian consciousness.* it means seeing a split between the church and world, or as Kaufman put it: "We tend to see the world outside the church as sinful, fallen, dangerous; it is inside the Christian community, therefore, that one is to take one's principle orientation in life."

And yet Kaufman linked sectarian consciousness to closed communities, insulated from the outside world. We at the conference, he said, are living in changed conditions: cities remove the screens that filter out the world's realities. When we begin to take part in the life-style and professions of the world, where do we turn to find confirmation for our moral knowledge? The Mennonite way, Kaufman said, has been to consult the Bible. But again, professionals are stranded far from tradition's fortress, because our education has made us unlikely to accept as absolute every doctrine in a book that was written in a cultural and historic setting much different than our own.

The informal consensus among the participants was that Kaufman had correctly identified a loss of innocence about the Bible's role in our lives. But as long as a majority of us seemed unthreatened by loss of a "perfect" written word of God, we had no trouble maintaining the sense of commonness and call that goes with sectarian consciousness.

And so it seemed that it is not isolation *from* the world that creates a Mennonite identity. The identity remains as long as we are not isolated *in* the world. Attendance at this conference signified a decision not to be isolated in the world, but to rely on others to support our values and standards.

Such an image has too little detail to be called a stereotype or to be considered exclusively Mennonite. But we didn't have time to discuss which ethnic peculiarities our self-image should preserve.

How difficult will it be to love, trust, and nurture community ties while we are urban professionals? How much conflict with society should we expect or seek in the process of being reconcilers? These were questions we didn't have time for at this conference. But the most basic question, which we each took home with us, was, What kind of Mennonite commonness do I need, and what am I willing to invest in it? *Jan Swartzendruber*

Words & deeds

Prototypes of a new 2½-minute daily radio program have been auditioned by Mennonite Broadcasts in Harrisonburg, Virginia, to replace the fifteen-minute weekly "Mennonite Hour." Subject to funding, the new format will be released in October. Tentatively named "A Closer Look," it will help listeners apply Christian faith to current events and issues, and is designed for congregational sponsorship on a Monday through Friday cycle. Arthur McPhee, pastor of the Lindale Mennonite Church, will serve as narrator with a research writer assisting him in preparing scripts.

Waterloo, Ontario—"Conrad Grebel College has had a difficult year but not one without its rewards and successes." With these words President Frank Epp summarized the last school year in his report to the college's board. Among the successes was an improved financial situation. Instead of an anticipated deficit of $39,500 there was a surplus of $34,600 in a total income of $716,000. The college also completed its building fund drive. Only $156,000 remains outstanding on the $1,052,000 academic hall. Among the difficulties cited by Epp were the financial problems with which the year began and tensions arising from his decision to seek public office. Epp won the Liberal Party nomination for Waterloo Riding and will contest the federal election expected before June 30, 1979. Regardless of the outcome of the election Epp has resigned effective by that date. The board appointed a committee to begin the search for a new president. Applications and nominations are being invited. Suggestions may be submitted to Ronald Schlegel, Department of Health Studies, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario.

En route to and from the World Conference in Wichita the forty-voice Mennonite Children's Choir of Winnipeg will be giving concerts in Minneapolis (July 23), Lincoln, Nebraska (July 24); Manhattan, Kansas (July 25); Salina, Kansas (July 27); Wichita (July 29-30); Goessel, Kansas (Sunday a.m., July 30); Newton, Kansas (July 31); and Mountain Lake, Minnesota (August 1). Their trip is a faith venture that not only expenses will be met, but that money will be raised to build homes in India through Mennonite Central Committee. The concerts incorporate sacred and secular works from an international repertoire. The group has represented Canada in international song festivals, winning first, second, and third prizes. Later in August the choir will perform at an international gathering of music educators in London, Ontario, and will represent Canada at the International Youth Choral Festival in Washington, D.C. August 21-23.

A documentary film about the tenth Mennonite World Conference will be filmed at Wichita during the conference July 25-30. Officially commissioned by the MWC presidium, it will be a professionally produced movie directed by Charles Davis and produced by Burt Martin of Burbank, California, the same team that produced *Hazel's People*. The film is planned to be ten to twelve minutes in length and suitable for use with a worship service or as a report about the MWC. It will be available for purchase or rent after September 15 from the People's Place, Main Street, Intercourse, Pennsylvania 17534. Because of the expected demand for the film persons should list first, second, and third choices for booking dates. The media production agency of the Mennonite Brethren churches is also producing an audiovisual report of the MWC in both slide-tape and filmstrip-tape formats. Orders for this presentation may be placed at the conference in Wichita or by writing Words of the Gospel Ministries, Box 1, Fresno, California 93707.

Charismatic renewal among Mennonites is the focus of one of the special interest groups meeting during the Mennonite World Conference. Praise, worship, testimonies, and the Kansas City conference film *Like a Mighty River* will be part of the program. Two meetings are scheduled Thursday and Friday, July 27 and 28, from 4:15 to 5:30 p.m. in the Metropolitan Baptist Church a few blocks from the Century II convention center.

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Archivist needed

Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania requires an archivist-administrator for its historical library and archives, and a curator-administrator of the Mennonite Heritage Center in Souderton, Pennsylvania. Candidates must have a Christian commitment sympathetic to Anabaptist-Mennonite theology, life-style, and practice. Academic training or experience in archival and library work, care and collection of artifacts, organizing and interpreting exhibits, and research in Mennonite history is desirable. A reading knowledge of German is required. Individuals interested in either a half-time or full-time position should forward a resume by July 31 to Ray K. Hacker, President, Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania, 5323 Lake Drive, East Petersburg, Pennsylvania 17520. The starting date for the position is October 1, or as soon thereafter as mutually agreeable.

Management couple needed

Camp Squeah, an all-season camp operated by the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia, requires a full-time resident management couple. An unfurnished three-bedroom house is available at the campsite. The salary is negotiable. Closing date for applicants is August 12. Camp Squeah is located near Yale, British Columbia.

For information call D. H. Epp at 604-437-8794 or W. Tessman at 604-794-7723.

Record

Workers

LaDonna Huebert, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Nebraska, began one year of General Conference voluntary service on June 10 working as a secretary at Crossroads Community Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She is a graduate in business from Hesston (Kansas) College. Her parents are Milton and Elvera Huebert, Henderson.

Kenton Kaufman, Eden Church, Moundridge, Kansas, began two years with Mennonite Voluntary Service on June 15 working in home repair ministries in Portland, Oregon. Kenton holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas. His parents are Virgil and Vernell Kaufman of Moundridge.

Donna Leck, First Church, Geary, Oklahoma, began two years of voluntary service with the General Conference on June 1. Her assignment is with day-care services in Beatrice, Nebraska. Donna graduated from Oklahoma Bible Academy this year. William and Nancy Leck of Geary are her parents.

Dan Liechty, First Church, Berne, Indiana, will soon begin a three-year exploratory study and service assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Hungary. He attended Goshen (Indiana) College, received a BS in Bible from Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia, and graduated this spring with an MA in peace studies from the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana. He is the son of Robert and Miriam Liechty of Berne.

Harry Loewen of Wilfred Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, has been appointed to the chair in Mennonite studies at the University of Winnipeg, effective September 1. Loewen is a graduate of Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg, the University of Western Ontario, the University of Manitoba, the University of Toronto, and the University of Waterloo. He has been a member of the German department at Wilfred Laurier University since 1968, and its chairperson since 1972.

Waldo Neufeld, director of Mennonite Brethren Communications in Winnipeg since 1973, has been appointed to head the personnel department and information services of Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) beginning August 1. Later he will also be in charge of the accounting department and office management. Neufeld has served as news director of CKX-TV in Brandon, Manitoba, and from 1971 to 1973 he was director of broadcasting and counseling for Faith and Life Communications in Winnipeg.

Chak Ng, Glenn Ellyn, Illinois, is beginning a two-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service on July 30. A graduate in social work (MSW) from Loyola University in Chicago, he will serve in the Seattle Mental Health Institute. Chak is a member of the Blanchard Road Alliance Church in Wheaton, Illinois. His parents are Ngok and Chui-Keng Ng of Penang, Malaysia.

Colleen Penner, Oak Lake (Manitoba) Church, in a two-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Winnipeg, Manitoba, is serving as a receptionist at MCC (Canada) headquarters. Colleen received a commercial art certificate from the Assiniboine Community College, Brandon, Manitoba, and has been employed by Marv-Eon Signs in Winnipeg as a commercial artist. She is the daughter of David H. and Sarah Penner.

Laura Rappl, Brookfield, Wisconsin, began three months with General Conference voluntary service on June 1 working in a day-care facility in Hutchinson, Kansas. She has studied at the University of Wisconsin for one year, and is a member of St. John Vianney Catholic Church in Brookfield. Her parents are Robert and Mildred Rappl of Brookfield.

Miriam Reesor, Pickering, Ontario, began a one-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service on May 29 working in a child-care facility in Hutchinson, Kansas. Miriam is a member of Steeles Avenue Mennonite Church in Markham, Ontario. She has worked as an athletic program director. Her parents are John and Eva Reesor of Pickering.

Amy Rinner, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kansas, is serving a two-year assignment at Mennonite Central Committee headquarters, Akron, Pennsylvania, as editorial assistant in Information Services. She holds a BA in English (communications) from Bethel College. Amy is the daughter of A. James and Esther Rinner of Newton, Kansas.

Susan Schumacher, Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio, will begin a two-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service in August working at the Hopi Mission School in Oraibi, Arizona. Her assignment includes secretarial, bookkeeping, and library services. Sue holds a bachelor's degree in English from Bluffton (Ohio) College, and has worked the last four years as the editorial assistant for *The Mennonite.* Her parents are Harold and Vera Schumacher of Pandora.

Barry and Joyce Suderman, Home Street Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, have begun a two-year voluntary service assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Scarborough, Ontario. Barry, who will be a workshop coordinator, has been employed in computer operations in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Joyce will serve as secretary and receptionist the first year and case aide worker the second. Previously she served with MCC as a bookkeeper in Manitoba. Barry is the son of John D. and Tina Suderman of Winkler, Manitoba, and Joyce is the daughter of Henry H. and Katie Pauls of Morden, Manitoba.

Huebert

Kaufman

Leck

Liechty

Loewen

Neufeld

Ng

Penner

Rappl

Ressor

Rinner

Schumacher

B. Suderman

J. Suderman

Audiovisuals

August 6, 1945—What actually happened in Hiroshima on that day, and what was to follow in its wake? Pictures and film footage shot by Japanese photographers in the weeks and months after the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima have been made into a thirty-six-minute film which is available on an offering basis from the American World Friendship Center, 2425 East Street, LaVerne, California 91750.

Conscience and War Taxes, a slide set produced by the National Council for a World Peace Tax Fund, gives information on the military budget, interviews long-time tax resisters, and introduces the option the World Peace Tax Fund presents. The set of seventy-nine slides comes with cassette tape and script and is available August 1 from Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; rental $2.00.

The Race Nobody Wins, a slide set produced by Citizen's Organization for a Sane World (SANE), views the world's race for arms and the probability of nuclear war. The set comes with cassette tape, script, and questions for discussion. It is available August 1 from Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; rental $2.00.

African Drought! is a twenty-six-minute, sixteen-millimeter color film produced by ABC News, suitable for audiences of junior high age to adult. It explains the effects of drought in the Sahel region of Africa and the steps being taken to assist the nomads who are its primary victims. The film is available free, but donations to cover the cost of the film are accepted. To book the film, write MCC (Canada), 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8.

Published

Toward Understanding the Bible is a book about hermeneutics for lay people. Written by Perry Yoder, associate professor of Bible and religion at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, the eighty-two-page book attempts to "help those seeking biblical answers for today's problems to find a coherent and consistent way of using the biblical text." It has been published by Faith and Life Press and is available from General Conference bookstores for $2.45.

Calendar

August 21-25—Mennonite Voluntary Service orientation, Camp Mennoscah, Murdock, Kansas

Central

August 21-25—Project Teach, Bluffton (Ohio) College

Pacific

August 14-18—Project Teach, Pacific College, Fresno, California

Ministers

Henry Braun began serving as pastor of the Glendale Church, Lynden, Washington, on July 1. Henry and Sally Braun served with the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission in Zaire, 1970-72. Since 1975 Henry has been studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart.

Paul Kroeker has resigned as pastor of Bethesda Church, Marion, South Dakota, after eight years of service to begin church planting work in Sioux City, Iowa.

George S. Stoneback, former pastor of Mennonite Community Church, Fresno, California, has come out of retirement to accept a call as assistant minister of the Congregational-United Church of Christ, San Luis Obispo, California.

THE CHRISTIAN AND CIVIL RESPONSIBILITY

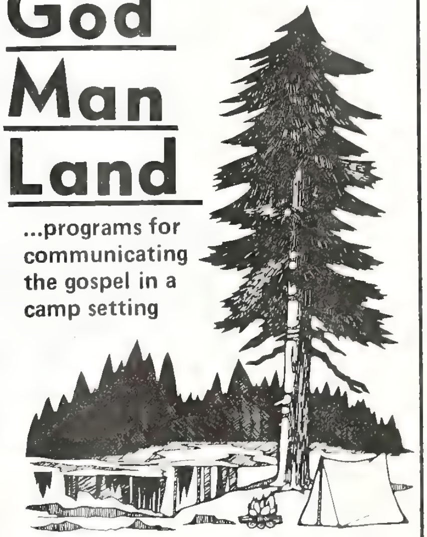
Two study guides have been prepared as process aids to help congregations study the issues involved and consequently to develop their own position. They could be used by a group for up to 13 sessions or as short as three sessions.

THE RULE OF THE SWORD, *by Charlie Lord*
In this first volume the writer speaks to the issue of "technological-industrial militarism." Five lessons $1.00

THE RULE OF THE LAMB, *by Larry Kehler*
In volume two the writer deals with the Christian citizen's responsibility in a technological-industrial military society. Eight lessons $1.10

Both books for the complete study $1.96

FAITH AND LIFE PRESS, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114



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I Care...

...about housing the poor

We all care about housing the poor, and sometimes we can actually do something about it by going to ghetto areas and helping to rebuild. Other times we have to say "I Care!" with our checkbooks.

Won't you send a check so we can actively care about the plight of our brothers and sisters?

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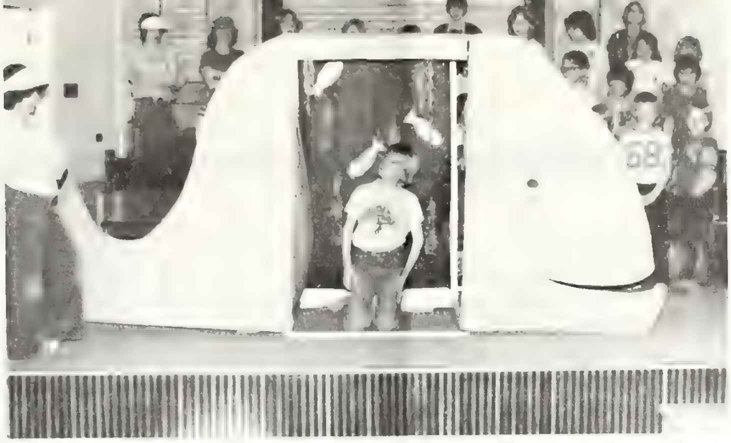

Mount Royal junior choir puts on the musical You Can't Run Away from the Lord. *Roy-Henry Friesen plays Jonah.*

Jody Zbeehko, the 1978 Saskatchewan Easter Seal girl, waits at a Saskatoon bus stop. Jody is a member of the Mount Royal girls' club.

Sunday school class with their teachers, Mary Lou Dyck and Hilda Epp

MOUNT ROYAL MENNONITE CHURCH

The Mount Royal Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, would like to describe itself through the following "personal and church goals" adopted by the congregation in February 1978 (slightly abbreviated version):

1. *Continue to grow in our faith relationship with God* (1) by establishing a daily Bible reading and prayer pattern that meets our schedule and needs; (2) by involving every member of the congregation in some kind of group Bible study series or other study at least once a year; (3) by having several sermons a year that focus specifically on personal forgiveness, prayer, assurance, and victory; and (4) by treating confidentially any information that comes to us regarding shortcomings of a fellow Christian. Talk to God first, then to the person.

2. *Provide a progressive program of Christian nurture for children and youth* (1) by helping families with good books for all levels of children and youth; (2) by enriching the homes through magazines; (3) by helping Sunday school and club workers to be spiritually and academically prepared; and (4) by helping parents, Sunday school, club, and youth workers understand that children and young people can experience saving faith in Christ. Also, that they need to be nurtured to grow in their faith.

3. *Maintain a consistent, friendly church community in which there is honest and understanding intergenerational sharing* (1) by sharing our faith, victories, problems, defeats, burdens, or concerns with at least one person; (2) by having occasional sharing and prayer sessions during the Sunday worship service or other church activity; (3) by encouraging the formation of intentional support groups in which participants are willing to share themselves and their belongings to the degree that is meaningful to the total number participating; and (4) by encouraging occasional intergenerational study sessions.

4. *Strive toward a discipleship that affects the home, interpersonal relationships, vocational, professional, and business ethics* (1) by planning church activities with home life in mind; (2) by strengthening the home through family activities, singing, devotions, work projects, trips, and discussions; (3) by considering the family before accepting promotions or transfers that uproot the family when the children have just established deep relationships; (4) by placing the family above luxuries that require an extra job or the earnings of both parents; and (5) by encouraging families to affirm each other to prevent isolation.

5. *Remain open to the Holy Spirit to develop gifts in the church* (1) by encouraging or affirming persons in the task the church has entrusted to them; (2) by creating opportunity for gifts to develop; and (3) by giving understanding and support when new gifts are exercised.

6. *Offer a vibrant, enthusiastic witness to those outside the church* (1) by increasing the cutting edge of contact with club and Sunday school members who come from outside the church by (a) learning to know them well; (b) having them in our homes; (c) having coffee or other contacts with their parents; (d) having activities with their fathers, like fishing, golfing, or Saturday morning breakfast; (e) inviting parents to our home; and (f) inviting parents to the church; (2) by seeking to establish a growing relationship with persons in our vocations.

CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

Letters

Ad was misinterpreted

Dear Editor: Ken Fast (Letters, June 6 issue) has totally misinterpreted the "character" in the May 2 issue, page 296 (Commission on Overseas Mission ad). He is not a COM representative; he is a wealthy Mennonite, the executive of a prominent bank, who relaxes as he listens to a COM solicitor (not pictured). And you can tell by the smile on his face that he is becoming much excited about overseas mission. It is obvious he will soon come forth with a liberal contribution to our COM treasury. *Louis Goertz, 1220 Summit Street, Beatrice, Nebraska 68310* June 8

Correction re April 4

Dear Editor: In your issue of April 4 my letter mentioned *Washington Memo* (WM). Later WM was misprinted as *Window to Mission.* Thank you for correcting this. *Ronald Rich, ICU, Mitaka, Tokyo, Japan* June 8

Bible on remarriage

Dear Editor: I would appreciate several thorough exegetical studies in *The Mennonite* on the sayings of Jesus and other biblical statements regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage. I am particularly concerned with the issue of remarriage and would be relieved if the biblical scholars and theologians could demonstrate that Jesus did not mean what he seems to say:

"But now I tell you: if a man divorces his wife, even though she has not been unfaithful, then he is guilty of making her commit adultery if she marries again; and the man who marries her commits adultery also" (Matthew 5:32, *Good News Bible*).

John R. Martin in *Divorce and Remarriage* softens the meaning of the passage by saying, first of all, that Jesus is not speaking to the morality of remarriage, but rather the sinfulness of divorce. Furthermore, what Jesus means is that the divorced person who remarries and the person marrying the divorced person are tainted with the stigma of adultery. He seems to imply they are not guilty of it. I find the explanation unsatisfying.

As one committed to following Christ, even the "hard sayings," I have no liberty at the present time to approve of or participate in the marriage of divorced persons claiming the lordship of Christ. To some that may sound harsh and unforgiving, but what binds me to that conviction is not a spirit of vindictiveness or an attitude of "holier-than-thou," but the teaching of the most forgiving person who ever lived, Jesus Christ. Though I could theologize from the love of God to the forgiveness of Christ to the legitimate marriage of repentant, forgiven, divorced persons, the explicit statement of Christ does not allow me to.

What did Jesus say? What did Jesus mean? What was Jesus' intention? *Clarence Rempel, 6018 Fleetwood Drive, Lincoln, Nebraska 68516* June 8

Booklet on homosexuality

Dear Editor: I received *The Mennonite* (June 6 issue) and was interested in the emphasis upon the homosexual issue. Undoubtedly you will receive a lot of mail, for it is a highly emotional and explosive matter.

In view of this fact I did some reading and studying in order to teach our congregation some of the issues and reasonings. I prepared a little pamphlet which serves as a study guide for some Sunday and Wednesday evening sessions. In fact, we are in the middle of it. I thought it good to send you a copy. I realize that this does not cover all the ramifications of this debate, but it gives an idea of our approach and how we at the present handle the debate.

This pamphlet is available to those who request it from us.

My personal fear is that the General Conference will take a "middle of the road" stand in order to satisfy those for or against homosexual practice. I also fear that the leadership will argue for the more "liberal" position. I do sense, with you and others, that this issue may very well be more divisive than the war tax debate. Whatever the outcome, I trust that much wisdom and prayer will be given to the handling of this matter. *Ted VanderEnde, St. John Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio 45877* June 9

In the name of Christ

Dear Editor: "In the name of Christ" is a concept very basic to the Mennonites. As we now struggle with the homosexual question, we do well to keep ever in our minds that the way we act to those persons who are homosexuals is very important if we want to be acting in the name of Christ.

Dade County, Florida, and other places, besides the very close to home, Wichita, Kansas, actions about homosexuals, have made me very uneasy with the so-called Christian response. The antihomosexual campaign was headed by Christian leaders and the vote against homosexuals was predominantly from church people. My mind's picture of Christ with the woman caught in adultery, and how he handled the situation, haunts me. Would Christ really want me to be a participant in this behavior that would deny homosexuals a place to live or a job to earn a living?

My mind's picture of Christ with the hated Samaritan woman at the well, who had had several husbands and the one she was living with was not her husband, and how Jesus treated her with love and entrusted this "sinner" to be his messenger, also haunts me. Would Christ really want me to be a participant in a church body that rejects the homosexual?

The article "A Christian Approach to Homosexuality" by John W. Miller (June 6 issue) also leaves me uneasy. Homosexuality has been around since history was recorded and is in our biblical records. Miller's too easy faulting the historically very recent woman's movement as a major cause of either homosexuality or family life problems is far too loosely used.

The recent years of the growth of the women's movement have also been the time of change in many things that greatly affect the family—TV with its advertising, sex, and violence; affluence with its materialism and greed; loss of extended family and the valuable contribution of grandparents and older people; emphasis on competition instead of cooperation; reliance on might through war and the military; obsession with youth; and on and on. To put so much emphasis on one area as the cause of family problems is inaccurate.

A woman who is confident in her abilities, strong in her spiritual life, and active in her faith doesn't have to hang on to her son and make a life for herself through him or any of her children. She produces less homosexual children than the dominated, insecure, inadequate woman. I see the lifting of women out of the role of being dominated, possessed, and ruled as one of the greatest strengthening Christian happenings to the family structure in centuries, and theologically sound. Saying one partner in a marriage should be stronger, implies the other should be weaker.

Why not say that both should be contributing strengths, joined together in a common goal? *Edith Stucky, Route 1, Box 81, McPherson, Kansas 67460* June 9

Meditation

From w-a-l-k to w-o-r-k

What does it take to change w-a-l-k to w-o-r-k? You can do it in three easy steps.

The last two years the "Walk for the Hungry" from Palmyra to Lebanon (Pennsylvania) has taken a lot of planning. Committees met, volunteers were recruited, and publicity pushed. Then the Sunday afternoon registration began.

Some came late, some came without sponsors, and instructions to wear sensible shoes were not always heeded (resulting in blisters). Small tots came along and had to be carried. Sunday afternoon traffic made walking where there was no sidewalk a bit hazardous.

We wondered if there were not a better way. The publicity had served the purpose of alerting the young people to the needs of the hungry of the world. Fasting for one meal a week? No, that still was not doing anything which seemed to count. Doing? That was it! Why couldn't our young people work for those in our church who need to have small jobs done—a work week.

The idea gained momentum. "Sure, I need help raking leaves." "Hey, that's a good way to have my windows washed." The pastor chimed in that his car really needed a waxing. A senior citizen chuckled that she needed a crew to carry firewood from the woods.

The project became countywide. Our church enlisted twenty-five teens for after school and Saturday. They brought in over $200 for CROP (Christian Rural Overseas Program). Best of all, the teens liked helping the members, had some interesting contacts, and felt they had contributed more than shoe leather. Some came back the next Saturday and finished more jobs. It was fun to work in small groups and they are eager to try again.

It was easy to change w-a-l-k to w-o-r-k.

Beccie Mitzel

Your estate and the kingdom

My office recently sent a check for just under $11,000 to the Internal Revenue Service. We wouldn't have sent it if a local Mennonite woman had come to see us in the last five years or so. This woman had taken estate planning seriously and had left a will giving all her property to a trust which was to care for her son, and to give all that remained to various charities when he died.

Unfortunately, between 1966 when the will was written and 1976 when she died, the US federal estate tax was changed. That change put strict limitations on the kind of charitable remainder trust which she had created. At the time the will was drawn, all of the remainder would have been deductible because it went to charity. The new law requires that, in the United States, the trust be one of three highly technical types of trust in order to qualify for the deduction. (Canadians should similarly check their current laws about estate planning.)

The reason for this change is clear. People were evading tax by using these trusts with the intention of having their heirs use up the trust, leaving nothing for the charity. That is no longer possible. It is also practically impossible for an ordinary person to be trustee of one of these new trusts.

The idea behind a charitable remainder trust is excellent. Few people are willing to leave all or most of their estate to charity unless they can be sure their children will not be left wanting, even though their faith and convictions regarding Christian stewardship would suggest such a gift. The charitable remainder trust allows a person to ensure the financial security of their children while also giving generously to the growth of Christ's kingdom. The trust pays the income, and a portion of the principal of the estate if desired, to the heirs designated, and distributes the remainder to various charities as the donor directs, on the death of the heirs.

If this type of giving interests you, speak with your attorney, or contact the Mennonite Foundation, 1110 North Main Street, Goshen, Indiana. Many organizations provide the highly technical services required to operate such a trust. The Mennonite Foundation exists for no other purpose than to assist people with these types of giving. Help yourself, and the kingdom.

Duane Heffelbower

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CONTRIBUTORS

Priscilla Wilder Raymond, Cadillac Apartments No. 101, 1111 Ash Street, Denver, Colorado 80220, is a person with handicaps.

Gilbert Fast, 210 Alexandra Avenue, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 1M7, is a person with handicaps.

This week's meditation writers are Beccie Mitzel, Box 253, Hummelstown, Pennsylvania 17036, and Duane Heffelbower, 1619 Eleventh Street, Reedley, California 93654.

CREDITS

Cover, 452, Canadian Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled, One Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario M5E 1E8; 454, Arnold Reimer; 455, Steve Goosen, MCC; 461, Betty Unger.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Susan Schumacher. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Ecclesiophobia

A woman (Mrs. J. B.) wrote to the George C. Thosteson column (Peoria *Journal Star,* June 13, 1977): "I know people suffer from heights, elevators, and crowds, but can you please tell me if there is a name for the feeling I have when I am inside a church? I become weak, dizzy, and I begin to perspire after about fifteen minutes when I attend."

She says that she's tried sitting by an open window or in the back, but it doesn't help.

Thosteson says that she may be suffering from "ecclesiophobia"—an illogical fear of the church.

The vacant seats in many of our churches in summer indicate that this phobia becomes especially prevalent when the weather is suited for beaches, travel, and other outdoor activities.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not trying to lay a guilt trip on anybody for taking vacations. We all need to get out-of-doors and learn to see more of the greatness of God in nature.

I don't particularly see the latter as an excuse for empty pews. While our people go to visit elsewhere, many others come to our neighborhood.

Somehow this suggests that many do take summer vacations from any church attendance or involvement. With that I take issue.

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, *not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another,* and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Hebrews 10:23-25).

If we have ecclesiophobia or a careless attitude about church in summer, there may be reasons. A phobia sometimes represents a secret unfulfilled wish. That wish could be a desire for outdoor communion with God. Carelessness is often the result of nothing consequential happening within a church. That attitude could be the product of a lackadaisical congregation.

Thosteson suggests that Mrs. J. B. discuss her problem with a psychiatrist, a psychologist, or the clergy of her church. I suggest that we begin by reminding ourselves of our commitment to Christ and the church.

Read again Hebrews 10:23-25. Now, talk it over with your congregation and your pastor.

It may be that you could become more excited if the congregation would deliberately plan for several outdoor services and relate them to such a setting.

Our congregation puts most of the summer services in charge of one or two families (different families for different weeks). We choose our Sundays and the settings. Whole families are encouraged to prepare family-type worship services where adults and children participate. These get so interesting and exciting that some families are reluctant to plan their vacations out of town on Sundays.

A phobia, like an attitude, is a state of mind. If we fear something or become careless, we need to do something about it.

Many vacation grounds have outdoor worship services. Other places are waiting for some dedicated people to initiate something. You might combat a careless or phobic state of mind by inviting fellow vacationers to your tent/cabin/trailer for a Bible study or a time of worship. You'll probably be surprised to find others who also realize that they need this continuing spiritual nurture. You may also be surprised to find others in your congregation who have been harboring a secret ecclesiophobia and are eager to make summer worship services into unique experiences.

Television goes into reruns of reruns for the summer. Sometimes I get the impression that summer church services get to feel a lot like that. Then I certainly can't blame people for becoming uneasy and careless.

The East Swamp Mennonite Church at Quakertown, Pennsylvania, is a good example of doing something about it. They have built an outdoor stage, a good sound system, and have enlarged their parking lot. Their summer outdoor Sunday evening attendance is higher than their best attendance indoors in winter.

That's turning ecclesiophobia into ecclesio-love and faithfulness. Their membership, community involvement, and Christian education program are all showing clear signs of growth. *Bernie Wiebe*

Following our summer biweekly schedule, the next issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated August 8.

The Mennonite

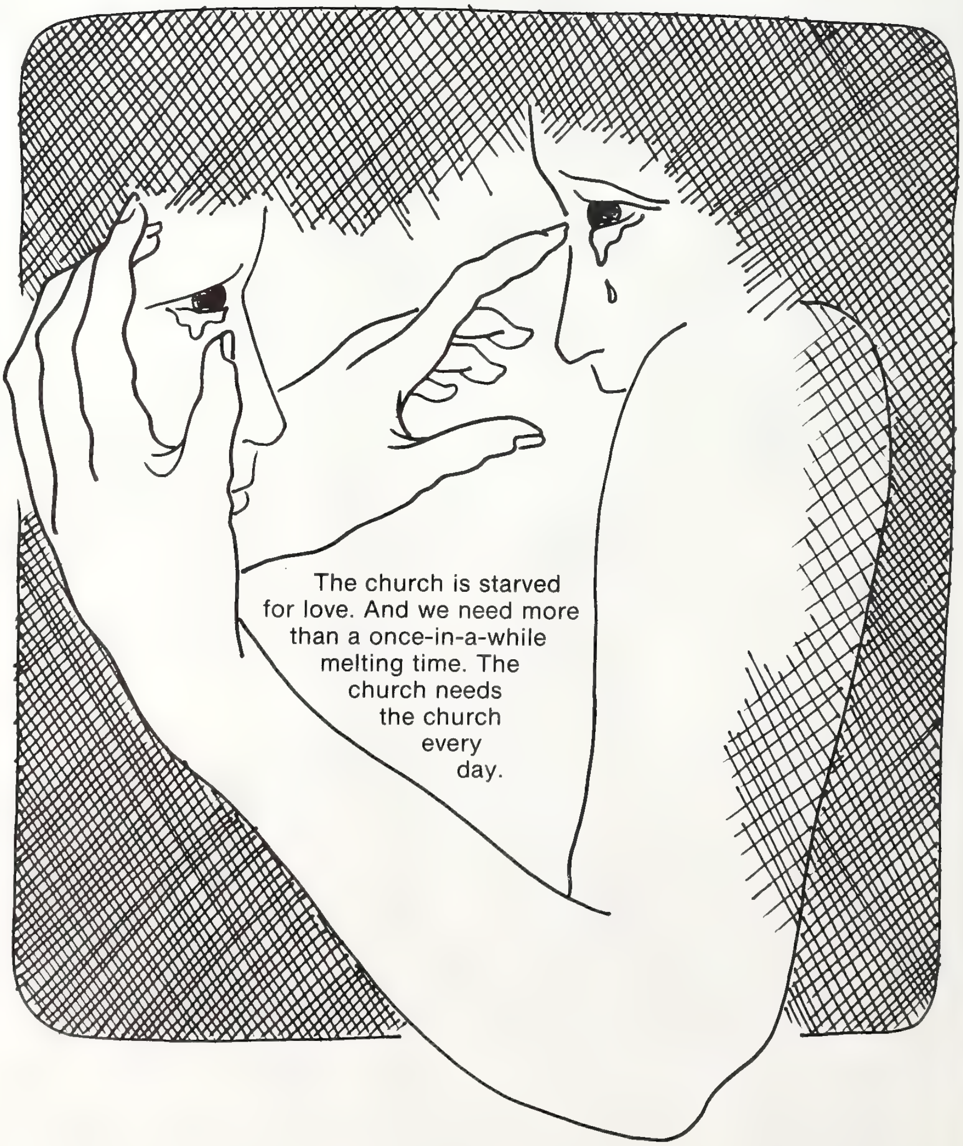
OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:29 AUGUST 8, 1978

Help, I hurt
Planting a Chinese Mennonite Church
The "tax revolt"
I want to tell of Jochabed

Help, I hurt!

G. Roger Schoenhals



The church is starved for love. And we need more than a once-in-a-while melting time. The church needs the church every day.

When the Holy Spirit is able to get a group of believers into an honest, caring mood, something remarkable happens. There is a great outpouring of human hurts. Children, young people, adults, and the elderly all participate in the revelation of personal sufferings, failings, fears, disappointments, struggles, and a host of other hurts. Following a service of prayer for the healing of human hurts, one minister observed, "I had no idea my people were hurting so."

Why does it take a special ourpouring of the Holy Spirit to help Christians share their personal burdens? Why the hiding of human hurts?

There are many reasons. Some Christians have difficulty admitting to themselves that they have certain kinds of problems or needs. Perhaps they have wrestled with these in the past only to fail repeatedly in solving them. In an effort to protect their delicate self-concepts and lessen anxiety they begin refusing to acknowledge the reality of the hurts. By repression or denial they press forward, hoping things will improve. The problems, however, continue to eat away and reduce personal poise and vitality.

Other Christians fail to face their hurts out of a dogged determination to be spiritual giants. Someone told them that the Christian life is an abundant life filled with joy and peace. It's the happy life, void of problems and hurts. Not wanting to fail, these misinformed Christians stoutly reject their inner needs. Facing the world with a forced smile, they are unhappy people fooling only themselves.

Many Christians are able to admit their hurts, but not openly. Secretly they try to

> “By going out beyond yourself
> and helping someone else, you help yourself.
> Bearing the burdens of another,
> you become able to share your own.
> The church comes alive.”

solve the problem or soothe the pain. They feel there is something despicable about admitting weakness to others. They might lose face. It might lower their spiritual profile. Parents often reason that being less than perfect will damage or destroy the admiration of their children.

Some hurting people keep silent so that they won’t have to face up to their particular problems. Making it public, or even telling one other person, puts them on the spot. They must stop playing around and start dealing with the hurt they hate yet enjoy.

Itchy ears and runaway tongues are other threats to those who would expose their hurts. We do not want the intimate concerns of our lives distorted and babbled all over the place. Who of us hasn’t cringed upon hearing a gossip tell the secret life of another, and vowed never to let anybody look behind our own masks?

There are those who consider their hurts unworthy to be expressed. Why bother someone else? They have their own problems to worry about. This may be either a genuine concern for the other guy or the reflection of a low self-image.

Some fear the easy answer. Maybe in the past they blurted out a need, only to be met with a “Now if you’ll just pray about this, it will go away.” The slap on the back and a verse of Scripture may be needed at times, but for the struggling person who has tried and tried and tried it feels like a slap in the face.

Have you ever humbled yourself before others by expressing a personal failure or need and then been ignored? Do you remember the depression that caved in on you and the flush of anger and bitterness toward those who let you down?

Many Christians are scared to death to express a personal need because it puts them in a vulnerable position where they are not in control. They fear the unknown. Though they may want help they are overruled by a pounding heart and a jittery stomach.

Even though Christians keep hurts to themselves it doesn’t necessarily mean they try to hide from God. How many times have you secretly agonized in prayer over a personal failure or a heavy burden? You probably found great comfort in the aiding presence of the Holy Spirit. You may have even found victory and peace. And maybe there are some things we should not share with other Christians.

But would you not admit that there have been times when you have longed for someone to help bear your burden? Have you not yearned to be able to share your hurts in a fellowship of loving, caring believers?

We need one another. We need help in bearing our burdens. We need to experience God’s love coming through human channels. This is why there is such a torrent of response in services of prayer for the healing of human hurts. The church is starved for love. And we need more than a once-in-a-while melting time. The church needs the church every day.

Perhaps you are thinking, “Oh, how I wish I could be a part of a congregation or a small group like that. I really need to share my problems and hurts in a fellowship of loving, accepting, supporting believers. I hurt and I need help.”

Isn’t it interesting that most of us want to share more than we want to bear? We want others to help us, but we have little patience or real concern for the burdens of others. We turn inside out the law of Christ to “bear one another’s burdens.” After all, how can we be expected to help someone else when we are the ones who really hurt?

Every Christian hurts. Some hurt enough to be desperately aware of the need for a caring, helping friend or fellowship of friends. Strange as it seems, these persons are the very ones who can start helping the church become the kind of loving fellowship it is meant to be. Knowing best what they need, they can help create it for the others.

Let’s say you are a Christian with a deep hurt. You keenly feel the need for Christian understanding and support. You don’t find what you need—what the church should really be. So you select a fellow Christian and you devote yourself to becoming a burden bearer for that person. This is hard for you must temporarily bury your own burden.

Knowing the kind of loving, trusting, prayerful atmosphere you need, you cooperate with the Holy Spirit in providing that very setting for your friend. You make it easy for him or her to share by eliminating the risks. You offer just what you need.

Helping another, you demonstrate how you can be helped. And in the continuing communion of caring, as you share your hurt, you will find the other also willing to share your load. By going out beyond yourself and helping someone else, you helped yourself. Bearing the burdens of another you were able to share your own. The church has become alive.

Bernie Wiebe

planting a chinese mennonite church

Sometimes you have to think of efficiency even in missions. The Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) expects to spend $260,000 in 1978 in working mainly with native Indian and Metis people. That ministry is thirty years old and there still aren't any strong Indian or Metis Mennonite churches in Canada. In fact, some years it has been difficult to point out more than one or two definite decisions for Christ.

Today you can predict that for every $1,000 spent by the CMC for Chinese ministries, there will be at least three Chinese persons responding to Christ.

That is the kind of hard logic I heard when the CMC council of boards voted last February to adopt an extra budget item of $46,000 for Chinese ministries in Canada.

Donald MacGavran has often spoken of "people movements" and that Christian missions should be sensitive to those times when God has prepared a people for responding to the gospel. Some Mennonite leaders believe that this is such a time among the Chinese people in Canada.

Over 150,000 Chinese have recently immigrated to Canada. Most of them are students from Hong Kong. Several have come from mainland China.

These Chinese have shown themselves to be open to the gospel. They are strangers in Canada, looking for a fellowship and an identity. Their strong family emphasis and quiet, hard-working character give them a kinship to Mennonites.

There are today about forty self-supporting Chinese churches in Canada. Seventeen have been planted and nurtured by the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) since 1962.

One of the CMA evangelists was Stephen Lee, a native Chinese. Stephen came to Hong Kong from mainland China in 1964. Among the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) workers in Hong Kong at that time, the Henry Beckers of Turpin, Oklahoma, volunteered to assist a Chinese Bible school student in a four-year program of studies. Stephen Lee became that student. Upon graduation in Hong Kong, Stephen went to Canadian Bible College, Regina, Saskatchewan, and earned a bachelor of theology degree in 1970. He then returned to Hong Kong as an assistant pastor for 2½ years.

The CMA called Stephen to become a church planter in Canada among Chinese people. From 1972 to 1977 he helped to plant Chinese CMA churches at Calgary, Lethbridge, Vancouver, and Victoria.

In the summer of 1976 the Henry Beckers came to stay with Stephen and Sally Lee at Vancouver. The Lees were also introduced to Peter Kehler (former missionary to Taiwan and then conference minister for British Columbia Mennonite churches) and to Paul Boschman (former missionary to Japan but now pastor of the Mountainview Mennonite Church).

Stephen says that he had never forgotten his indebtedness to MCC and his good feelings and experiences with Mennonites. When the Beckers, Kehlers, and Boschmans spoke to him about doing church planting among the Chinese for the CMC, he and his wife felt it was a calling from God.

A reference council was set up of representatives from the CMC, the Mountainview congregation, and the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia. Their decision was to work in Vancouver, which already had seventeen Chinese churches. But, Stephen Lee says, "there are over 80,000 Chinese in Vancouver and less than 4,000 are now in Christian churches. We have lots of potential for greater witness here."

In July 1977, 5,000 letters were sent to Chinese people (from the telephone book) in the Mountainview church area. Over 100 Chinese people responded by attending the first meeting on August 7, 1977. Regular services have been held ever since in the Mountainview church basement from 11:00 to 12:00 each Sunday morning. Attendance averages about fifty. Sunday school is held for twenty children at the same time. Services are in Mandarin and Cantonese. Saturday morning Chinese classes are being held for eighty children while twenty adults study English. Saturday evening is youth fellowship and on Friday nights family groups meet in homes for fellowship, singing, and sharing of their faith. Weekly offerings are averaging over $300.

The Chinese Mennonite Church received forty-one charter members on June 4, 1978 (thirty-six upon confession of faith and five by baptism). This congregation has been looking for a way to open a Christian bookstore in a Chinese area. They also offer counseling to Chinese newcomers in the city.

There have been problems. Since the Chinese congregation meets at the same time as the Mountainview group there isn't enough parking space. Mountainview Church is located opposite a cemetery, a symbol of dead spirits to Chinese people. They would prefer to locate near symbols of the "life" spirit. Their space is already overcrowded and the congregation is looking for larger facilities. For this they will need financial assistance.

How does this new nonethnic Mennonite group affect its parent group upstairs? Pastor Paul Boschman says, "As the activity began downstairs, it had the effect of making many of the other upstairs members also want to become more actively involved. Our congregation was probably motivated partly by the Chinese church to engage Les Klassen as a full-time outreach worker among the English-speaking people in our community."

Les Klassen, former Safeway employee, sees his task as "coordinating the community's needs and the resources we can find to meet them." There are about twenty lay

Paul Boschman, right, pastor of the Mountainview Church, visits with some of the Chinese children at the joint service.

people actively involved in such community projects as counseling, tape ministry, Bible study groups, and visitation.

The Chinese church is very much a family church—over twenty families are making it their home church. The larger Mountainview spiritual family has been tested on several occasions. On March 17, 1978, they held the first joint service (with translations). Only appreciation has been heard for that experience. The June 4 charter service, baptism, and communion were also joint. Eleven new members were also received into the Mountainview congregation.

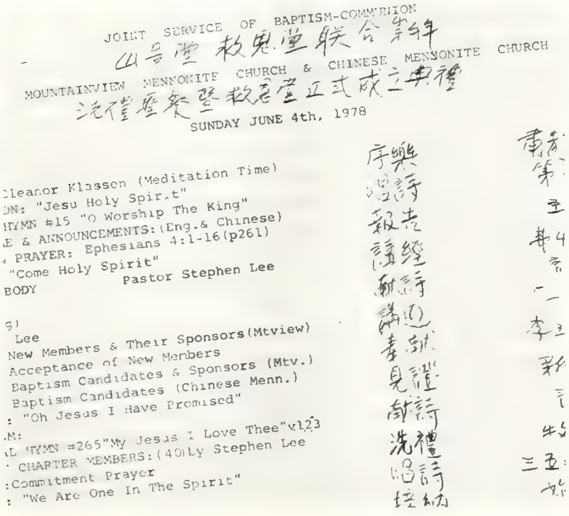
Sig Toews, a professional architect who is moderator of the whole project, says: "It has been just fantastic to be part of the Holy Spirit's working at Mountainview. He gave us motivation and also the leadership personnel (Paul, Stephen, and Les), along with the encouragement and support from the BC conference and the CMC. It has been a growing experience for most of us. When problems come up, we pray and wait on the Lord. Once he gives us a 'green light' we move."

Stephen Lee sees many more opportunities to plant Chinese churches in Canada. Already the CMC has a ministry in Winnipeg and is exploring possibilities in Toronto.

What is God's Spirit saying to Mennonites about church planting through this venture? Is it a form of Christian "opportunism"? Or is it being faithful to the Great Commission in our time? It raises some serious questions. It has also given Mountainview, the BC conference, and the CMC something to "sing and shout and praise the Lord" about.

THE MENNONITE seeks to witness, teach, motivate, and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published weekly except biweekly during July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton, Kansas 67114, by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kansas 67114, and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions in United States and Canada $9.00 one year; $17.00 two years; $24.00 three years; foreign $9.50 per year. Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Canada R3P OM4. Business office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114

Chinese church members visit with other members of the "upstairs" congregation following the joint service of baptism and communion.



JOINT SERVICE OF BAPTISM-COMMUNION
山景堂 救恩堂聯合崇拜
MOUNTAINVIEW MENNONITE CHURCH & CHINESE MENNONITE CHURCH
洗禮聖餐暨救恩堂正式成立典禮
SUNDAY JUNE 4th, 1978

Eleanor Klassen (Meditation Time)
ON: "Jesu Holy Spirit"
HYMN #15 "O Worship The King"
E & ANNOUNCEMENTS: (Eng.& Chinese)
PRAYER: Ephesians 4:1-16(p261)
"Come Holy Spirit"
BODY Pastor Stephen Lee

g)
Lee
New Members & Their Sponsors(Mtview)
Acceptance of New Members
Baptism Candidates & Sponsors (Mtv.)
Baptism Candidates (Chinese Menn.)
: "Oh Jesus I Have Promised"
.M:
L HYMN #265"My Jesus I Love Thee"v1,2,3
CHARTER MEMBERS: (40)Ly Stephen Lee
:Commitment Prayer
: "We Are One In The Spirit"

序樂
唱詩
報告
讀經
獻詩
講道
奉獻
見證
獻詩
洗禮
唱詩
接納

Gretna hosts Canadian Mennonite conference

More than 1,500 persons gathered for the evening sessions in the Gretna arena.

The quiet, peaceful atmosphere of Gretna, a small border village in southern Manitoba, was interrupted July 5-9 when over 800 Mennonites arrived for their annual meetings. This seventy-sixth session of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC), held near the site of the first conference in 1903, was a time of celebration and commitment. Throughout the business sessions at the Mennonite Collegiate Institute the challenge of both history and the future was evident.

There was an aura of celebration inspired by the seventy-fifth anniversary. History was related and applied to many situations, and on Saturday afternoon a cairn was unveiled at the site of the first conference sessions at Hochstadt near Altona. The evening sessions were devoted to worship as was the final day of the conference when a *Saengerfest* followed the regular Sunday worship service in the morning.

Although business sessions were mostly calm, there was a frustration expressed that the conference should deal more deeply with issues presently facing the churches. A resolution demanding that a time slot be given at future conferences for presentation and discussion of issues was adopted.

The proposed 1979 conference budget of $1,073,300 was accepted. Being the first CMC budget above one million dollars, it was seen as a milestone reflecting a growth in new evangelism programs and resource facilities.

Two major resolutions dominated the General Board's report. The first pertained to the work in Germany with the *Umsiedler,* recent Mennonite immigrants from Russia. Several workers are being sent from Canada to assist in the establishment of new churches and to aid in Bible school work, local personnel training, and Bible study. Canadian involvement in Germany need not last more than a few years, but the present need is crucial, and the delegates voted to support this work. $50,000 is being solicited for the 1978 activities, and nearly $91,000 has been budgeted for 1979 *Umsiedler* ministries.

The second resolution of the General Board was aimed at providing guidelines for donors of larger gifts. A basic concern was that large gifts would not determine the direction of conference programs in a way that would otherwise not have been chosen. CMC is, however, working at ways to direct donors who wish to give to specific projects.

Canadian Mennonite Bible College reported a successful year. Appreciation was shown for the work of outgoing president Henry Poettcker, and George Epp was welcomed as the new president. A long-range planning proposal, which created concerned discussion, was presented. The emphasis on new buildings and the seeming lack of program and course proposals seemed one-sided to some. The college was urged in the discussion to do some real innovative and creative dreaming about the concepts of "open university" and expanded extension courses.

In the far-reaching Congregational Resources Board report three matters took precedence. An approach to ministry that is seldom pursued by churches was presented by the education committee. Through a media presentation and small group discussions a model of gift discernment and mission which allowed for more involvement and growth of the church was examined.

The peace and social concerns committee presented their response to the Law Reform Commission's report on the family. Time for discussion was inadequate, but the conference body adopted the recommendation that the church and government be more involved in efforts for reconciliation, making divorce the final, not the first, alternative to marriage breakdown. The response emphasized that the law must never be the teacher of ethical values.

The CR board has also been instrumental in encouraging ministry to Chinese communities in Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Toronto. Consequently, of the five requests for building fund loans from CMC, two were from Chinese congregations. All five requests were accepted upon the recommendation of the CR Board. The amount loaned to these congregations totals $315,500. The rapid growth and expansion of these groups has been exciting and further evangelism plans are being considered.

The Native Ministries board's report expressed an honest concern about the role of churches in urban centers or near native reservations. "Proximity to a people of another culture does not assure a mutual friendship," said Ike Froese, the NM executive secretary. Malcolm Wenger presented a paper on the ministry to natives in which he encouraged the conference not to necessarily aim at setting up new Mennonite churches, but rather to cultivate our ability to "live together as people of differing cultures and histories as brothers and sisters and neighbors." In this session there were several admissions that conference work in native ministries has not always been successful. An independent study of native ministries has begun, however, and the commission will evaluate the NM purpose and program. Initial summarization of responses indicates a deep concern for the work and direction of native ministries. The study commission will present a progress report at the Council of Boards in January, 1979.

At the beginning of the conference delegates were urged to celebrate in worship, to renew covenants, and to evaluate and redefine their visions. By the final session there was evidence in the resolutions and in the discussion that many had followed this challenge. Perhaps the Conference is on the verge of a turning point towards new and revitalized grappling with the issues. *Adelia Neufeld Wiens*

Reflections on UN disarmament talks pessimistic

Ortman—Discouraged by US role

Pronouncements of peace ricocheted throughout the United Nations during the May 23-June 28 special session on disarmament in New York.

Yet nations continue to plan for war. Developing countries devote large amounts of their capital to arms. The Soviets continue to modernize their forces in Eastern Europe. The United States leads the world in military spending.

Against this backdrop of policy, and after three weeks of roaming the halls of the United Nations building, I have the following observations about the US role in world peace.

1. The warmakers and planners in the Pentagon have carefully kept quiet the most disturbing aspects of strategic nuclear deterrence. While we have been led to believe that the Pentagon merely wants enough weapons to wipe out the Soviets, more and more money is being spent seeking ways to destroy the Soviet arsenal first, thereby (so the reasoning goes) keeping American losses to an acceptable level. New weapons such as the Trident submarine, the Cruise missile, and the M-X mobile missile have this first-strike capability as their primary function. Unless US policy moves away from this first-strike threat, all attempts at disarmament will be futile.

2. Contrary to current belief, the United States has exhibited willingness to escalate a conventional war into a nuclear war. This has been documented by Daniel Ellsberg in a recent issue of *The Nation* (May 27, 1978) for at least seven cases where nuclear weapons were considered as a response to various conventional arms struggles since 1950.

3. The resources the Pentagon has to wage an information and propaganda war on American policymakers is staggering. As Sidney Lens has written: "One might suppose that in a nuclear age the role of the military would be to avoid war, but the Pentagon argued—with some cogency—that its very existence was a mandate to find a way to win wars. In the process it built an empire such as the world has never seen—$228 billion of wealth (more than that of the fifteen largest utilities and fifteen largest industrial companies combined), more land than the seven smallest states put together, and thousands of lobbyists to sell the program of more."

By comparison, the US arms control and disarmament agency has a budget of $16.5 million. This year the Pentagon will spend $11 billion for research and development of new weapons alone.

4. An artful job has been done to wallpaper over the fact that military spending is directly linked to inflation. It also competes with industries with much higher employment opportunities, and drains off capital which could be used to meet human needs. *David Ortman is a research associate with Friends of the Earth in Washington, D.C., under Mennonite Voluntary Service.*

Among the 500 Japanese who delivered twelve tons of signatures petitioning a ban on nuclear weapons to the United Nations special session on disarmament were some of the survivors of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. These survivors marched through deteriorating areas of New York's south Bronx. The demonstration was staged to dramatize the need for reordering national priorities.

Peachey—The stones will cry out

The United Nations' special session on disarmament could be the single most important event of the century if it succeeds in turning around arms escalation. If it fails, the survival of the human race is at stake.

The UN consultation has considerable potential as an educational instrument, but the event is also illusory because the nations of the world do not conduct their real politics in this arena.

World military expenditures have increased from $107 billion in 1960 to a projected $400 billion in 1978.

The economic momentum for arms escalation is underestimated. Richard Falk, professor of international law and politics at Princeton University, wrote in the May 27 issue of *The Nation,* "The situation is compounded by imperial geopolitics that make the United States want to export as much weaponry as possible so as to exert control over foreign governments, while earning the dollars needed to help defray the costs of oil imports and of maintaining a foreign military presence."

If one country discovers newer advanced weapons technology, the next country feels pressed to develop and deploy a superior technology. Research and development of new technology energizes escalation automatically.

The *Disarmament Times,* published under the auspices of the nongovernmental organization disarmament committee in New York, reported on June 2 that eighteen proposals had been gleaned from thirty-four speeches delivered at the conference.

The USSR suggested it would not use weapons against states which renounce the production and acquisition of nuclear weapons. The United States proposed a UN peacekeeping force to be made up of national contingents trained in UN peacekeeping methods. West Germany expressed readiness to contribute to a program establishing a maximum ceiling on national defense expenditures in proportion to a country's gross national product.

Prime Minister Trudeau of Canada announced that Canada is phasing out nuclear-armed planes and replacing them with conventional weapons aircraft. It is relatively low risk for the Canadian Government to make this commitment as Canada is covered under the nuclear shield of the United States. Nevertheless, Canada should be urged to make good on its rhetoric.

The most productive achievement of the disarmament session, and various rallys which occurred, could be alerting the public to the crisis of survival. It would be tragic if the Christian church were silent. There is good reason to believe that (as Jesus suggested in the Gospels) if the church is silent, then the stones themselves will cry out. *Urbane Peachey is secretary of Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section (International)*

Reconstruction work in Guatemala to continue

Mennonite Central Committee has accepted the invitation of the National Reconstruction Committee of Guatemala to continue work in villages where MCC has been active during the past 2½ years. MCC workers have supervised the building of 1,800 houses, spending nearly $900,000 in response to the 1976 earthquake which killed 20,000 persons and destroyed 250,000 houses. Some of the money is being paid back by the homeowners and is then used in local community projects. Homeowners in Patzicia (photo at right) see their monthly house payments finance a bridge and a laundry center or pila. *At the* pila *persons do the family wash by dipping water from large concrete tanks into one of the separate sinks surrounding the tank. The reason for maintaining an MCC presence in the villages is to help guarantee that the voice of the poor will be sought in developing community projects. MCC personnel have tried to be conscious of working with community groups.*

Wurmbrand sued by Bass and Bankov

Michael Wurmbrand, general director of Jesus to the Communist World, and the organization itself, have been sued for defamation by Joe Bass and Steven Bankov of Underground Evangelism (UE).

The charge which was filed June 1 in a California court is based on the fact, states Wurmbrand in a June 6 news release, that "my son (Michael) spoke with two directors of UE, and also wrote to top Western leaders in the relief work for the underground church, drawing their attention to information alleging sex scandals and dishonesty in the leadership of UE."

Wurmbrand says Michael was alarmed that such scandals could be used by the communists to infiltrate UE and blackmail persons in the organization to obtain secrets of the underground church.

Wurmbrand says he does not want the charges to be aired in a secular court, but would like a commission of church leaders to investigate the matter because he believes that in conflicts between Christians the church is the only competent authority. He concludes by stating that he intends to maintain his position of love, forgiveness, and nondefense.

Revisions begun on *The Foundation Series*

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—Despite widespread affirmation of *The Foundation Series,* first introduced in the fall of 1977, revisions have begun. Some of these are extensive, but most are typographical or cosmetic in nature. Many of the revisions are the result of suggestions from teachers.

The Foundation Series is a Sunday school curriculum for nursery age through grade eight published cooperatively by the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Church, and the Brethren in Christ.

The work of editing the revisions has been divided among the three denominations. John Zuercher of the Brethren in Christ is editor of the revisions for the grades seven and eight material; Jim Horsch of the Mennonite Church is responsible for similar work for grades three to six; and Edna Dyck of the General Conference has oversight of the revisions for nursery, preschool, kindergarten, and grades one and two.

Except for Horsch, who has worked with *The Foundation Series* since its beginning, the other members of the revisions committee are new to the work. General oversight for the revisions is being given by Laurence Martin of the Mennonite Church. The Church of the Brethren, as a cooperative user of the curriculum, has also appointed Shirley Heckman to the committee. This group of five meets quarterly to assess suggestions and decide on revisions. For example, they will meet again in August to decide on revisions for the second quarter of year one.

Of the teachers who sent in evaluations about 80 percent said they would recommend *The Foundation Series* to others. An even higher percentage rated the visual attractiveness of the curriculum positively, except for the kindergarten and grades one and two levels.

The teachers were also asked for specific suggestions. Many of these are being incorporated into the changes. These are the revisions planned: *Nursery*—A teaching packet will be developed containing stories, songs, more specific session plans, and pictures; *Preschool*—Teachers singled out three lessons as especially difficult to teach. The editors will attempt to remove these difficulties; *Kindergarten*—Most dissatisfaction was with the teaching packet. Consequently it will be released in quarterly segments rather than in an annual packet. Color photos will replace the black and whites, and stick puppets will be provided for "Friends." *In and Out* will be more colorful. Although the kindergarten program has an annual cycle, its revisions will not be ready until September 1979, the same schedule as the two-year cycle of the other levels.

For grades one to eight the following changes are being processed: *Grades 1-2*—The format of the student guide will increase to 8½ by 11 inches. The editors will lower the reading level and pictures will be added to the teaching packet; *Grades 3-4*—The materials in the student workbook and reader will be more clearly labeled with session numbers to match the teacher's guide; *Grades 5-6*—Though most respondents were grateful for the biblical base, many were overwhelmed by the amount of biblical material included in every session. As a result the editors will reduce the amount of Bible content and will sharpen the focus for each session. Different inks will be used on the teaching pictures and instructions for using the pictures will be printed on the back of each picture; *Grades 7-8*—References to the service and relief activities of the Church of the Brethren will be added.

Paul Lederach, former executive director of *The Foundation Series,* says everyone involved in the curriculum is dedicated to making the materials a more effective tool for teaching. Since guidance for future revisions will be influenced strongly by evaluation sheets, he encourages teachers to complete them and send them in.

"The Longest Walk" passes the torch to non-Indians

At the World Conference in Wichita Mennonites acted out a drama of American Indians, "Cheyenne Jesus Buffalo Dream."

Meanwhile, a real-life American Indian drama came to an end. Since early spring thousands of American Indians have walked from all areas of the country in a dramatic witness to their spiritual unity, their desire to save their way of life, and their opposition to eleven "anti-Indian" legislative bills pending before congressional committees.

"The Longest Walk" is a literal journey from the West Coast to the East. It is also the name given to the temporary cooperative organization of many tribes, urban groups, and national organizations joining in the journey.

It began February 11 when 180 American Indians and supporters gathered in San Francisco. After brief prayer, they set off for Washington, D.C. Their purpose was to build awareness among Americans and the world community of the concerns of their people.

The group was organized to combat "anti-Indian" legislation. These eleven congressional bills range from sweeping measures calling for the abrogation or repeal of all Indian treaties to bills deleting treaty rights of specific tribes.

The Longest Walk coalition reminds Americans that Indian nations defended their homelands in countless battles with the US Government, resulting in treaties between separate sovereign nations. One result of the wars was treaties which clearly defined the boundaries of those nations. They guaranteed Indian nations a land base on which to maintain their people's culture and government.

During a stopover of The Longest Walk in Wheeling, West Virginia, United Methodist Bishop Frederick Wertz chats with Ernie Peters, Sioux chief.

As America expanded, there was an urgent desire for more land and more resources. This has resulted in broken treaties, forcing American Indians from their land again and again.

When the group stopped in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Mennonite Central Committee took an active part in assisting the walkers.

Bill Means of South Dakota, Oglala Sioux, told MCC representatives, "At one time the United States waged a military campaign against us. We lost much in the treaties that followed that campaign. Now they are waging a campaign of words in Congress to take still more from us."

Nevertheless, Means believes that the majority of Americans want to see American Indians dealt with justly, and want to see Indian culture survive.

But he noted the American public does not protest the political force of special interest groups who want water and mineral resources located on Indian land. These groups are pressuring Congress to abrogate treaties protecting these resources.

In Washington, D.C., the walkers conducted ceremonies, educational meetings, and had meetings with government officials.

What will follow The Longest Walk? Means reflected, "The spiritual bond we have formed will stay with us and nurture us. As for our future as nations, Indians are only one million strong. We have no influence in this government. Follow-up to The Longest Walk lies in the hands of the non-Indians who have heard our message. They are the only ones who can help us." *Tina Mast Burnett*

Philadelphia Mennonites fault mayor for polarizing races

Mennonites in Philadelphia have taken issue with the city's mayor, Frank Rizzo.

About two months ago the mayor made statements which received nationwide publicity. Rizzo's remarks were seen by many as the promotion of the interests of white ethnics at the expense of other racial groups and served to polarize various racial groups.

The Philadelphia Mennonite Council (PMC), which represents a total of four General Conference and Mennonite Church congregations, and several other Mennonite organizations, communicated its concerns to the mayor. However, its members are not satisfied with the mayor's response.

In its letter to Rizzo PMC said his statements were out of keeping with the intent for which God established government. It is evil, says PMC, that blacks, Indians, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans have been denied access to a relatively comfortable and accepted position in society.

"Blacks, in particular," the letter states, "have never been afforded fair treatment in Philadelphia. . . . Blacks continue to be forced to find housing in a discriminatorily arranged system, and monies are not available to finance home purchase, home repair, or small-business activities in many parts of the city which are predominantly black."

Since many Mennonites in the city are black, many are Spanish, and many are white, it is noted that some Mennonites have seen and also experienced the results of unfair treatment.

The letter concludes, "We are very concerned over the continued attitude of oppression which exists towards blacks in this city. This is not Christian nor is it good government. We can affirm your concern for the other ethnic groups of the city, such as the residents of Whitman Park, but we would pray that you do not fall into the trap of playing one group of your citizens off against another."

Rizzo's three-sentence reply to the PMC thanked the group for writing, noted that the Constitution made no provision for second-class citizens, and said citizens need to stop being deluded by bureaucratic double standards.

Uruguayan Mennonites interact with other denominations

A retreat for the German-speaking ministers and deacons of the Mennonite Church in Uruguay featured interaction with Lutherans, Presbyterians, and a Catholic theologian. Two Lutheran pastors and missionaries, Klaus Schimpf and Guenther Nickel, were lecturers at the gathering which met April 29-May 1 in Centro Emanuel, a retreat center about fifty miles from Montevideo. A delegation from the Presbyterian church visited the gathering, and thereby became actively interested in the work of the Mennonite Church in Uruguay. Gertrude Meyer, a Catholic theologian and member of the Ecumenical Institute of Montevideo, also attended the three-day event and addressed the participants. In the photo above, Henry Dueck, General Conference missionary, leads a study of Hebrews.

Friends critique new intelligence act

Washington, D.C.—(AFSC)—Provisions of a bill to reorganize national intelligence agencies, no matter how artfully constructed, may still be ignored because of past abuses, says Louis Schneider, executive secretary of the American Friends Service Committee.

"The National Intelligence Act of 1978 (S 2525) appears to be based on a formula of prohibitions coupled with broad grants of executive discretion which equals the legitimizing of past abuses," Schneider told the Senate Committee on Intelligence July 11.

"I am confident that if we were to return to the original conception of the 1947 act and allow a CIA independent of the President and the Pentagon to collect and analyze information and provide the FBI with a clearly defined criminal investigative mandate, we would not endanger the national security and would take positive steps toward insuring that America will not become a police state," Schneider said.

He concluded, "It's not that the citizen should be under surveillance by the government, but that the government should be under the surveillance of its citizens."

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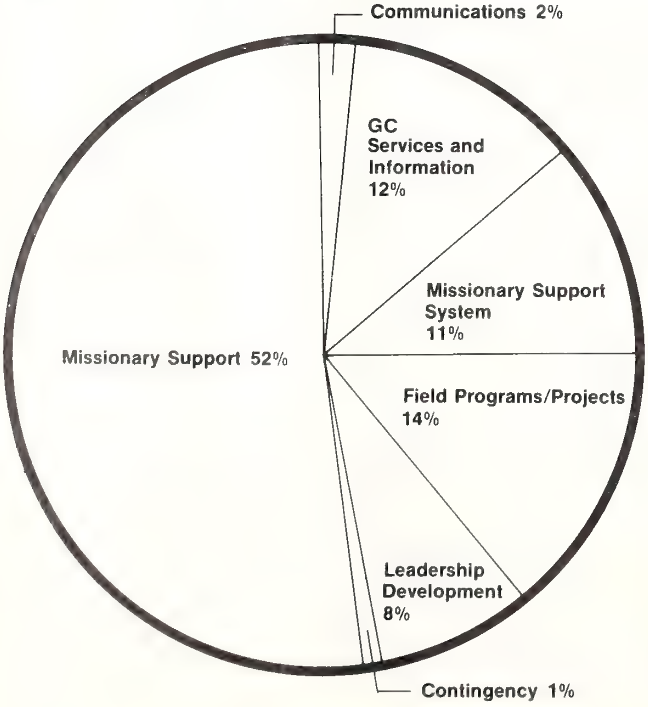


MISSIONARY SUPPORT	$1,094,129
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	156,881
FIELD PROGRAMS/PROJECTS	279,133
COMMUNICATIONS	47,200
GC SERVICES/INFORMATION	250,389
MISSIONARY SUPPORT SYSTEM	234,629
CONTINGENCY	22,588

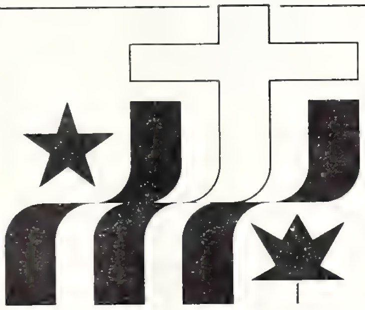
Words & deeds

New approaches to evangelism and intercongregational ministries will be the themes for two events sponsored by the Congregational Resources Board of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada this fall. Named "Wellspring," they will be held in Saskatchewan (place to be announced) September 28-October 1, and at Saint Norbert in Manitoba, October 2-5. Resource persons are Carol Fitch and Roger Roark, both members of the Church of the Savior in Washington, D.C. The four-day sessions will focus on the interrelationships of the spiritual pilgrimage and outreach ministries, with an emphasis on calling and gift discernment. For further information write: Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4, or telephone 204-888-6781.

Celebration and reflection were the two dominant aspects of the seventy-fifth anniversary celebrations of Rosthern (Saskatchewan) Junior College, June 23-25. More than two thousand persons attended, watched three performances of the Mennonite musical *The Blowing and the Bending,* listened to a 160-voice choir, and participated in various cultural activities including a seminar about the history of Rosthern Junior College led by Frank Epp. The weekend also saw the school graduate sixty-eight students. Epp, who was graduation speaker, said the history of the school showed the importance of vision, the achievements possible from small beginnings, and the necessity of perserverance.

Mennonite Disaster Service workers in southern Manitoba were much involved in cleanup activities following a tornado which affected two Roman Catholic towns, Augbigny and Sainte Anne, and a Mennonite community, Greenland, on June 19. One person was killed during the tornado. On the day following the disaster 250 volunteers and a fleet of trucks were on hand to clean up rubble, gather scattered debris from fields, and repair houses and barns. On Friday, four days after the tornado struck, MDS had organized more than 500 volunteers. MDS provided volunteers to the three communities throughout July.

General Conference missionaries, resource persons, and Commission on Overseas Mission staff met June 21-27 on the Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas) campus for the fourth annual missionary seminar. The purpose was to enlarge the missionary perspectives of the participants. This was done through lectures, discussions, and daily Bible studies. Twenty-six missionaries were present representing work in seven countries. One of the keynote addresses was titled "What Kind of Witness Do I Leave?" by COM secretary for Latin America Hector Valencia. Valencia, a Colombian national, drew upon his experiences with missionaries during his years of church work in Colombia. He noted that a missionary is a person subject to all the tensions of a normal human being regardless of the image projected, and that most missionaries are the creatures of their times, as shown in the emphases they bring to their work. When asked what had really irritated him about missionaries Valencia referred to the manipulation done by them, mostly about money for projects (which then divided the church), and the persecution of progressive leadership in the national church.



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Houseparents needed

Mennonite Residental Homes Incorporated needs houseparents (or single individuals) to operate home in rural Mennonite community for eight mentally retarded adults who will be in a workshop during the day. Wages negotiable. Contact: John Brenneman, administrator, Route 3, Elida, Ohio 45807 or call (419) 640-7286.

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Workers

Gerald J. DeSobe, Naperville, Illinois, began serving as pastoral counselor at the Health Center, Bloomington, Illinois, on July 3. DeSobe had been a staff counselor with Central Dupage Counseling Center in Glen Ellyn the past year. He holds a PhD in pastoral psychology from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois.

William Keeney of North Newton, Kansas, has assumed the position of executive director of the Consortium on Peace Research, Education, and Development (COPRED) on a half-time basis July 1 at the consortium's new location on the campus of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas. COPRED serves as a clearing agency for over 100 colleges, universities, and other groups working in the field of peace education. COPRED was located at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minnesota, for the past two years and prior to that was at the University of Colorado in Boulder. Keeney will continue with Bethel College as director of continuing and experiential education.

Arnie Lehn of Leamington, Ontario, and *Lawrence Toews* of Calgary, Alberta, have begun six-months assignments with Mennonite Disaster Service. Now serving with the unit at Johnstown, Pennsylvania, they will soon be transferred to the summer project at Pike County, Kentucky, for the remainder of their term.

Steve McKindley of Edmonds, Washington, has begun a two-year assignment with Mennonite Voluntary Service in Wichita, Kansas, working in home repair. He is a 1978 bachelor's degree graduate from Seattle Pacific University with a major in environmental studies. His work experience has included managing a service station. Steve's home congregation is Lynnwood Free Methodist Church in Lynnwood, Washington. His parents are William and Dorothy McKindley of Edmonds.

McKindley

Orr

David Orr of Markham, Illinois, has been appointed associate director for the western region of Mennonite Voluntary Service beginning September 1. The western region includes nine voluntary service units and fifty volunteers west of the Mississippi River. Since January 1976 Orr has served under MVS as youth director of the Community Mennonite Church and Trinity United Church of Christ in Markham. His work has regularly included participation in Sunday morning worship and various teaching and counseling ministries. He has also been active in cooperative ventures with local youth service agencies, including employment services and Christian education. In 1975 Orr earned the bachelor of arts degree in international relations and religious studies from Beloit (Wisconsin) College. He replaces *Dale Suderman* who terminated his work with MVS May 31.

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Christians and world events— a comment

The "tax revolt"

A new specter is haunting Anglo-North America. It threatens to reverse a recent trend within national, provincial, state, and local governments. The move toward making governments more responsive to the needs of the poor, the underprivileged, and those who have been treated unjustly by our bloated, rich, and selfish society seems to have slowed down, if not stopped. Two recent events, one Canadian and one American, serve to illustrate the point.

In October 1977, the people of the province of Manitoba decided to oust their New Democratic Party government of Ed Schreyer, and replace it with the Progressive Conservative Party with Sterling Lyon as premier. Lyon campaigned on the basis that the New Democrats had spent money as if it were going out of style, that it was taxing the business community too much (hence discouraging businesses from investing), and that the province was being led into expensive bureaucratic socialism.

After a resounding victory the Lyon government began fulfilling its election promises. The civil service, by attrition and layoffs, has shrunk in size by over 1,000 people (about 10 percent). One of the departments receiving the largest staff cuts was Northern Affairs, and the vast majority of those were low-income natives. Business taxes have decreased while user fees, such as for legal aid, have been instituted. All departmental budgets were cut below inflation, save two—the Highway Department (the poor of Winnipeg's Main Street and of northern Manitoba have no use for big highways) and the Attorney General (jails, courts, etc.), who will prosecute the people who cannot afford the new legal aid fees. The universities were given a 1.9 percent increase in grants and the hospitals 2.9 percent (inflation is currently running at 8 to 9 percent).

The frightening fact as a Mennonite Christian is that there is probably no provincial or state jurisdiction where Mennonites are more influential. Mennonites constitute about 7 percent of the population and four sit in Lyon's government. One of the two major Winnipeg papers stated that the Mennonites were one of the major components in southern Manitoba that insured Lyon's victory.

The other example is more immediate. California voters, in practicing love for direct democracy, have overwhelmingly supported Proposition 13. The "tax revolt," as it is labeled, has Californians demanding that their property taxes be rolled back to a maximum 1 percent of the assessed value of their homes. No doubt there is some validity to the fact that with increasing assessment values some low- and middle-income homeowners cannot afford the new exorbitant tax rates. There are possibly better methods of taxation. The fact remains, however, that deep cuts are forecast in government programs. That, seemingly, is what the population wants. *Time* reports a recent poll which indicated that 22 percent of Californians felt that the government provided too many services; 67 percent responded that welfare should be cut. School boards, health services, and many other "people" agencies will be hit hard.

These two stories are paradigms for what is happening across our countries. The Canadian federal government and all ten provincial governments are in restraint, with the possible exception of the NDP government in Saskatchewan (none, however, to the extent of Manitoba). The tax revolt is spreading across the states and even to Washington like wildfire. There is a move afoot to call a constitutional conference to consider a constitutional amendment that the US federal budget must be balanced at all times. Many US cities are attempting to stave off bankruptcy by lowering budgets.

Where do we stand in all of this? First, I think that we must acknowledge that there is waste in our growing, bureaucratic governments. If Carter had held to his promises, he would have cut the waste without creating unemployment—that is, a cut in management areas with a redistribution of staff to more "people oriented" and direct aid areas.

Defining waste is difficult. I do not consider a Young Canada Works grant to a group of high school students for a summer recreation program to children or old folks a waste, but a meaningful deployment of funds.

Second, there are two routes that we as Christians can pursue. We can admit that we must not see the government as the church. The government is not meant to help the poor and disabled. That is the church's task. The government is too ineffective and government workers are not motivated necessarily by Christian concerns and convictions. Hence, we the church should increase our giving and our volunteer projects. Possibly we should expect all our youth to give two years of voluntary service.

Or we can become more politically involved and attempt to change public opinion. We are enough in the mainstream of society to be able to affect its thinking.

I believe that we must take both positions. Our Christian and Anabaptist roots tell us that we cannot depend on the governments, which are of this world, to do the work of the kingdom. Yet, we must never give up being prophets, prodding our governments to greater concern and passion.

Harold Fransen is a summer pastoral assistant at First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, Alberta.

Letters

A further word on ACTS

Dear Editor: After reviewing the news release on the closing of the ACTS Mennonite Voluntary Service unit (February 14 issue), I agree with the unit and its support committee that the intense struggle and the variance of opinions involved are not alluded to. It needs to be said that the unit and support committee expressed frustration regarding the MVS staff's recommendation. As the news release outlined, there were specific operational, philosophical, and administrative questions on which MVS staff was recommending ACTS' termination. By and large, the unit did not think those issues warranted the termination of the program.

On April 11 the unit, support committee, and MVS staff met to work out any loose ends that still needed clarification. Present members have all decided to remain in Chicago and to continue their involvements there. Eric Stedfeld and Howard Casner will be moving to the North Side at the beginning of May. Dan Gerber is still undecided about where in Chicago he plans to relocate. *Charles Neufeld, associate director, MVS, 3248 West 163rd Street, Markham, Illinois 60426* May 28

No dialogue with gays

Dear Editor: There can be no dialogue with homosexuals—it can only be a monologue, and God is doing the talking. *Dennis L. Derksen, 49 New Rochester Road, Dover, New Hampshire 03820* June 12

Lesbians and homosexuals

Dear Editor: As I see it (June 6, page 381) the two lesbians are seeking love, toleration, and acceptance. They make this plea because their conscience condemns them. They know that the Scripture, the Word of God, condemns them in the sight of God; so it seems that they are trying to find consolation from friends and neighbors.

The Word of God condemns homosexuality and it is an abomination in the sight of God. It is a willful and deliberate rejection of God's plan for the human race. Satan is, in a wicked and deceitful way, trying to inject in mixed-up minds a way to make them believe that God does not mean what he says and that you can play a game with God and win.

As sure as there is a just and righteous and holy God in heaven, he will not tolerate this abominable sin as practiced by lesbians and homosexuals, or any other sin. God cannot save you in your sin but he will save you from sin only if you will discontinue to practice this abominable thing and go and sin no more. "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (2 Peter 2:21). Don't seek your justification in society or mankind. They cannot give you the inner peace.

Everyone—black, white, American, Chinese, male, female, heterosexual, homosexual—is saved by the blood of Jesus Christ only if they will turn from sin and not continue to practice and continue and remain therein. Jesus knocks at the heart's door but you have to open the door and invite him in. "There is a way that seems right unto man but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14). *Peter J. P. Schrag, 1917 Millers Lane, McPherson, Kansas 67460* June 12

Learn from the issue

Dear Editor: Knowing how we work at issues, I suppose there will be some hostility expressed because *The Mennonite* tried to help church members deal with the fearful topic of homosexuality and homosexual people. It might be similar to the *Puritan Weekly Review* in colonial times doing articles on witchcraft and witches that would try to deal carefully with unknown things we can't quickly solve and control unless we hurt some innocent people. Perhaps *The Mennonite* will be accused of promoting or endorsing homosexuality or agreeing with comments made by any and all gay persons.

Nevertheless, the learning should be valuable, and I hope when the shouting dies down those gay persons all around us, driven from our communities, our families, churches, or their jobs, and sometimes to suicide, can be accepted as part of God's family. They, like all the rest of us, need grace, new life in Christ, and support to walk the resurrection way.

A quote from a Mennonite gay person in a letter a year ago, who suffered some unchristian acts from people who needed the material *The Mennonite* is now printing, says: "I do not consider myself a gay liberationist, but a gay Christian-ist. Gay liberation is for nongay people and not for gay people. Nongays are the ones who need to be liberated from their attitudes, stereotypes, myths, and lies about gay people."

We will never know enough to act with complete wisdom, but your willingness to print some articles could help us know enough to stop burning witches in the name of a loving God. *Stanley Bohn, 217 Grove Street, Bluffton, Ohio 45817* June 12

Nice things about Vietnam

Dear Editor: At work I have spent several hours thinking up "Nice Things About Vietnam." I thought I would share my discoveries with *The Mennonite*'s readership through this letter.

First of all, the war provided American soldiers with unparalleled opportunities for learning manhood. What can compare with striving to kick a heroin habit or an infestation of oriental venereal disease?

Americans weren't the only ones with learning chances. When sprinkled with napalm, Vietnamese peasants learned the value of spiritual training intended to control pain in the body. They also learned that if you stand just on the outer edge of the spray area of a pellet bomb you can get a nice back-scratching effect by facing away from the point of impact.

Furthermore, the experience made life easier for all concerned. Instead of bothering with the troubling emotions of love and compassion, both sides came to simply hate each other. What a blessing! *Jack Goering, 1920 Buchanan, Apartment A, Topeka, Kansas 66604* June 12

Women speakers at MWC

Dear Editor: It was disappointing to note that among the seven persons named as keynote speakers for the World Conference this summer (June 13 issue) there was not a single woman. An even deeper disappointment is that this is a reflection of a still male-dominated leadership in a church which is committed to the priesthood of *all* believers, whether they be female or male.

Over the years we North American Mennonites have become sensitized to the need to treat our non-North American sisters and brothers in Christ with respect and equality. Apparently we have not yet realized the need for similar efforts with regard to women Mennonites. *Martha Wenger, 643 G Street SE, Washington, D.C. 20003* June 20

Meditation

I want to tell of Jochabed

By faith, dear lady, you hid your baby, and rallied your husband, son, and daughter in the monumental task of shushing an illegal infant. For ninety days you broke a vicious law, tenaciously protecting a tiny human life.

By faith you made a basket waterproof with bitumen and pitch. (You did know about boatbuilding; I read from G. Ernest Wright that reeds coated with bitumen were and are a good way to make a boat.) Did you do your boatbuilding at night, praying that the baby wouldn't cry to be nursed while your hands were sticky with pitch? What did you use to clean your hands? Did Amram help with the project?

When the little boat was dry, you made it soft to lie on, patting the place where your three-months-old would lie. What did you think when you laid the baby inside? The basket-boat could easily have become a coffin.

Was the baby rolling over yet? Were you afraid he would rock the basket-boat and fall into the water? Did you fasten the lid shut? Shut! (I know there was a lid; later the record states that the basket "was opened.")

By faith, dear lady, you placed the basket-boat on the water—just put it to float—and walked away. (Where did you get such a hair-brained idea? Surely you shared your plan with Amram. What did he say?) You just walked away from the baby you had so vigilantly guarded for ninety days—day and night—so that no Pharaoh's patrol would suspect a thing.

How did you manage to walk away? Trusting God—and who else was there? Hoping against hope that by some circumstance—Almighty protection—your baby might live.

Giving up everything, having done everything that you knew to do (precious stupid though it appeared), you walked away. You gave up control. You went where you couldn't see the baby. Couldn't even hear the baby.

Did you carefully time the placing of the basket on the water so he wouldn't have any unburped burps, so he wouldn't immediately have a bowel movement and cry uncontrollably and toss the little floating boat? Did you give Miriam any instructions? Did she have any reason to expect the princess?

What a daughter you raised, who was not a bit intimidated by the royal entourage! She asked just the right question and got just the right answer.

And you; Jochabed, Jochabed! You got your baby back! A gift from the princess. Now he could live. Now he could cry. He could laugh. He was now legal. He was now royal. He was alive.

How did you manage to be subservient and poker-faced when that innocent princess-instrument-of-God gave you back your very own baby? *What* kept Miriam from jumping for joy? Did she comprehend the moment? Surely she did—after her dazzling demonstration of restrained wisdom.

Jochabed, you are my teacher. You teach me to take seriously the guidance which the world considers strange if not absurd. (*Who* would have recommended putting a baby in a floating basket for his safety?)

You teach me to walk away from situations—which are often death-producing—which I can control, and rather walk with God into situations where I don't have the foggiest notion of the outcome. (What mother in her right mind would leave her baby floating on a river and go home?)

You teach me that God is able to save that which I treasure most—redeem that which I treasure most—only when I give it up, when I allow myself to be terrifyingly vulnerable. (Who would have predicted that the baby was safer on a river than in his bed at home? Yet, home in bed he would have inevitably been given a death sentence rather than becoming legal, let alone regal!)

Jochabed, you teach me to walk by faith and thus, mystically, to participate in God's participation in the world. I will tell of you as long as I am able. God used you to preserve a nation, to redeem the people of God, and to teach me a thing or three.

Muriel Thiessen Stackley

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CONTRIBUTORS

G. Roger Schoenhals, Route 1, Hickory Estates, Warsaw, Indiana 46580 is a freelance writer.

Tina Mast Burnett is director of information services for Mennonite Central Committee.

This week's meditation writer is Muriel Thiessen Stackley, 1125 North Ash, Newton, Kansas 67114.

John K. Stoner is the executive secretary for MCC (US) Peace Section, 21 South Twelfth Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501

CREDITS
Cover, 466, Lavonne Dyck, Route 3, Box 49, Viborg, South Dakota 57050; 468, 469, Mountainview Mennonite Church; 470, Richard A. Kauffman, 801 Walnut Avenue, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 471, 473, RNS; 472, Fred Kauffman, MCC; 474, COM.

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

The West is losing ground

John K. Stoner

The West is losing ground in the struggle with communism because the weapons it has chosen for the battle are not equal to the task.

Yes, as a Christian I believe that there is a struggle going on—a necessary struggle—against communism as a totalitarian ideology. (I also believe that there is a necessary struggle against capitalism as a totalitarian ideology, but that is not the subject of this writing.) Moreover, communism is expanding its sphere of influence in the world, and in that sense the West is losing ground in the struggle with communism. I agree with other Christians that ideological communism is a self-proclaimed enemy of New Testament Christianity, and therefore ought to be opposed.

For its defense against a powerful ideology, the West, led by the United States, has marshalled a nuclear arsenal. So we now have the capacity to destroy the world, but not the capacity to save it from communism. The official policy is, by all appearances, prepared to destroy the world to try to save it.

Is this the best we can do? No, it is not. There are stronger weapons available. I am not motivated to describe them by any glowing optimism that they will soon be adopted, but rather as a witness to the truth regardless of the results. I consider it obligatory for me as a Christian to make this witness about the meaning of world events, whether or not by so doing I can significantly shape the course of those events.

The one line of defense which could have, and perhaps could still, halt communist expansion is actions of truth and justice in the noncommunist world. The West could have spent the past thirty years winning the hearts and minds of Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America by working with them in the development of intermediate technology, agriculture, and self-government. Instead the West has viewed these peoples and continents as regions to exploit for our own advantage, while truth and justice have gone by the board. From Argentina to Ethiopia, and Uganda to South Africa, the West has put military alliances ahead of truth, and economic advantage ahead of justice. Now in the steady advance of communism we are reaping what we have sown. This is not stated with rancor, but rather with regret that is profound.

Twenty years ago Clare and Harris Wofford wrote: "Americans ought to be ashamed of their inadequacy if they admit that the Soviet one third of mankind is able to prevent them from working with the remaining two thirds. What disgrace is more sickening and shocking than this—that the West at the height of its power, producing most of the world's wealth, is losing in an ideological struggle with a weakened, invaded, devastated, backward country only one generation out of feudalism?"

It is to no small degree caused by a fanatical, myopic concentration on military power as the answer to the communist ideology. Now the fruits of these labors are a military Frankenstein and scores of underdeveloped and unaligned nations impressed with the moral bankruptcy of the West and filled with a burning passion to see the injustices of their situations corrected. They are ripe for the picking by communist ideology. And that, not because they are so sure that communism is right, but because they are so sure that capitalism is wrong.

My burden is mainly for the church, for "to whom much is given, of him shall much be required." The church has bitten its tongue and kept silent in the face of numerous oppressions carried out in the name of democracy and capitalism. It has been too fascinated by the illusion of tranquillity to upset the tables of the moneychangers and cleanse the temple. Consequently, it ends up giving its blessing to the Christian bombing of temple and moneychangers alike in a last desperate attempt to stem the tide of evil.

The West is losing in the struggle with communism because its weapons—its bombs and delivery systems—are unequal to the task. The only possible defense against a totalitarian ideology is truth and justice. Can the line of defense be changed? Who knows? But most importantly, what is the church saying in this matter? In which direction are Christians investing their time and treasure?

The time is past due for a more open dialogue and honest appraisal in the church about the global struggle with totalitarian communism. By ignoring, covering up, and making excuses for the failures of "democracy" and capitalism, the West is aiding and abetting the enemy. This is what it means to be "soft on communism."

Not superior weapons but a superior passion for justice can stem the advance of communism.

Following our summer biweekly schedule, the next issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated August 22.

10

Wichita
1978

The Mennonite

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Mennonite World Conference

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The World Conference was a winner

It won not only the affection of participants, but the commendation and admiration of the Wichita community. One of the employees of the Century II convention center was so moved by the events of the July 25-30 gathering that he joined in the Sunday communion service which closed the conference.

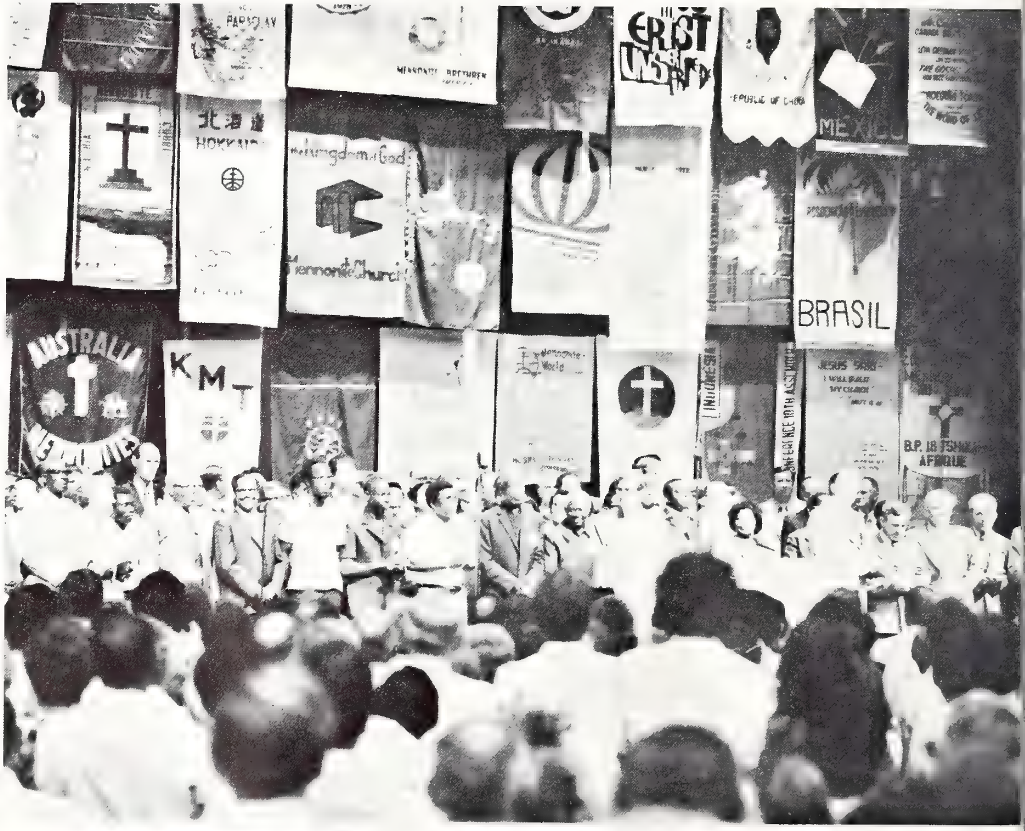
Official registration for the six-day event was 9,500. Attendance at the Saturday evening session at Cessna Stadium was estimated at 16,000—the largest-ever gathering of Mennonites and Brethren in Christ.

The assembly was strongly influenced by its North American setting, but approximately 800 persons from other continents produced a distinctive international dimension. The North American personality lived in the unceasing flow of people, in the intensive and extensive media attention, in the electronic tools used to facilitate communication, and in the sophisticated organization. The latter produced a tightly scheduled program (with many options), and left many participants mentally and physically exhausted.

Persons from forty-four nations were present. Their participation symbolized an unprecedented diversity among Mennonites and Brethren in Christ. Participants saw this

Vim Kuiper, The Netherlands

Particularly impressive and moving was the roll call of delegates during the Tuesday evening opening session. Tears of joy welled up in the eyes of many, especially when the Russian delegation (far right) was welcomed—the first time Russian Mennonites have been at a world conference.



South meets North during the children's activities.

Exhibition Hall was a major center ▶ for activities—registration, exhibits, travel and tour arrangements, sale of crafts and books, and various cultural events.

"We did not ask who our brothers and sisters would be when we became your children." ***Million Belete, Ethiopia***

as a blessing since plurality carries with it innate responsibility for growth. "Mission activity for the past century," said a Canadian, "has produced a mosaic which promises a fresh burst of spiritual vitality."

The spirit of the tenth assembly made itself felt in a decision by the General Council (formerly the Presidium) of the Mennonite World Conference to have a full-time executive secretary between assemblies. Paul Kraybill will continue in this position. The eighty-six-member council, representing thirty-eight nations and sixty-five conference groups, said the time has come for ongoing communication among many Mennonite and Brethren in Christ bodies, and for the organization of regional meetings for various purposes.

Something was born at the tenth assembly. Participants awoke to a new consciousness of what it means to be Anabaptist. Despite unresolved ambiguities new wine flowed in abundance.

But that which is spiritual and uplifting cannot necessarily be communicated through print and pictures. Although this photographic essay attempts to focus some of the spiritual, cultural, and social enrichment which occurred, the message is limited by the medium. *Vic Reimer*

"Meeting and talking here is like a heavenly language." ***Vijaya Kumar Sastry, India***

Elizabeth and Adolfo Puricelli, Argentina

The Taiwan Women's Choir not only sang, but its members also shared their cultural interests in dancing, flower arranging, and painting.

Some conference-goers took a break from speeches, exhibits, and the throngs of people by taking tours. Here a group is viewing the historic Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church near Goessel, Kansas.

"As I observe the Japanese they feel comfortable in their culture. We should feel the same way." ***Henry Dueck, Canada***

Foppe and Alice Brouwer, Australia

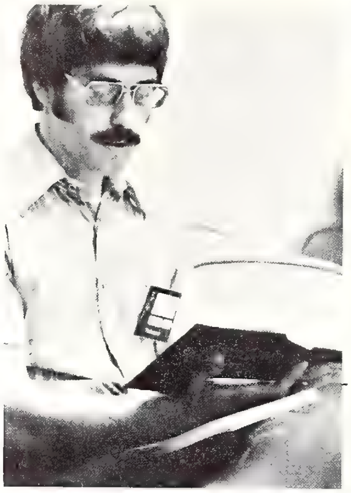
Takashi Yamada, Japan

◀ *Sara Regier (center), former missionary to Zaire, symbolizes the blending of cultures as she walks between Western and African women. From left: Unidentified, Marian Franz (United States), Regier, Mbangu Sualala and Kimbadi Kabangi (Zaire).*

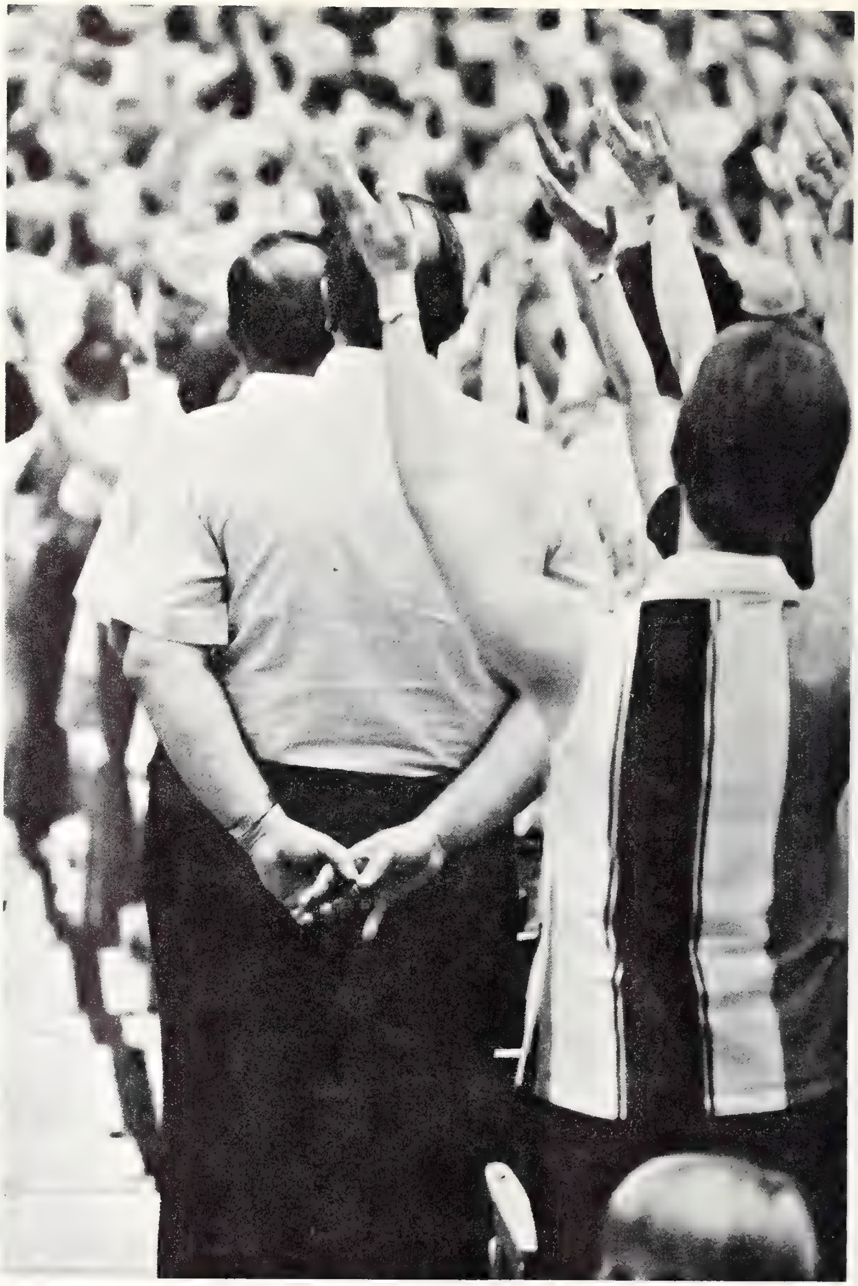
...celebrate peoplehood...

"I would have liked more opportunity for sharing the spiritual life. We need more opportunity to be teachers to each other. We need more time for meeting each other." *Musa A. Abura, Kenya*

Some said the Bible study and working groups were the best feature of the tenth assembly. Others asserted that their groups had failed.



John Ruth entertained and taught through his "kingdom stories."



There was reticence on the part of some to use the sign language of the deaf in the singing of Kum ba ya. *Although Mennonite charismatics were present at the conference, the overall tone of worship remained sedate, coupled with private reservations about some of the performances.*

"Some people were shocked by the dancing because they associated the groups with the charismatics and loose doctrine. We don't live on emotions; we live on commitment. But what the Pentecostal has too much, we have too little." *Willy Peterschmitt, France*

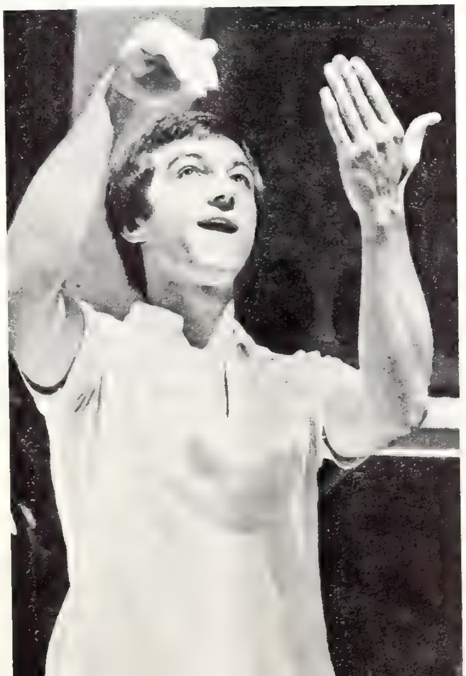
...praise the Lord...

The repertoire of the Indian ensemble included Telegu, Hindi, and English selections. Among the instruments used were the sitar, tabla, bongo drum, harmonium, tambourine, flute, accordion, and guitar.

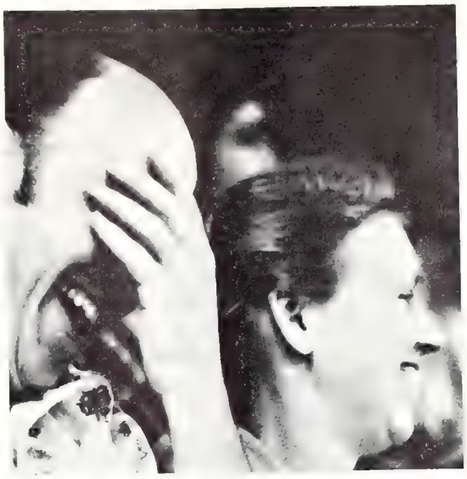
With assistance from the Kenyan music team Mary Oyer leads thousands in learning an African song from the World Conference international songbook.

Myron Yoder signs for the deaf. A team of ▶ *four did a sensitive ministry in interpreting messages, songs, and drama for the deaf. Their work also sensitized the hearing to the needs of the deaf.*

"We need to pray for you. Your wealth may cause a greater separation from spiritual life than our governments." ***Alvaro Fernandez, Uruguay***



Although there was little humor from the podium, conference-goers were a cheerful, outgoing lot. Performers received frequent applause.



Lee Bong Kim, a South Korean Presbyterian, says he has a "Mennonite heart."

"In South Korea there is a foundation to start a Mennonite church. . . . The Mennonite faith is at a turning point. The question is whether to conform to Christ or to the world." ***Lee Bong Kim, South Korea***

"We thought we were the ones who gave the good news. But now spiritually rich people have given us nurture. The Africans and Latins really come across from their battered situations. They showed us how beautiful Christianity can be through their music. The whole week peaked with Festo Kivengere. The week has been unsettling. I have to identify with the poor." ***Alfred Epp, Canada***

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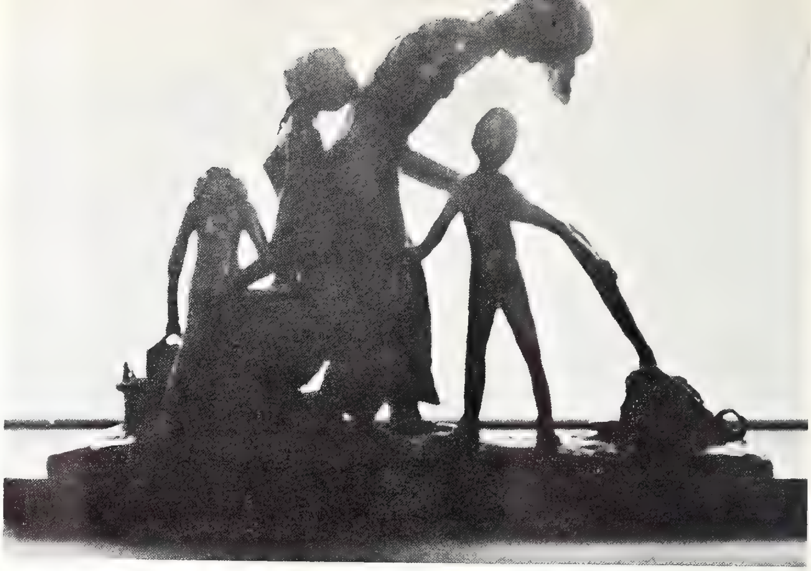
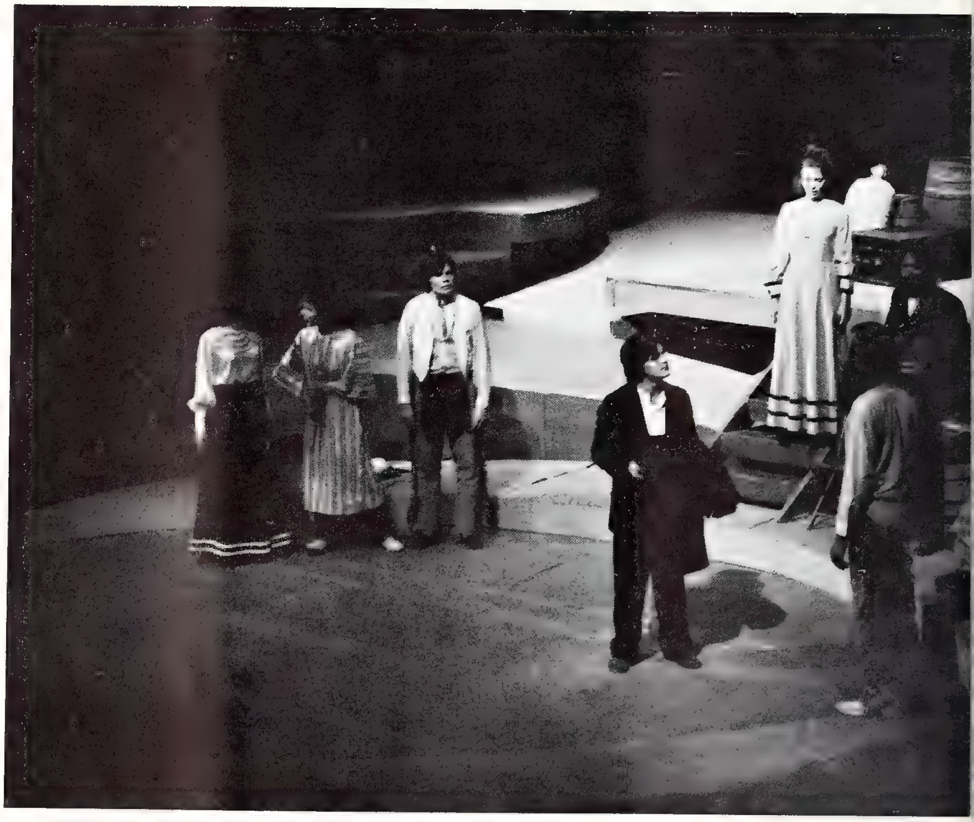
"I have endeavored to permit my background with its emphasis on empathy, simplicity, and craftmanship to be felt through sculpture." Milton Good



"We still feel a lot of paternalism. We have not been absorbed into the flow of things in any conference, although the Mennonite Indian Leaders' Council is helpful. Maybe this hasn't happened because of our desire to remain distinctive, and to maintain some of our cultural values." ***Lawrence Hart, Cheyenne***

"He made something beautiful of my life. . . . All I have to offer is my brokenness and pride."



The drama Cheyenne Jesus Buffalo Dream *was presented to capacity audiences daily, as were other dramatic productions. It told the story of Two Visions, a young Indian who seeks a revelation adequate for living in a world of rapid change. The play was commissioned by the Mennonite World Conference and written by Robert Hostetter.*

...share the joys and burdens....

"How do I think the kingdom of God is emerging in my country? It depends how you interpret the kingdom. Have you ever been concerned that the kingdom is with you?" *Takashi Yamada, Japan*

"Why do we consider it normal for races to worship in separate churches? Why do we consider it normal to be captive to materialism? Can the people of the developing world help?" *Anna Juhnke, United States*

"Protest is a genuine Christian way of bearing witness." *Vim Kuiper, The Netherlands*

"I am here as a delegate of the Paraguay church. My work is as a teacher and a lay minister. My only comments to the conference are that I find the sitting and digesting of all these speeches to be quite difficult." *Santiago Crespo, Paraguay (Tshilupi Indian)*

"Rhodesia is in crisis. The African people want a share in the government. All of us are suffering. Six members of my denomination have been killed. Many are in prison, including a pastor." *P. M. Kumalo, Rhodesia*

"Where and how and when does concern for human rights enter this conference? What is our responsibility and action?" *Weldon Nisley, United States*

"Poverty is not a result of our stupidity, laziness, or ignorance. The national and international capitalistic economic system keeps us undeveloped." *Luis Correa, Colombia*

"I missed the need to maintain a missionary emphasis. There has been an overemphasis on politics and economics." *Gary Giesbrecht, Canada*

"Our attitude is 'I, I, and the rest can die.' We cannot say we don't know what is going on in the world. We must act." *Toos Offerhaus, The Netherlands*

Jacob Muchimba and Jonathan Mwaalu of Zambia requested prayer for their country's churches, that they would learn how to serve God. They were taken aback when asked what the North American church could learn from them. Jacob finally spoke hesitantly, "We have been in America three weeks. I see that there is a large focus on the individual." He put his arm around his companion, Jonathan, and went on, "In my country, in my church, if something happens to my brother here, it happens to me. If one is hurting, everyone hurts. We don't see ourselves just as individuals."

"How much of our struggle for peace is motivated by concerns for democracy? Are we concerned about faithfulness?" *Ernst Weischselberger, Paraguay*

"We are flooded with many missionaries, good and bad; but parachurch organizations organized by outsiders often bleed off our local leadership." *Felonito Sacapano, Indonesia*

"If you want to be a witness for Christ, you don't have to be rich." *Perumalla Arnold, India*

"The purpose of justice is community, not the equal distribution of goods and services. Injustice is that which inhibits and destroys community." *C. Norman Kraus, United States*

Old friends met . . .

And new friends were made

Kingdom messages highlight need for action

In five major addresses to the Mennonite World Conference, speakers dealt with the theme "The Kingdom of God in a Changing World."

MWC president Million Belete, Nairobi, Kenya, United Bible Societies regional secretary for Africa, opened the conference Tuesday evening, July 25, with the topic "Christ Establishing the Kingdom." Opening night attendance at Wichita's Century II was estimated at 8,000.

Belete said that the greatest miracle of the Christian faith is the incarnation. Into a world "filled with all kinds of wickedness, evil, greed, and vice . . ." (Romans 1:29-32) Jesus Christ came, as one of us, to establish a kingdom of the redeemed. In this kingdom there are two main emphases: the love of God and the miracle of a second birth.

David Schroeder, professor of New Testament and philosophy at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, delivered the main theological framework for the MWC sessions Wednesday on the topic "The Church Representing the Kingdom." He began with the familiar imagery of God's kingdom as promise, as salvation, through covenant, and through judgment.

Today's church is not coterminous with the kingdom ("the two, church and kingdom of God, are not identical, nor wholly or partially overlapping") but rather is a witness to the kingdom.

Paul Hiebert, Pasadena, California, associate professor of anthropology and south Asia studies at Fuller Theological Seminary, spoke about "The Kingdom Reconciling Humanity."

Hiebert's Thursday morning talk illustrated humanity's ongoing search for an assurance of a god by the probes being made into space to detect some other living voices. Christianity is a witness of people who have responded to extraterrestrial callings, from Abraham of Ur to the most recent convert. But Jesus' message of servanthood and incarnation is not popular.

With this foundation Hiebert called upon the church to turn more away from itself (not neglecting the equipping of saints) toward the world, because it is the reconciling missionary vision which continues to provide new kingdom life.

Charles Christano, Indonesia, in his response to Hiebert's challenge, said that all Christians today are recruited to "be voices in the wilderness." The gospel is also for the rich, but it may need to "bring down the high and mighty" before they can enter the kingdom. He called for MWC delegates to stop referring to a "third world" and speak rather of "one world—*our* world."

Abram Neufeld, Austria, responded to Hiebert by saying that "reconciliation is possible only where there is disparity, estrangement, brokenness." The Christian church has become "obese" and tries all kinds of "spiritual diets" but fails to become serious about being the "body of Christ."

Kedir Dulchume, Ethiopia, called for a more practical application of kingdom reconciliation to poor countries like Ethiopia.

The next day, Friday, Hank Kossen, professor of practical theology at the Mennonite Seminary, Amsterdam, spoke of "The Kingdom Confronting the Powers."

Kossen said that God's uniqueness is fully expressed in his act of Israel's deliverance and liberation. But even in the Old Testament we can see that God's plan for a new society of peace and justice was never realized. "The counter forces of greed and fear proved to be too strong."

Jesus challenged the authorities by riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, in drastic contrast to the dreams of the Zealots. His way was also in direct contrast to the luxurious life-styles of the priests. He sided with the poor and powerless.

In a biblical, kingdom-centered congregation people would be more ready to attack the causes of world tensions. Such a process requires a greater sense of oneness both within the Mennonite churches and with other Christian bodies. We need "living peace congregations" as models.

Michio Ohno, Japan, confessed first of all to shame that "Japan has increasingly joined the industrialized world which preys on undeveloped nations and that our churches are too weak to resist." Michio cautioned Kossen's call for larger cooperation by saying that cooperation is good "to the extent that we can agree on goals." Such goals should be clearly spelled out in advance.

Ernst Weichselberger, Paraguay, agreed that "living peace congregations" are the best way to confront the powers. He reminded the MWC delegates that the "effectiveness of confrontation" should not be the primary aim. "Our first challenge as Christians is to be faithful."

Anna Juhnke, Kansas, in perhaps the most applauded response of the whole conference, applied some of Kossen's principles more specifically. She said that the basis of power in today's world is usually greed (in the form of people wanting all the middle-class gadgetry and comforts) and fear (usually disguised as "national security"). Larger groups normalize such feelings and numb us to their consequences.

Albert Widjaja, research associate and economics instructor at the University of Indonesia at Jakarta, spoke on "The Kingdom Renewing the Environment," Saturday morning.

Widjaja, in the hardest-hitting address of the conference, graphically painted a picture of how the rich nations have continued to grow richer at the designed expense of the poor.

In such a world, Christians are tempted to wash their hands of such affairs by claiming to be "spiritually minded." But God's call to discipleship, as recognized by the early Anabaptists, is a call to care for all human life, irrespective of race and color, as people created in God's image. We are called to translate our kingdom faith into kingdom living.

Toos Offerhaus, Netherlands, in a similarly urgent tone, responded to Widjaja by confessing that in today's atomistic individualism, we often feel like, "I-I—and the rest can die." We cannot expect almighty God to "fix" everything for us.

Two inspirational sermons—one Saturday evening, and the other Sunday afternoon—capped the five speeches on the kingdom. Festo Kivengere, Bishop of the Church of Uganda, was scheduled to speak at the Saturday evening rally in Cessna Stadium, but since Air Jamaica was strikebound he arrived only in time to address the conference Sunday afternoon. Don Jacobs, who was to speak Sunday, addressed the crowd of 16,000 on Saturday.

Jacobs, who is executive secretary of the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions, said, "We are here not because we are righteous, but because we are sinners; not because we are strong, but because we are weak; not because we have the answers, but because we have questions."

One of his major themes was that Christians live among powers, but that Jesus is lord and "stands tall above the powers." He appealed to his audience to be the people of tomorrow, people who have caught a vision, and to be people who respond to Jesus' call to live lives of "suffering, conflict, and confrontation."

Sunday afternoon's assembly took place in Century II, attracting a crowd of approximately 7,500 to hear Kivengere.

Kivengere declared that the church is at the heart of changes in the world, but warned that when the church becomes a part of the world it loses its power. "Some of us reject changes," he said, "because they threaten our security. . . . But that is not growing. Security is not a mark that we are growing in Jesus Christ." *Bernie Wiebe*

"The vice-president is... and her husband is..."

"Perhaps one day there will be in our world conference this introduction: 'The vice-president is . . . and her husband is . . .'" stated Toos Offerhaus from The Netherlands, one of two women who presented official responses to main addresses at the Mennonite World Conference in Wichita. Anna Juhnke of North Newton, Kansas, was the other woman respondent.

If conference-goers were looking for more input from women as main speakers, moderators, or officials, they were disappointed. The conference planners had made attempts to secure women as speakers and as half of the Bible study leaders, but according to Rosemary Wyse, administrative assistant to Paul Kraybill, there were women who refused to accept major responsibilities, not because they were not capable, nor for theological reasons, but because they simply wanted to be able to enjoy the conference.

However, in every other area the event was permeated with women. Wyse, who will complete her eighteen-months assignment at the end of August, served on seven major committees. Her leadership made possible all translation of materials, all simultaneous interpretations, and hospitality to foreign guests in bridging language barriers. Wyse was also editor of the multilingual conference songbook. "Language is the key to understanding," stated Wyse, "and this conference would not have happened without crossing the language barriers."

Lois Bergen, coordinator of the youth activities council, is the first woman to have filled that position for a world conference. Bergen commented on the hopeful sign that the ratio of males to females participating in the youth program at Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas) was even, and that there were more women than men in the work camp.

A look at the Saturday morning schedule at Century II indicates the wide range of women's leadership. The worship was led by Ruth Wedel of Germany; singing, as it was all week, was directed by Mary Oyer of Goshen, Indiana; Helen Litz of Winnipeg, Manitoba, directed the Mennonite Children's Choir; Bethel College Reader's Theater performed a strong contemporary Christian statement authored by Ada Mae Haury of Newton, Kansas; and Offerhaus gave her response to the morning address.

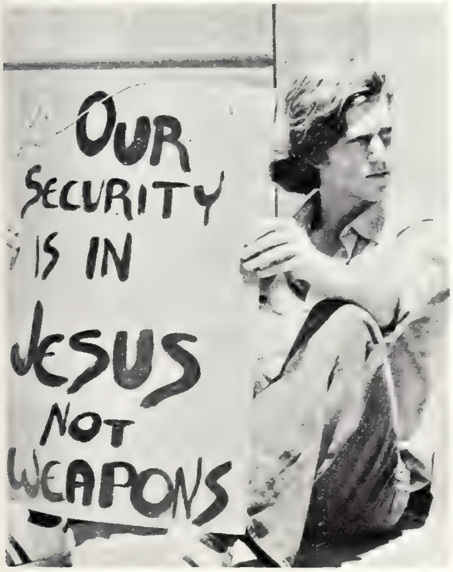
The staging at all times was managed by Diane Umble of Newton and Virginia Mininger of Hesston. The text for the popular "The Wedding at Cana" (a musical) was written by Ingrid van Delft, known in The Netherlands through her writings for a feministic political cabaret.

In adherence to a directive from the 1972 Curitiba conference that segregation of the sexes was contrary to the Anabaptist ideal, there were no specific women's meetings scheduled. However, a total of 635 women from twenty-three different countries attended two fellowship meals sponsored by the MCC Peace Section Task Force on Women in Church and Society.

The issue for both those who protested the male-dominated stage and those who lifted up the wide participation of women in other areas boils down to where one places the heartbeat of such a conference. What will people remember? What will be of lasting importance? "Will they remember the content of the major speeches or the captivating presence of Mary Oyer?" asked one participant. It is certain that the program book carrying the pictures of the seven main speakers, all men, emphasizes the speaker role. But, states Wyse, "I felt great excitement as thousands joined together over a songbook on which I labored long." The effects of the theology stated in song and dance, as well as the efforts put into language interpretation remain to be seen.

Anna Juhnke, professor of English at Bethel College, received sustained applause to her response to the main speaker on Friday morning. Juhnke, in reemphasizing the destructive nature of fear and greed, referred directly to the oppression of women, asking for the church to respond by making it possible for women to take leadership positions. The favorable response she received from the audience may be an indicator of changes during the six years from now until the next world conference. *Marilyn Klaus*

Unofficial group brings message of peace to conference



Wichita's temperature soared to 109° F during the Saturday witness.

Nuclear armaments and peace concerns were the main interests of an intergenerational group which met each noon hour during the Mennonite World Conference.

Each meeting began with silent reflection, singing, reading from Scripture or poetry, and sharing of personal experiences and thoughts. Topics emerged spontaneously and were discussed. A remarkable consensus occurred on certain topics and volunteers were requested for acting on various decisions. The number of participants grew each day, Wednesday through Saturday (July 26-29), until the plush Rose Room of the Broadview Hotel overflowed with persons.

Two directions decided upon by the group of 125 came to the attention of the general assembly of MWC.

One was a prophecy presented by David Janzen of Newton, Kansas. Janzen told how he received a "word from the Lord," which was then confirmed by his congregation, New Creation Fellowship. The Rose Room group also affirmed the message and expressed the hope that it could be presented to the larger conference body. The program planning committee of MWC agreed to this request. Hedy Sawatzky, John Stoner, and Hubert Swartzendruber read the prophecy to about 8,000 persons at the Friday evening session of the general assembly.

A second action by some members of the Rose Room group was a twenty-four-hour vigil at the Wichita Internal Revenue Service building, located just three blocks from Century II, where the MWC sessions convened. About fifteen persons walked to the IRS building on Friday at 3:00 p.m., carrying placards proclaiming, "It's a sin to build a nuclear weapon"; "Why pay for war and pray for peace?" and "Our security is in Jesus, not weapons." A delegation from the group—Peter Ediger, Harold Regier, David Janzen, Jim Claasen—talked with Maurice Johnson, the local director of the IRS. During the vigil participants prayed together, handed out leaflets, and reflected on Christ's message of peace. *Gordon Houser*

Creative arts present gospel in a variety of forms

Presenting the gospel in a variety of forms was an early goal for planners of the tenth Mennonite World Conference, but even they didn't envision the wealth of cultural and artistic expression which flourished through the sessions.

Mass morning and evening meetings were highlighted by presentations from the Taiwan Women's Choir, Mennonite India Choir, Jamaican Ensemble, a Swiss passion play in mime - as well as the more traditional Kansas Men's Chorus and Winnipeg Mennonite Children's Choir. Previous polarization between those who favored gospel tunes and others who preferred stately German hymns was forgotten as women in capes and bonnet strings found themselves worshipping through a black soul singer in long black dress and dangling earrings—who was also a Mennonite. Delegates out of the USSR were surprised at the celebrative movements incorporated by Reba Place Fellowship during a devotional.

"Are those people really Mennonite?" asked a man in plain coat to his companion as a colorful Kenyan music team presented a rhythmic religious song.

"Yes," was the answer.

Through the afternoons, folk singers, pianists, bell choirs, college bands, and family groups performed on the Exhibition Hall stage as delegates put their feet up, ran into old friends, looked for baggage, and viewed American women quilting and Taiwanese arranging flowers. In carpeted corners poets and storytellers drew larger and larger circles of passers-by who had been strolling through an exhibit of art by Mennonites. Film sessions were packed out an hour in advance and visitors streamed through the hot sun to nearby churches to listen to formal recitals, jazz bands, and a Dutch musical.

Mennonite artists who had felt disapproval of the church in the past met one another and rejoiced. A folk opera about the life of Joseph Funk, "Singers Glen," affirmed that "art . . . unites people" and springs from "the center of Creation."

"The whole thing has superseded our expectations," commented James Juhnke, head of the creative arts council, "and I've had an overwhelmingly positive response." Certainly the questions: What is a Mennonite artist? and What is a Mennonite theme? will be on the agenda in the future.

Peggy Newcomer

Findings committee: What are our primary tasks?

Newton, Kansas (MWC)—The findings committee for the Mennonite World Conference made a report at the Sunday closing session of the conference.

The group of eight indicated they had struggled with how to reflect accurately the minds of more than ten thousand people who attended the sessions, because "these days have been filled with a host of new, strange, joyous, and even disturbing experiences." They emphasized the call to "think beyond particular conference, nation, and culture to see ourselves as brothers and sisters in Christ whose community is the world."

The report included special thanks for the rich diversity of gifts among Mennonites and Brethren in Christ, for the new sense of wholeness of the kingdom of God, for the missionaries who went to many lands and for their spiritual sons and daughters who now come "in joyous procession to tell their stories of the kingdom," for the inspiration of the American black experience, and for those lands which were represented for the first time at a Mennonite World Conference.

In particular the findings committee expressed gratitude for the sense of "world solidarity in Christ" in the roll call of delegates from forty countries during the Tuesday evening opening session. Another moving experience, they said, was 5,000 voices singing "Kum ba ya" and in unison making the graceful gestures in the language of the deaf.

A litany of disobedience is also included—individualism, national idolatries, indifference to the hungry, shyness in sharing the good news of Christ, timidity in confronting evil powers, and "our retreat from a courageous biblical Anabaptist faith."

There is a call to discipleship. Among the tasks suggested are a renewal of the kingdom within each person, reconciliation of the broken and alienated, justice for the oppressed, witness against those who trust in bombs, and the recovery of a sense of purpose and mission. "What are the primary tasks?" asks the committee. They suggest that congregations discern their gifts and callings, and then with God's help, act.

The report concludes: "This conference has provoked a multitude of comments - some sharply critical, others highly laudatory, some deeply disappointed, many divided in their feelings, most appreciative of the experience. No one can be neutral about this week.

"We pray for guidance in understanding as to what it means to be faithful Mennonite people in God's kingdom now that we have been given this wondrous gift of cultural diversity.

"As we separate from one another we are grateful as were the disciples at Emmaus: 'Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? . . . And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread'" (KJV, Luke 24:32, 35).

The members of the findings committee are: P. J. Malagar, India; Hans Jacob Galle, Germany; Toshiko Aratani, Japan; Gerhard Ratzlaff, Paraguay; Jonah C. Munsanje, Zambia; Sharon Sawatsky, Canada; Robert Kreider, United States; and Daniel Schipani (chairperson), Puerto Rico.

Charles Christano (left) and Million Belete, past president of World Conference

Christano MWC president

The general council of the Mennonite World Conference, in a meeting in Wichita, Kansas, July 31, elected Charles Christano as president for a six-year term extending to 1984. Christano, thirty-nine years old, is a leader in the Chinese Mennonite Conference of Java.

The council also appointed Paul Kraybill as executive secretary for a six-year term. A budget of $50,000 for 1979 was adopted, and the quota of support was set at twenty cents per member (if possible) with a minimum of one cent per member from all conferences who have membership on the council.

Other officers were elected as follows: vice-presidents—Philemon Kumalo (Africa), P. J. Malagar (Asia), Raul Rosado Ortiz (South and Central America), Carl Brusewitz (Europe), and Marvin Hein (North America); recording secretary—Robert Kreider; members at large—Gerhard Ratzlaff, Newton Gingrich; first vice-president—Carl Brusewitz.

Words & deeds

Jersey City—Goerge Buesing (above), a twenty-seven-year-old physician at Patrick House Medical Center in Jersey City, talks with a patient. Though he was advised a year ago that he is terminally ill with leukemia, Buesing continues his work with drug addicts and alcoholics. He describes the year since the diagnosis as a time of service and of deepening relationships with those he loves. He said, "It's not good to die or be sick or have to think about it, but it's human if we share it with those around us. It can be a time of growth. It can be a blessing if you use that time to live as fully as you can."

In memory of Daniel Gerber, Mennonite Central Committee worker in Vietnam who was captured May 30, 1962, the Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale organization has built a service building in Kidron, Ohio. Gerber was captured along with two Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) workers. The three have not been heard from since that day. Through the years MCC and CMA have made numerous efforts to find the missionaries. Gerber's sacrifice has deeply affected the Kidron church community. Bill Detweiler, pastor of the church, said that those of Gerber's age-group were deeply influenced and he became an impetus for many others to enter service. "I hope the memory of Daniel stays alive to remind us that life is more than making a living." The Gerber Memorial Building will be used for the MCC sale in Kidron, for MCC canning, as a storage center for relief goods, and as a maintenance center by Central Christian High School.

Winnipeg—The five chiefs of the Northern Flood Committee are frustrated with the way government authorities and Manitoba Hydro are stalling in the March 16 hydro development agreement between the native communities at Norway House, Cross Lake, Nelson House, York Landing, and Split Lake, on the one hand, and Manitoba Hydro and the federal and provincial governments on the other. Among the provisions in the agreement are compensation for loss of land and livelihood, and a structure to create jobs for native people of the affected communities. No funding for implementation of the agreement is forthcoming even though Manitoba Hydro is flooding areas used by the communities for trapping, fishing, and hunting.

"The Long Search," a thirteen-week television series that examines at close range the world's great religions and man's search for a god, will be presented nationally on Public Broadcasting Service stations beginning in September. It is a coproduction of the British Broadcasting Corporation and Time-Life Films and is underwritten by a grant from the Xerox Corporation. The series not only examines religious tradition and ceremony, but seeks to discover the relationship of religious experience to modern culture and society.

Hunger awareness seminars with emphasis on agriculture in developing countries will be available in the United States (except for the West Coast) and Ontario beginning this fall under the sponsorship of Mennonite Central Committee. Resource person for the sessions will be Kenton Brubaker of Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia, who will spend his sabbatical year in a food and hunger education program. His specialty is a weekend retreat featuring his own simulation game about rich and poor farmers. Other topics include subsistence agriculture, alternatives to North American agriculture, and a study of Matthew 5 titled, "Why Don't the Poor and Hungry Just Give Up and Die?" He and his wife, Emma, have set aside four one-month blocks of time for the seminars. Inquiries about booking a seminar should be directed to MCC regional offices.

To encourage persons to prepare for church leadership a committee has been set up by the Inter-Mennonite Conference of Ontario. The committee—Darrell Fast, Ralph Lebold, Gerald Good, Herbert Schultz, John Miller, and Marlin Miller—met May 31 and June 1 to spell out its tasks. They decided to establish contact with persons interested in or currently taking training in leadership, to provide counsel, and to develop guidelines for training in a variety of Ontario settings which will be compatible with the program of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Indiana. The contact persons for the committee are Ralph Lebold and Darrell Fast.

"Time for the Family" (a scene is shown above) is one of two recent television spots produced by Mennonite Radio and Television (MRT) of Winnipeg. Over sixty Canadian television stations have aired the newest pair of public service spots, the other of which deals with the wisdom and experiences of elderly persons. The spots are a continuation of the "Invitation to Live" campaign that urges persons to recognize the potential they have to reflect their love, hope, and reconciliation through God. Programming directors of stations have encouraged MRT to continue their productions. Another series is being readied for January 1979.

If you aren't a millionaire, then surely you must know one, because the United States has one millionaire for every 1,200 people, or about 200,000 according to a recent survey. Are the statistics true for General Conference people? The General Conference would have to count about fifty millionaires to be average.

Teachers/counselors/librarian needed
Freeman Junior College and Academy has positions open beginning in September for an admissions counselor, a high school counselor, a librarian with secondary certification, an instructor of industrial arts with secondary certification, and an instructor of English. Coaching, drama, debate, and developmental reading skills are also needed with the positions listed above.
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Telephone: 605-925-4237

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Rosthern Junior College needs a ¾-time dean for the girls' residence, and a ¼-time dean for the boys' residence.
Direct inquiries to:
R. J. Suderman, Principal
Rosthern Junior College
Rosthern, Saskatchewan S0K 3R0
Telephone: 306-232-4222

Record

Workers

Miguel Almanza, assistant professor of art at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, has received the Rhoten Smith Minority Graduate Assistantship Award for study at Northern Illinois State University at DeKalb. He has been granted a one-year sabbatical from Bethel with the possibility of additional leave time to work toward a doctoral degree in education.

John F. Brown, Lima, Ohio, has been named head men's basketball coach and assistant director of admissions at Bluffton (Ohio) College for the 1978-79 academic year. Brown is a 1973 Bluffton graduate and holds a master's degree in educational administration.

FULL CIRCLE, Stories of Mennonite Women
edited by Mary Lou Cummings

The book contains stories of 19 Mennonite women. "I never thought much about what a 'woman' should do. My main concern was to know what God wanted me to do, and I knew He would help me do it," says Dr. Ella Garber Bauman. Through the simplicity of these words, a great power is unleashed. This power, this focus, is an unspoken theme in many of these biographies. Each biography is a story, of a woman on a journey with God through this imperfect, real world.

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Peter and Gladys Buller, Deep Run Church, Bedminster, Pennsylvania, are returning to Kinshasa, Zaire, in August where they will again serve on the teaching staff of ISTK (The Theological Institute of Kinshasa). The Bullers have served in Zaire since 1951.

Virginia Claassen, Emmaus Church, Whitewater, Kansas, is returning to Japan where after one year of upgrading her Japanese language skills she will be working in Nobeoka in evangelism and Bible-teaching ministries in an established Mennonite congregation. Virginia has served in Japan since 1959. She leaves August 31.

Peter and Mary Derksen, West Abbotsford Church, Abbotsford, British Columbia, are returning to Japan to engage in church planting in the resort town of Beppu, near Oita. Before their North American assignment of the past year, they worked with the Mennonite church in Oita. The Derksens have been missionaries in Japan since 1954. They left July 31.

Michael D. Edmiston has been named associate professor of chemistry and physics at Bluffton (Ohio) College for the 1978-79 academic year. He is a 1972 Bluffton graduate and holds a PhD in chemical-physics from Michigan State University. He is currently engaged in nonweapons research at Los Alamos Scientific Lab, Los Alamos, New Mexico. Edmiston plans to continue his research while on the Bluffton campus.

Randy Eisele, Church of the Good Samaritan, Holland, Pennsylvania, has been appointed as youth worker at Crossroads Community Center in Philadelphia. He replaces *Ray Linberger* who has begun serving as administrator of Camp Men-O-Lan. Eisele has attended Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Mary Epp, Nordheimer Church, Hanley, Saskatchewan, is returning to Nyanga, Zaire, in mid-August. The Zairian church leadership has asked her to continue serving on the staff of the church-sponsored girls' school known as Lycee Miodi. Mary has served in Zaire since 1958.

Lowell Ewert of Bingham Lake, Minnesota, has been retained as attorney for Rosedale Team Ministry, a cooperative community ministry of the Rainbow Boulevard Mennonite Church, the Rosedale Christian Church, and the Rosedale United Methodist Church. The attorney was hired because the neighborhoods in which the churches minister have few resources available to represent them against outside business interests and city officials. Ewert is a 1978 graduate of Washburn (Kansas) Law School and has attended Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, California.

Carol Farran, Normal, Illinois, has been named director of Mennonite Hospital School of Nursing in Bloomington, Illinois, effective August 7. Farran has served as curriculum coordinator at the school since 1973 and as an instructor since 1969. She holds an MS in counselor education from Illinois State University in Normal.

Phil and Kim Friesen, Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minnesota, are beginning their first term as missionaries to Taiwan. They will be situated in the capital city of Taipei where they will assist in music and youth ministries. Phil, who has taught music and has a master's degree in music education, will initiate a special ministry to help the church in Taiwan develop its own hymnody. This has been a request from the church for years. He will also teach music and choral conducting at the Presbyterian seminary at Taipei. Kim, who was born in Vietnam and attended the University of Saigon for two years before immigrating to the United States in 1968, has a master's degree in guidance and counseling from Kearney State College in Nebraska. Kim will be involved in ministries to youth. A commissioning service was held July 9 at the Bethel Church, and the Friesens left August 16.

K. Friesen

P. Friesen

Jim Harder of Seattle, Washington, has been appointed executive director of a recruitment program at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, which is designed to increase awareness of the college among high school students. Harder is a 1978 graduate of Bethel with double majors in history and business administration.

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General Conference Mennonite Church
Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114

Letters

When people are different

Dear Editor: The whole question of homosexuality (June 6 issue), how to deal with those who are thus oriented and understanding how the Scriptures deal with such an orientation, is clearly a difficult task.

One thing that keeps bothering me more and more is that the church in the recent past has been so well protected from dealings with people who are "different" that we seem to have lost our ability to "test the spirits." We are suddenly bombarded with lobbies for the church to understand "me" (whoever or whatever I may be), and seemingly the understanding demanded of and often given by the church has been to see "me" as different, perhaps even strange, yet at the same time totally acceptable as I am. Attached to this acceptability, it seems, is the understanding that if you *accept* "me" as I am, I am therefore no longer in a position where there might be any need for me to change.

This is expressed in the comment made by James Glyer, pastor of Kansas City Metropolitan Community Church (May 30 issue). "We cannot change," he said, referring to himself and other homosexuals.

It is also expressed by those who are "normal," in that there is often no effort made to understand the different person, and also to understand myself and why I feel the way I do about this "difference." "Perhaps my understanding needs changing" is seldom considered.

We need more of the Spirit's teaching on what was intended when Jesus said to the woman caught in adultery: "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way and sin no more." May God help us *all. Clare Neufeld, Box 33, Mather, Manitoba R0K 1L0*

June 14

Because of my name

Dear Editor: The article "What Is a Mennonite?" (March 28 issue) sparked off many memories of disgust. One in particular was a few years ago when I was candidating for a position as pastor of a church in the Pacific District of the General Conference Mennonite Church. I was a seminary graduate and ordained. After performing the entire worship service, which included a sermon, and everything having gone right, a member of the board of ministry came up to me and said these words: "Holgersen; that is not a Mennonite name!"

I knew then that I would not get the church. Since that time other churches have not accepted my Danish surname. So, heartbroken, I had to choose another profession—one that is completely foreign and different as night and day—that of being a camera repairman.

My camera repair shop is my church and the counter my pulpit. I have counseled some people about their problems which I could never have done in that church, for my customers are non-General Conference Mennonites. Since becoming a photographic equipment technician I have written a book, *Camera Care,* which is probably the first of its kind written from a technician's point of view, to help people take good care of their photographic equipment.

Even in my new profession I am still trying to be a pastor who helps people both across the counter and through the book, which is a helpmate to the photographer. It is a new life, a strange life, a challenging life, many times a very lonely life, sometimes it is a very depressing life, other times a frustrating life, but then at times it is a rewarding kind of life. I am not completely satisfied. It isn't what I wanted in life, it isn't that for which I prepared and studied for years, but it is something to do in life, and it stems back to the churches who did not accept my surname. *Otto A. Holgersen, 2390 South East Ermine Street, Albany, Oregon 97321*

June 15

History and female roles

Dear Editor: I share John W. Miller's view (June 6 issue) that homosexual behavior is socially unhealthy and does not have the Bible's approval. I appreciate his encouragement to us to cultivate relationships with our children that are free of tensions.

I disagree most strongly, however, with the suggestions contained in his fourth point, that somehow homosexuality is related to changing male-female roles and to "a slow drift towards matriarchy" in the church. Can the ordaining of one or two women to associate pastorates be described as drifting towards a matriarchy?

More important is his assertion that "historical experience has shown that when the delicate balance between male and female in a society tips too far to the feminine side, the men become lethargic and irresponsible." I would like to know what his evidence is. Mine leads me to no such conclusions. In fact, if by tipping the balance to the feminine side he means greater rights and opportunities in public and church life for women, one could well argue the opposite from European history. In the past when women have appeared in more public roles, men also have been more active and energetic.

In periods of upheaval and turmoil such as the fifteenth-century Hussite revolution, the sixteenth-century Reformation, the seventeenth-century English civil war, and the eighteenth-century French revolution, women played more prominent parts in public and ecclesiastical affairs. They were active in ways denied them in less tumultuous times.

The events in each of these centuries represent a period in history in which Europeans made advances in what has traditionally been described as Western civilization's march to greater liberty and respect for individual rights. They were important steps on the way to modern democracy. Males during these revolutions certainly were not lethargic. We might argue that their violence was irresponsible, but lethargic—hardly. The same can be said about England in the nineteenth century, a period marked by significant advances for women, but also a time when Britain reached the high point of international prestige and power.

A discussion which helps us to better understand how we can nurture our children into healthy, caring heterosexual persons is welcomed. We must, however, be honest in our approach and not describe the justifiable aspirations of women to play a more active role in public and church life as a potential cause for homosexuality when there is no evidence to support it. *John Klassen, Box 789, Langley, British Columbia V3A 4R9*

June 16

Faults Kansas City church

Dear Editor: I agree with C. R. Preheim's letter (June 13 issue) in regard to the homosexual workshops at the Kansas City Mennonite church. First it was a divorce workshop; now this. What next? It is entirely unbiblical. Do these discussion leaders not know their subject before getting involved?

People living that kind of life better go find a church(?) which condones that kind of living, but they should not expect the Mennonite church to make changes in order to accommodate them. It has got to the point where one doesn't feel comfortable any more about being classed as a fellow Christian Mennonite. *Mrs. A. F. Derksen, Lowe Farm, Manitoba R0G 1E0* June 27

AUG 23 '78

Meditation

The groaning environment

". . . the whole created universe groans in all its parts as if in the pangs of childbirth" (Romans 8:22). The Bible promises an abundant life to Christians but also reminds us that our environment needs to share in the redemptive experience.

Many Christians do not like to hear this. They believe that our only concern should be for personal souls; leave gasoline consumption to individuals, meat consumption to the homes, and company profits to individual businessmen and corporate enterprises.

Today's world is beginning to experience the seriousness of abusing the environment. It has been proved that chemical waste is the main cause of heart disease (carbon monoxide), of permanent nerve disorder (mercury), and of bone abnormalities (vinyl chloride). The US alone spends 1.8 billion dollars annually to finance hospital care of cancer patients, not to mention doctor bills and outpatient therapy. Kenneth Galbraith (*The New Industrial State*, page 8) writes: "Our present method of underwriting technology is exceedingly dangerous. It could cost us our existence."

Australian biologist and futurist Charles Birch in a 1975 address to the World Council of Churches said, "Genesis 1:28 contains three directives. The first is to 'be fruitful and multiply.' We have done that. The second is to have dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and every living creature that moves upon the earth. Science and technology are well on the way to completing that. The third directive is a plea to 'replenish the earth.' That we have failed to hold." Indeed, in the midst of plenty our modern world is actually heading toward destitution, resource depletion, and world hunger.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN estimated that in 1970 about 460,000,000 people were suffering serious food deficiency which brought infants into permanent mental retardation and blindness. Among ten Latin American countries alone 35,000 children under age five died of malnutrition.

Meanwhile, in 1975 the population of the industrialized world (25 percent of the total outside socialist countries) owned and enjoyed 82 percent of the world's income (outside the socialist countries). The population of the poor countries (75 percent of the total outside socialist countries) earned only 17 percent of the world's income. "Beggar your neighbor" trade policies strengthen the hold of the rich and impede the improvement of the poor.

Some evangelical Mennonites are persuaded that we must "seek first the kingdom" (Matthew 6:33) and not become involved with political or economic matters. After all, the world is in the realm of the powers of darkness.

Other Mennonites believe in Christian witness *and* service. This is evidenced by various relief and other service agencies in our churches. They want to give something to the needy.

But some Mennonites want to go beyond that. Discipleship lays the foundation for our Mennonite teaching on nonresistant love and opposition to war. The deepest motive of nonresistance is that human life should be cared for because all are God's created beings, regardless of nationality and race. God's kingdom is present only where we are willing to follow Christ's path of righteousness and justice.

God calls us anew in today's turbulent and groaning environment to (a) be present with those who need our help, show justice for the needy and challenge those who abuse it; (b) reduce our high consumption habits and distribute world resources more evenly; (c) witness to our government and society by challenging unjust, exploitive, and destructive policies (that hurt both people and the environment), take an active role in demonstrating alternatives, and make these known as our faith positions; (d) find new ways of cultivating Christian discipleship in our churches so that our life, witness, and ministry can properly express God's grace and justice; and (e) suggest to our Mennonite churches at the local, conference, national, and world levels that we increase our awareness of world issues and develop better channels for our involvement in God's work in the world.

Isaiah's call to Israel is God's call to us: ". . . loose the fetters of unjustice, . . . snap every yoke . . . taking the homeless poor into your house, . . . never evading a duty to your kinsfolk. . . . Then shall your light break forth like the dawn . . . your own righteousness shall be your vanguard and the glory of the Lord your rearguard" (Isaiah 58:6-8, NEB).

Albert Widjaja

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CONTRIBUTORS

Marilyn Klaus is youth pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kansas.

Peggy Newcomer lives at 1119 NW 58 #1, Seattle, Washington 98107.

Albert Widjaja, Jakarta, Indonesia, is a research associate and instructor in the department of economics at the University of Indonesia. The meditation is an excerpt from his speech to the general session of the Mennonite World Conference.

CREDITS

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

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Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Mennonites in international flavor

I have frequently wondered what it would be like in a body as described in Revelation 7:9. "After this I looked, and there was an enormous crowd—no one could count all the people! They were from every race, tribe, nation, and language, and they stood in front of the throne and of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palm branches in their hands" (Good News Bible).

I still don't know, but I believe that the tenth assembly of the Mennonite World Conference gave us an appetizer.

We were people of God from forty-four nations. No, we did not include every nation or race or language. And our balance was out of proportion. (Of the 6,500 preregistered delegates, 4,473 were from the USA, 1,255 from Canada. The next highest was 165 from The Netherlands.)

But there were moments when God's Spirit showed us sights never seen among Mennonites before. It was my first world conference, but I am told that the international flavor of the Mennonite world has not been in evidence as strongly in the previous conferences.

At Wichita we unmistakably encountered a cross-cultural Mennonite peoplehood. From the presiding president, Million Belete of Kenya, to the Tshilupe Indian delegate Santiago Crespo, these were not token Christians on display, but sisters and brothers in Christ, not dependent on North American mission dollars. They are Mennonite by choice.

The strong mission orientation of the Mennonites in the twentieth century has been fruitful. We have deeply rooted congregations in at least thirty-eight nations. Just the sight of the people from these countries made every mission dollar suddenly feel like what it was intended to be—a personal sharing of Jesus Christ in such a way that personal response was evoked; an incarnation of the Great Commission. Wichita has to be a great incentive for further faithfulness in Mennonite mission efforts.

Music, that fantastic common dimension among North American Mennonites, obviously is precious to all Mennonite peoples. We heard the native drums and cymbals and strings; the voices of children and adults; the tunes and tones of Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe, and North America. Mary Oyer managed at times to weld us into one body, trying our voices at totally new musical variations (and gladly so).

Speeches and other formal sessions, which so often have characterized our gatherings and occupied most of our time, were this time limited to reasonable allotments. A smorgasbord of simultaneous events frustrated some delegates unaccustomed to choices at church conferences. But this frustration caused many to wander about, only to encounter fellow believers from around the world. In these unscheduled conversations possibly the most lasting impressions of the assembly were planted and watered.

In my estimation, the weakest points in the conference were the Bible study and prayer provisions. Maybe these were supposed to jell spontaneously. For many they were simply absent. The preparations seemed superficial and disconnected. One delegate (asking to be unnamed) said to me, "I didn't need a Bible the whole time. That bothers me. And I wonder about the lack of prayer. Were we too afraid of the charismatics among us?"

But the impressions indelibly marked on my life are positive ones. We have Mennonite sisters and brothers in Christ all over this globe. God's call to our Anabaptist ancestors was not in vain. He obviously wanted to raise up among his diverse body a people who represent an alternative to general Protestantism. This people dares to assemble in 1978 and call each other to repentance where we have compromised our faith with a civil religion or a civil patriotism. Our first allegiance is to God and to people in need.

The international flavor of Mennonites is encouraging. If ethnic Russian, Swiss, or Dutch Mennonites should become complacent, our fellow believers from Taiwan, Indonesia, Rhodesia, Zaire, Jamaica, India, Italy, and Zambia wouldn't leave us alone. Even now some of them are praying for revival among us. And when ethnic Mennonites despair of their traditions, our fellow Christians in the USSR, Germany, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Paraguay, and Mexico will call us back to basics which come not as customs but as evidences of responding to God's call.

Yes, Mennonites in international flavor was a moving experience and a sign from God that we as a church still have a significant place in his kingdom work on earth. And it was a delicious appetizer of his kingdom yet to come. *Bernie Wiebe*

Following our summer biweekly schedule, the next issue of the *The Mennonite* will be dated September 5.

The Mennonite

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Growing a church in Seattle

Lauren Friesen

The South Seattle Mennonite Church is consciously trying to live an Anabaptist-Mennonite vision for the church in a city. Consequently the subtitle for the congregation is the "Church of the Sermon on the Mount." In our congregation there is a serious attempt to establish love, fellowship, mutual aid, service, and peace as expressions of faithfulness to God's call to discipleship.

When people are asked why they are active in our church the replies may be, "It is a home away from home," "a substitute family," or "an extended family."

Three major urban realities influence our church life: (1) mobility (we are experts at farewell parties); (2) distance (nearly everyone lives twenty-five miles from the church building); and (3) alienation (it is difficult to establish meaningful and trusting relationships in the city, and jobs are often a means of income and not a source of meaning).

Worship is an act of service to God. Nearly everyone in our church participates, on occasion, in the planning or in the leading of worship. Our services are informal. We sit in a U-shape around a fireplace. The services may vary from the traditional (hymns, prayers, Scripture, sharing, sermon, and children's story) to the creative (plays, puppets, or choral readings). Before Christmas we have an intergenerational "activity" Sunday. Each family builds a Yule log, decorates the church, and makes a banner. This has been a meaningful integration of worship and service.

The congregation sponsors two Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) units. Currently there are ten members in the two units. Persons in MVS work in mental health centers, day care, environmental concerns, and community action. A third unit is being developed for a special emphasis on peace and justice.

Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) has also been an active part of our congregation. We have cleaned up after floods. Recently we expanded the concept of MDS and applied our efforts toward social and economic disasters. Thirteen members of our congregation remodeled and repainted First Avenue Service Center (a facility for,

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The afterglow of worship

It is Sunday afternoon and I am excited after attending church this morning. When we arrived the coffee was just perked. It smelled good and tasted even better (we were out of real coffee at home). Last Sunday only eleven of us attended. Today there were fifty plus. A number of people had brought guests.

The congregational singing was inspiring. Many interesting things were mentioned in sharing time: next Sunday's potluck and annual meeting, a new baby, Bible study tonight, workday planned for our church at First Avenue Service Center (skid row), and an appeal for funds to enable women from developing nations to come to the Mennonite World Conference.

Karl read the Scripture. The group that had attended sing night last Wednesday came to the front to sing. I think we had three in each part because at the last minute the tenors drafted someone from the congregation. We sounded rather good, I thought. My nephew's little girls begged to sit with me and I felt honored. Sitting in front of us were five youngsters who attend without their parents and it was heartwarming to see how well the older sisters cared for the younger ones.

The sermon was on the Good Samaritan. One would think that topic would be worn out and exhausted by now but, as usual, our pastor gave fascinating new insights. It was exhilarating to be given ideas so new to me from a subject so common and familiar.

For the children the pastor read a humorously revealing book, *A Day Off.* The adults began chuckling softly as they recognized themselves and their children in the story. Soon restraint gave way and we were laughing outright. What fun! The adults enjoyed the story even more than the children gathered around the pastor's knee. After singing "Happy Birthday" to several adults and children it was time to break for Sunday school. In the adult class David Newcomer started a series on Mennonite-Anabaptist history which my husband declared to be excellent. I am glad that adult class presentations are taped so that those of us who teach the children can hear them later.

All in all an aliveness and vitality permeated the whole morning. We will have our discouraging times, I know, but today and many other Sundays like today I thank God for the wonderful excitement generated in me from going to church. *Lucy Harms*

and run by, the skid row community).

We have dared to risk and innovate. We are continually changing our emphasis according to the needs and interests of those who are active in our congregation. What we did six months ago may not be what we are deeply involved with today and it may be different six months from now. Changing needs, changing people, and a changing city alter our emphasis and outreach.

Currently we have a very active Bible study group, a hymn singing group, adult singles, and a youth group. The adult Sunday school hour has taken a number of creative twists. Recently the most meaningful aspect is the once a month sharing by a congregation member. Persons share vocational goals, perspectives, questions, and the possibilities of integrating Christian values with their jobs. We are very active in camping programs and in the Washington Mennonite Fellowship.

Our leadership reflects the mobility and the involvement of youth in the congregation. In five years we will have five different congregational chairpersons. Three of these have been graduate students at the University of Washington, one a businessman, and one a teacher. One was a woman.

The development of an urban congregation requires dedication, a faith to move mountains, and a willingness to take risks. One member refers to our willingness to take risks as living with a high level of "brinkmanship." This willingness was illustrated recently when the pastor was granted a one-year leave-of-absence to work on an ecumenical peace education project with Seattle area churches.

Taking risks, adapting to change, overcoming the obstacles of mobility, distance, and alienation, developing programs based on the needs and interests of persons, and dropping them as they lose their relevance has been the daily diet in growing a church in Seattle.

Our visit led to a stay

My husband, David, and I worked for Mennonite Central Committee in Egypt for three years. While at a retreat in Jordan we met an agriculturalist (a young man from a rural Washington state congregation) who told us wistfully (he was just beginning his term and I believe he was still homesick) that the new Mennonite church in Seattle was a "neat place."

We were from the Northwest, I a non-Mennonite from Seattle, and David a Mennonite from Portland, but we had never heard of the South Seattle Fellowship.

At the completion of our MCC term we moved back to Seattle and decided to give the church a try. However, as we drove down the freeway for half an hour that first morning I remarked, "This may be a nice place to visit but I don't want to attend regularly; it's too far to drive." (Because of its unique Puget Sound and Lake Washington geography, Seattle is a long and narrow city. We live in the north end and the church is in the south). David agreed with me.

My wardrobe at that time consisted of two pairs of jeans, two shirts, and some hiking boots. I wanted to be presentable for worship, so I borrowed a dress and "church" shoes from my mother. As soon as we found the building (we drove past it once because the rambling white structure, set back among the evergreens across the street from a small lake, looked more like a retreat home than a formal church) and walked in, I realized that I needn't have bothered to dress up.

South Seattle is a "come as you are" church. Come with your worries, wear your sweatshirt; come with your joys, wear your suit and tie; come with your beliefs, wear your doubts. The folks at South Seattle will welcome you. I saw the pews arranged in a U-shape around the fireplace—children playing quietly on the rug in the enclosed area framed by the benches, people standing around in small groups sipping coffee—and felt at home.

We went back the next week . . . and the next . . . and within a few months David was asked to represent peace and social concerns (his area of interest) and I volunteered to fill the need for a music coordinator.

We carpool now and look forward to those long rides as an opportunity to talk with our friends.

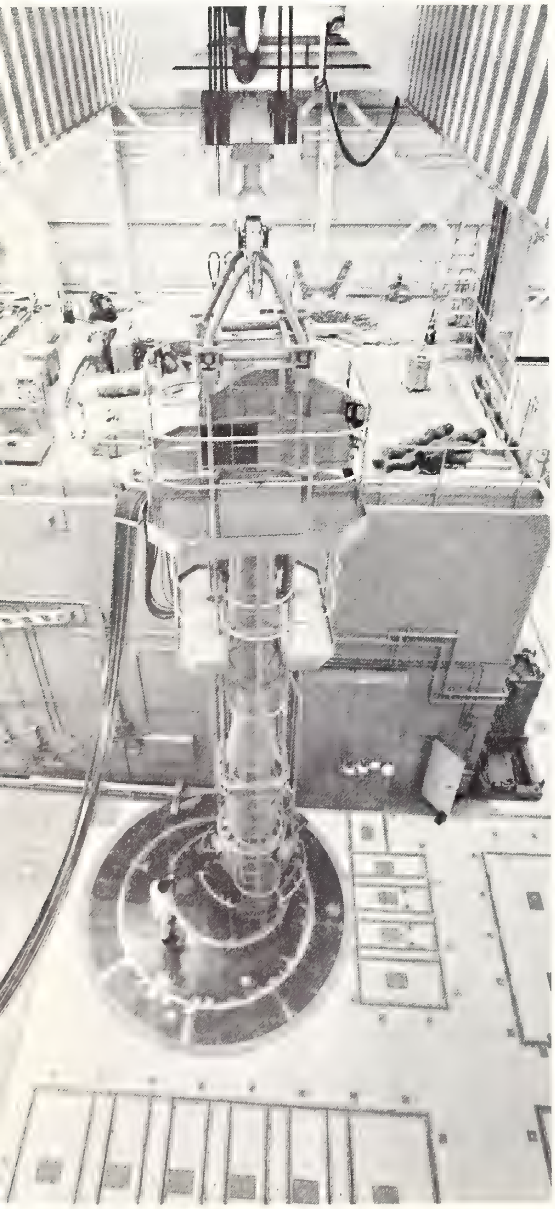
South Seattle Mennonite—a nice place to visit—is a good place to stay. *Peggy Kilborn Newcomer*

HALLELUJAH

A nuclear refinery in your town?

Lorne R. Buhr

A technician positions the fuel flask over the reactor at the Whiteshell Nuclear Research Station, Pinawa, Manitoba



Warman is a small Saskatchewan community of about 1,000 people, eleven miles northeast of Saskatoon, an urban center of 140,000. It is part of a concentration of Mennonites in the Saskatchewan valley region, which is a fertile farming area between the two branches of the Saskatchewan River before they meet near Prince Albert on their eventual voyage to Hudson Bay.

The major change in this tranquil countryside had been the flight from the city, which began in 1970. Until then upheavals were usually restricted to the ups and downs of farming caused by nature's vagaries. Dairying is common along with other forms of mixed farming. But with rising housing costs in Saskatoon many individuals joined the commuter set and moved to small towns within a ten-to-forty-mile radius of the city. Others were even more daring and took up acreages to become weekend or hobby farmers. The Canadian census shows that from 1971 to 1976 each of the towns of Osler, Warman, and Martensville grew substantially.

Rumors of further change began in the spring of 1976. The Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO), a government corporation mandated to fund projects which would further the economic diversification of Saskatchewan, was interested in land east of Warman. Initially it seemed this was just an extension of the general interest in urban growth. Talk was of an industrial site or a satellite city. Farmers were offered $500 an acre in return for options to develop their land. The 1971 census indicated that 90 percent of the people in the three communities and 73 percent of the rural area were Mennonite.

The SEDCO inquiries caused few sleepless nights until they were linked with Eldorado Nuclear Limited (ENL), a federal government uranium corporation. This galvanized the Warman community. Soon it became apparent that ENL was interested in building a $50,000,000 complex at Warman to refine milled uranium from mine sites in northern Saskatchewan.

Nearly 500 miles (as-the-crow-flies) northwest of Saskatoon, ENL has been engaged in mining uranium since 1950 at Uranium City. Its refining division has been located at Port Hope, Ontario, on the Toronto-Montreal freeway. Warman was to become a second refinery site. At Port Hope ENL also acts as the custodian of the Canadian Government's stockpile of uranium concentrate. Also in 1976 and also in Saskatchewan was the proposal of AMOK Limited, a consortium of five French companies to develop a major uranium deposit at Cluff Lake, about a hundred miles south of Uranium City. The coincidence of these two developments was not lost on some of the Warman area residents.

On the one hand, the Warman refinery seemed like a great proposal (in terms of land sales), while at the same time aiding the export market in bringing nuclear generating capabilities to underdeveloped countries. This was the official explanation. The Saskatchewan government has no immediate need to provide a nuclear generating capacity for the needs of the province's residents.

Some of the concerned citizens, including a number of Mennonites, tried to become acquainted with the issues. Bill Janzen, a native of the area and now in the MCC (Ottawa) office, was called in, as were some of the environmental groups from Saskatoon. Jake Buhler, principal of the Martensville School, helped organize some information sessions in the district. With the purpose of raising all the intricate issues, this was the first intitiative in what was to become the Warman and District Concerned Citizens Group (WDCCG). Eventually, this group elected Ernie Hildebrand, pastor of the Osler General Conference Mennonite Church, as its chairman. Jake Buhler is on the executive committee, along with Edgar Epp, a former deputy-minister of corrections for British Columbia and currently on assignment in offender ministries with Mennonite Central Committee. Other members are Sam Rempel, who is in the construction business, and Jeanne Vanpinxterin, a Saskatoon businesswoman and acreage resident.

The presence of Hildebrand, a minister, in such a prominent public position, taking a stand against what seemed to be a willy-nilly escalation of the nuclear game, caused mixed feelings in his congregation and among area Mennonites. Is this what a minister should be doing? Are not the Mennonites "die Stillen im Lande"? Had the Mennonites not been granted numerous privileges when they first entered Canada? How could they now question government actions? All real questions—no theoretical ethics here.

Hildebrand, in his own mind, also had his reservations, "In social issues the Christian is faced with a dilemma. One cannot act and retain one's *purity,* but one cannot refuse to act and retain one's *innocence* before God."

The January 1977 annual congregational meeting of the Osler church passed a resolution urging the provincial government to call a moratorium on further uranium developments until the issues could be

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properly debated. A similar resolution was passed by the Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan in February 1977.

The Bayda Commission of Inquiry (also known as the Cluff Lake Inquiry) began its work. Set up by the Saskatchewan government with the purpose of investigating all the implications of the new uranium mine at Cluff Lake, the Warman group saw this as a place for input of their own concerns on the closely related refining issue. The government inquiry board, made up of E. D. Bayda, Kenneth McCallum, and Agnes Groome, was asked to present its findings by November 1977. Many of the concerned groups found this deadline too short and protested. But the process began.

On October 17, 1977, the WDCCG presented its brief to the Bayda Commission. Jim Robbins, farmer-resident of the surrounding municipality, wrote the brief on behalf of the WDCCG. He asked seven questions:

(1) Since the nuclear industry is so secretive, who is able to police it? Who is able to ensure that the public interest is being pursued? (The brief alludes to the fuzzy control that the Atomic Energy Control Board (AECB) exercises over the Canadian nuclear industry. There is such a mixture of industry and government officialdom on the AECB that there really cannot be a semblance of objectivity.)

(2) Could a uranium refinery spoil our water supply? (Even some seepage—and this cannot be ruled out—could get into the water supply which ends up servicing fifty dairy farms in the area, as well as other farming operations.)

(3) Will the plant or its wastes present a radiation hazard to those living nearby? (Nuclear waste has become the hot potato which nobody can handle. There is until this day no failsafe method for dealing with the problem, even if outer space or the Antarctic is contemplated as a possibility. For instance, *Nuclear Safety,* May-June 1977, published by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission lists 268 "Recent Occurrences at Nuclear Reactors and Their Causes." Sixteen of these incidents resulted in reactor shutdown, 109 were found by testing and 143 were not discovered by testing.)

(4) In the event of the plant causing injury or economic loss, would there be compensation? Could individuals insure themselves against such a possibility? (The answer to the latter is "no"; to the former, "yes, as in any other disaster.")

(5) Would the building and operation of the refinery benefit the area economically? (Here is the usual situation where highly technical skills need to be imported and automated systems run the giant after it is built. Labor intensive it is not, on the long haul, but there are of course sizable spinoffs from the payroll generated.)

(6) Where will the plant's products eventually end up? (The answers here are as nebulous as those given to the third issue.)

In another connection T. C. Douglas, a provincial and federal politician of long standing, put the issue of moral responsibility very succinctly (Regehr, *Making a Killing,* pages 8f): "It is the issue of whether I am prepared to sell a revolver to a man when I suspect he is going to use it to rob some old woman of her life savings. You can always argue that if I don't sell the revolver someone else will, or perhaps he will buy a shotgun, which is more dangerous. But this does not relieve me of my moral responsibility. All you can do is live up to your moral responsibility and hope it has some effect." Nuclear blackmail may be the next scenario after skyjacking. The stakes are even bigger—perhaps eternal.

(7) What voice do the local people have in the decision to proceed with the Warman refinery? (The WDCCG refer to a one-day inquiry on a nuclear installation in New Brunswick and hope a similar fiasco is not perpetrated in the Saskatchewan setting.)

At the time of this writing (January 1978) the Bayda Commission had not reported. Meanwhile the nuclear debate heats up at every level. As early as April 21, 1977, Saskatchewan premier Allan Blakeney wrote Canadian prime minister Pierre Trudeau, "I am of the view that there would be merit in an inquiry on the national level into a number of aspects of the (nuclear) industry." Nearly every major news or issues magazine has published articles in 1977 on the nuclear issue. The federal government of Canada has taken two steps. The House of Commons gave first reading on November 24, 1977, to Bill C-14, "The Nuclear Control and Administration Act." The House also referred to its Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works a document "The Management of Canada's Nuclear Wastes" for study.

MCC (Saskatchewan) made the strongest statement on the Saskatchewan nuclear issue at its annual meeting in November 1977: "We request the government of Saskatchewan not to rush into uranium development for economic gain but to take sufficient time to explore further the moral, environmental, and safety questions."

On January 10, 1978, Ralph Katzman, a member of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly for the Rosthern constituency (which includes the Warman area) released the results of his own poll on nuclear issues. While only 20 percent of 5,625 households responded, 78 percent of the 1,200 respondents opposed building a refinery at the Warman site. A similar percentage favored the holding of referendums on specific uranium developments. Sixty-two percent opposed the export of Canadian uranium. Will the people be heard?

Dennis Hayes, former director of the Illinois State Energy Office and presently a senior researcher with Worldwatch Institute gives us the following perspective: "The nuclear safety debate has been a source of great confusion to the layman. One team of experts is lined up against an equally expert opposing team, each armed with computer printouts and technical jargon. Each tries to prove its case. But most nuclear issues are not amenable to proof; they are matters of judgment. It is impossible to eliminate all risk. The level of acceptable risk is an ethical rather than a technical matter. Consequently, the final decisions are not scientific, but are, rather, social and political."

Where is the truth? What is God's Word for us in the nuclear age? Ernie Hildebrand has found that initial misunderstandings about his role in the controversy have been somewhat resolved. Now there is more understanding and support. He has been invited to speak to local public schools, Mennonite schools, and some churches. The media were also interested in a minister's involvement in the affair.

The atom did not die at Hiroshima—it is alive and flourishing and evident at Warman, Uranium City, Elliott Lake, Port Hope—and who knows which community may be the next one chosen for a site. While world wars have been fought in Europe and Asia, nuclear plants can be stationed wherever most expedient.

The implications raised by the church's involvement in the nuclear controversy are far-reaching. We need nuclear energy *only* if we maintain our insatiable appetitie for more energy and the products it can dangle before us. It has already been conclusively proven that it is more viable to save a dollar in energy conservation than it is to invest it in trying to find more gas, coal, or oil. When will we believe this and live as if we really mean it? When will we return to the simple life-style which our forefathers maintained while hounded from continent to continent to preserve their religious beliefs and integrity?

An old adage says about foreign missionaries, "They came to do good and stayed and did well." No longer are North American Mennonites out of the mainstream. So when you're part of the stream, how can you buck the current? "More-with-Less" cookbooks are a good beginning, but where do we go from here? Are we willing to lay our faith on the line for the sake of the world? Sounds a little bit like what Jesus did. Did he not commission us "to do likewise"?

News

New MCC project proposed for Vietnam

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—A Mennonite Central Committee delegation visited Vietnam July 1 to 15 to make contacts with the church, to review MCC-assisted projects, and to negotiate continuing projects there.

As a response to the visit, the five-person delegation will recommend that MCC fund a new project providing laboratory equipment for the Chemistry Research Center for Agriculture in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon). MCC is particularly interested in that project since it involves areas of MCC emphasis—agriculture and food production.

The Chemistry Research Center, staffed by ten scientists, works to develop new uses for local products in order to replace materials formerly imported. Recent projects have included development of cattle feed from coconut wastes left over after oil extraction, exploring uses of the common rubber seed, and experimental use of corncobs to develop a carrier (casing) for vaccine.

The center is also working on purification of drinking water, on finding local ingredients to use as rust preventatives in areas of high humidity, and research on removing the effects of defoliants in the soil.

Delegates were Vern Preheim of MCC headquarters; Betsy Beyler, assistant director of MCC Peace Section's Washington Office; Takeji Nomura, secretary of the Japan Mennonite Fellowship; Albert DeFehr, treasurer of MCC (Canada); and James Stauffer, Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities worker in the Philippines, who was a missionary in Vietnam for seventeen years.

Overseas mission to be interpreted

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—"Change in world missions has been so rapid in the past decade that our constituency needs a total reinterpretation of what has happened and why," says Howard Habegger, executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Consequently the commission is launching a special mission education effort of one-day workshops for local church leadership brought together on a regional basis. Each workshop will have three sessions, morning, afternoon, and evening.

The effort is called "Interpretation '78." Interpreting changes in world mission, updating mission language, images, and symbols, and explaining the complexities and challenges of a new day in world missions are the stated purposes of the educational effort.

The first series of meetings is scheduled for September 13-28. Regional meetings will occur in Harleysville, Pennsylvania (September 16); Kidron, Ohio (September 20); Bluffton, Ohio (September 23); and Normal, Illinois (September 27). Services will also be held in churches in the areas, and visits will be made to Bluffton College and to the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Indiana.

Team members for the September meetings are Hugh Sprunger, missionary to Taiwan; Tina Block Ediger, COM director of mission services; John Sommer, COM personnel secretary; and a commission member from the area.

Doctors and nurses meet

Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania (GCNS)—The joint annual convention of the Mennonite Medical Association (MMA) and the Mennonite Nurses Association (MNA), August 3-6 at the Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, attracted about 300 persons. The theme for the convention was "The Family, a Healing Unit."

For 1978-79 MMA adopted a general budget of $28,300 and a mobilization for missions budget of $13,000. The latter provides subsidies for medical students for training in a missionary setting, and for aiding personnel to be available for specific mission needs. In cooperation with Mennonite Central Committee forty students have had training in Haiti from 1967 to 1978. MMA has 370 members.

Katherine Yutzy of Goshen, Indiana, is the new president of Mennonite Nurses Association, an organization which has about 400 members.

A new MNA project is to work with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) by providing nursing personnel for MDS units. MNA also adopted a policy to aggressively recruit among Mennonite nurses.

The keynote address and banquet speech were presented by Bernie Wiebe, Winnipeg. He spoke on five issues—the caring community, children, familial dimensions, morality, and modern poverty—which confront today's family, and pointed to ways in which they could be healing elements. Wiebe also pointed to the potential in families for parenting, loving, and growing.

Missions consultation delineates concerns

Newton, Kansas (MWC)—From July 22 to 24 representatives of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches from twenty nations met on the eve of the tenth Mennonite World Conference to consult about Mennonite world missions. The Hesston (Kansas) consultation was a follow-up to a similar conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in 1975.

A number of points surfaced in the papers presented and the discussions which followed: (1) all churches should become partners in missions on the basis of mutuality; mutuality of reception has to come before the mutuality of giving; (2) the responsible selfhood of all parties has to be considered in every act of giving and receiving; (3) the Christian message should be brought not only to the common people but also to those who are in leading positions and in government; (4) how Christians relate to power structures needs to be continually looked at; (5) the common agenda for churches is for each national group to find its own priorities and appropriate structures which will serve to represent the coming of the kingdom; (6) greater efforts need to be made in leadership training; and (7) Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups need to express and demonstrate cooperation with each other and with other Christian churches.

Move toward conscription wins in Senate

Washington, D.C. (NISBCO)—A Selective Service funding increase of slightly over 50 percent was approved by the Senate on August 7. The increase approved is the exact amount requested by the president for fiscal year 1979 in a move toward reinstatement of conscription.

Acceptance of the $9.5 million requested by the administration followed a lopsided vote against an amendment which would have nearly tripled the Selective Service budget for the next fiscal year.

During the debate on this largest appropriation figure no objection to the intent of the amendment except that of Senator Mark Hatfield (Republican, Oregon) was raised. Several Senators, among them Sam Nunn (Democrat, Georgia), recognized authority on military manpower, saw this as the desirable and inevitable direction in which Selective Service should move.

Amnesty International faults public relations firm

New York (AI)—Amnesty International (USA) began a campaign May 18 against political imprisonment, torture, disappearances, and executions in Argentina with vigils at the offices of Burson Marsteller in New York, Washington, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

Burson Marsteller, a leading public relations firm, was hired by the Argentine government to improve its image and counter growing criticism of human rights violations in Argentina.

At a New York press conference held just prior to the vigil David Hinkley, chairman of AIUSA, outlined the situation of human rights in Argentina. He stated that while Amnesty International condemned left-wing violence, it was deeply concerned that "in the name of combating terrorism, the Argentine government had unleashed a terror of its own: widespread and arbitrary arrests, long-term imprisonment without charge or trial, abductions, torture, and political murder." Hinkley noted that guerrilla violence has largely been eliminated but that the official terror continues, aimed at what the government terms a "subversive mentality."

AI distributed at the press conference a report received by its research department in London which appears to be the detailed Burson Marsteller recommendations to the Argentine government on how to "generate a sensation of confidence in Argentina among the ranks of the target audience in eight countries around the world through projecting an aura of stability."

Michael Boggs, assistant director, Department of International Affairs, AFL-CIO, spoke on the situation of unions in Argentina. All trade union activities, including meetings and election of officers, collective bargaining, slow-downs, and strikes are forbidden by law; many are punishable by many years' imprisonment. Many trade unionists have been arrested, have disappeared, or have been killed.

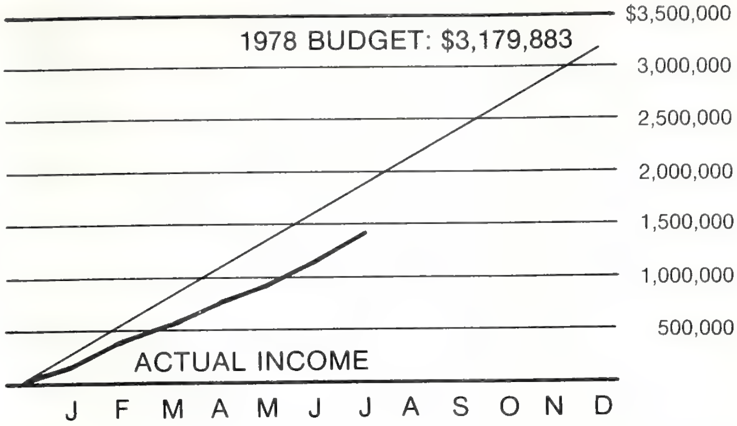
Whitney Ellsworth, publisher of the *New York Review of Books,* summarized the situation of the media in Argentina. When the military took power it took immediate steps to restrict the press. In January 1978 *Le Monde* reported that at least 29 journalists have been killed, 40 have disappeared, 70 have been imprisoned, and 400 have gone into exile since the military government took power.

Amnesty International, recipient of the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize, works impartially to free prisoners of conscience, and to abolish torture and the death penalty around the world.

Conference budget

Budget for 1978 includes:

Commission on Education	$234,048
Commission on Overseas Mission	$2,084,949
Commission on Home Ministries	$579,918
Mennonite Biblical Seminary	$280,968
Total	$3,179,883



Giving to the General Conference is up significantly in 1978 compared to a similar time period in 1977. Receipts at July 31 totaled $1,397,635 compared to $1,171,451 at July 31, 1977. On a percentage basis we have received 44.0% compared to 36.8%. Continued strong support is needed as the 1977 year-end total fell $340,000 short of the budget. My sincere thanks to all churches and individuals who are making special efforts to see that the budget will be reached in 1978. *Ted W. Stuckey, conference treasurer*

Canadian MB church debates identity, remarriage, alcohol

Winnipeg, Manitoba (MBNS)—Questions of faith, practice, and denominational identity dominated the sixty-seventh annual convention of Canadian Mennonite Brethren churches.

The 530 delegates met from July 1 to 4 at the Prairie Bible Institute campus in Three Hills, Alberta. They encountered long discussions on the remarriage of divorced persons, abstinence from alcoholic beverages, and the denomination's name and identity.

John Redekop, political science professor at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario, read a paper on "The Mennonite Brethren Church as a Believers' Church: Past, Present and Future." In it he contended that the label "Mennonite" in Mennonite Brethren loads a church which wants to be a genuine believers' church with too much ethnic and cultural baggage.

Opinions were divided. With no consensus in sight the matter was referred back to the Board of Spiritual and Social Concerns for further consideration.

A resolution on the issue of divorce and remarriage took the position that marriage is "for life" and a disruption of a marriage is "always the result of sin and disobedience." Yet breakups do occur. How should the church respond?

The resolution went on to state that where persons "recognize their failture and repent of their sin" they should be forgiven and accepted into the fellowship of the church. The church should also see it as its duty to seek to bring about reconciliation with an estranged partner. But where reconciliation is not possible (for example, an estranged partner has remarried) and the person does not have "the grace to live alone or as a single parent," the resolution said, "where there is general agreement in the local church, a remarriage may take place." The resolution concluded, "We believe such a procedure should apply whether the persons were, at the time of their marriage breakup, professing believers or not."

The resolution on the use of alcohol was basically a restatement of a position taken in 1969: "We affirm and teach the position of abstinence from drinking beverage alcohol as a true expression of our divine calling as disciples with a responsibility to God and man."

Evangelical Mennonites hear Augsburger

Steinbach, Manitoba (EMC)—The twenty-eighth annual Evangelical Mennonite Conference convention was held July 7-9 in Steinbach, Manitoba. The convention's main theme was "Self-Discipline in an Affluent Society."

Myron Augsburger from Harrisonburg, Virginia, delivered the main address at each of the four public sessions. His topics were (1) family responsibilities, (2) social responsibilities, (3) mission responsibilities, and (4) church responsibilities.

The conference council, consisting of delegates, deacons, and ministers conducted a business meeting on July 8.

Individual Mennonites express convictions on military taxes

While Mennonite church institutions continue to struggle with an administrative response to the issue of "war tax" withholding, individual Mennonites are voicing their convictions through refusing to pay the portion of their taxes designated for military use.

About $4,000 has been received to date in 1978 by the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section's "Taxes for Peace" fund, contributed by Mennonite war tax refusers.

Nonpayment of taxes violates national laws, but tax refusers are convinced that paying taxes is disobedience to God when slightly over half of that tax money is allocated for the past, present, and future military expenditures of the United States.

Most of these tax refusers paid only 47 to 50 percent of taxes owed to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), forwarding the remaining amount to MCC and other Mennonite agencies. Statements to IRS clarified that the withheld tax money was not for personal profit but rather for meeting human needs, promoting peace and reconciliation, and supporting life instead of death.

James Klassen, Newton, Kansas, who claimed a Nuremburg Principle tax deduction in an amount sufficient to result in a 50 percent refund of the amount of taxes due, recently received the refund in full and forwarded the check to MCC. (The Nuremburg Principles, unanimously affirmed by the United Nations after World War II, specify that crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity are crimes under national law.)

"This is the first time we have deliberately broken the law of our country," say tax refusers James and Anna Juhnke, North Newton, Kansas. "It is not an easy decision. We love our land and we respect the authority of the government. We want to show our respect by making our civil disobedience a public act and by accepting the penalties which may result from our action."

"As a Christian who accepts the teaching of Jesus and the New Testament as normative for life and ethics, I am a 'conscientious objector' to participation in war and to the resolution of human conflict by violence," concludes Marlin Miller of Goshen, Indiana. "It is my conviction that the financial support of war and military expenditures cannot be reconciled with this stance any more than actual military service itself."

They and other Christians feel that Christ's calling to a life of love, nonviolence and reconciliation supersedes demands of the state.

Thirty-three persons and families thus far have identified themselves as "war tax resisters" after *God and Caesar* in its June 1978 issue provided the opportunity for people to do so. The respondents represent eleven denominations as well as those with no church affiliation.

One recent case of a non-ordained employee at a Mennonite institution hoping to resist paying war taxes involved Esther Lanting, a teacher at Western Mennonite School (WMS), Salem, Oregon, who on July 21, 1977 wrote a letter to the WMS board requesting that her income tax not be withheld from her check.

On September 22, 1977, Lanting was invited to meet with the board to explain her reasons. The board decided to seek the counsel of the conference executive committee, and secure study papers on the tax issue.

Finally, on March 28, 1978, after extended study, the peace and social concerns committee of the conference recommended that the WMS board grant Lanting's request and discontinue withholding her taxes.

On May 9, 1978, the WMS board considered the committee's recommendation. By a vote of six to two they decided not to follow the recommendation, but to continue withholding all tax as legally required. At this same board meeting three other WMS teachers or staff members acted as follows: Ray Nussbaum submitted a letter requesting that the board stop withholding his tax; Floyd Schrock made a verbal request that his tax not be withheld; and Cindy Mullet asked that the board decrease her salary to the level where she will owe no tax.

The board granted Cindy Mullet's request for a reduction in salary. The board is willing to reconsider the issue if more faculty members should make the same request to have the board refrain from withholding taxes.

MCC has taken no official position on the refusal to pay taxes for military use, but MCC Peace Section (US) adopted a statement in 1975 which in part recommended "that Mennonite and Brethren in Christ continue to work toward reduction of military spending, not resting content with special provisions exempting us from payment of taxes for military purposes." It affirms "those in our midst who feel compelled by Christian conscience to refuse payment of all or some federal tax because of the large percentage of such taxes used for military purposes." *MCC News Service and* God and Caesar

WPTF not taken seriously by Congress or by church

Washington, D.C.—Most Mennonites are hesitant to resist payment of the military tax portion of federal income tax.

Many would be gratified to have a legal alternative, such as is envisioned in the pending World Peace Tax Fund (WPTF) legislation. But military tax resistance and a legal alternative may have to go hand in hand if a legislative remedy like the WPTF bill is to get serious attention in Congress.

Past lessons suggest that minority rights of conscience are not achieved without sacrifices shaped by deep religious and moral convictions.

An alternative to bearing of arms for conscientious objectors was achieved in 1940 only when it became clear to both President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Congress that large numbers of young men from historic peace churches would go to prison before consenting to wear military uniforms.

At the June inter-Mennonite consultation on war taxes in Elkhart, Indiana, a realistic appraisal of the current status and future prospects for the passage of the World Peace Tax Fund bill, HR 4897 in the House and S 880 in the Senate, was requested.

It should be observed that from the fifty-five Congressional districts in which a significant number of Mennonites reside, only three members of Congress have become cosponsors of the House bill—Glickman (Kansas), Nolan (Minnesota) and Guyer (Ohio). This seems to indicate that too few letters have been written by Mennonites to bring their representative aboard.

The bill was introduced in the House five years ago and in the Senate eighteen months ago. There are now twenty-eight House cosponsors, compared to twenty-four a year ago. One hundred to 150 cosponsors are needed to get serious attention in Congress. The three initial Senate cosponsors have not increased in the last eight months.

Congress-watchers on Capitol Hill know that when special interest legislation such as this loses momentum, the possibility for it being taken seriously in Congress erodes rapidly. Considerably more constituent effort is needed, if there is to be any hope for its passage. The bill went through five meticulous drafts by peace-oriented tax law professors before being introduced in Congress. *Delton Franz, MCC Peace Section*

Words & deeds

Two fraternal visits to mission areas in Latin America and Africa are planned for September and October by the Commission on Overseas Mission. From September 4 to October 5, Hector Valencia, COM secretary for Latin America, and Larry Kehler, recording secretary for the commission, will visit missionaries, institutions, and consult with national church leaders in the countries of Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia, Colombia, and Costa Rica. From September 6-30, James Bertsche, executive secretary of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, and Howard Habegger, executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission will visit Upper Volta, Botswana, and Lesotho. Upper Volta is a new work for COM and AIMM as missionaries Loren and Donna Entz only recently arrived there. In the other two countries the administrators will evaluate possibilities for expansion of mission activity.

Shaping the new Anabaptist-believers' curriculum for youth and adults was the focus of a consultation which met May 26-28 at Bethany Theological Seminary in Oak Brook, Illinois. What should be the curriculum's biblical content? What are the needs to which it should speak? What teaching-learning strategies should it have? More than fifty representatives from the five denominations—Brethren in Christ, Church of the Brethren, General Conference Mennonite, Mennonite Brethren, and Mennonite Church—cooperating in the publication of a youth-adult curriculum devoted one day of discussion to each of these questions. There was a basic commitment that an Anabaptist curriculum must find its foundation in the Scriptures. There was an equal concern that biblical truth must be related to life and needs.

A retreat for singles—never married, divorced or separated, widowed—fulfilled the expectations of most participants. The retreat, organized by the director for adult education of the General Conference, Herta Funk, happened July 2-5 in Grand Lake, Colorado. Thirty-four persons attended, excluding resource persons. Small groups met daily. In the never married group some advantages of being single were noted. "It's an advantage to be single because it has freed me during the nonfarming season for volunteer service in the winter," observed one participant. However, social interaction is a problem area for singles. To obtain social relationships with couples and families it was suggested that singles invite couples to dinner. Another comment counseled churches to have only round tables, and for the widowed in particular, a consultation service in finances, cooking, automobile and home maintenance. The participants came from four Canadian provinces and eight American states.

The General Conference Church of Cuauhtemoc, Chihuahua, Mexico, celebrated groundbreaking ceremonies for a new church building on July 30. The congregation was officially organized in 1967. Later it established and built a school, but despite growth in the congregation school facilities continued to be used as the center for worship. Two years ago the congregation bought four acres of land north of Cuauhtemoc in the nearby village of Blumenau. Plans for a complete church facility to seat 500 persons, together with thirteen classrooms, and dining and kitchen facilities were finalized. It is hoped that the new church will be opened in early 1979.

The subcontinent of India is the target for religious broadcasts beamed from a new 400 kilowatt AM station opened June 8 in Sri Lanka.

NOTICE OF VACANCY
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Bluffton College invites applications for the position of director of development and public affairs.

Qualifications: Previous experience in public relations and fund raising preferred; commitment to the values and heritage of Bluffton as a Mennonite church related Christian college.

Beginning date: As soon as arrangements can be made.

SEND APPLICATION, RESUME, AND REFERENCES TO: ELMER NEUFELD, PRESIDENT, BLUFFTON COLLEGE, BLUFFTON, OHIO 45817

Record

Ministers

Herbert Brannon terminated as pastor of the Medford (Oklahoma) Church in August.

Claude Boyer was installed as pastor of First Church, Reedley, California, on August 6.

Menno and Margaretha Ediger will become copastors of the Community Church, Markham, Illinois, on October 1. They have been involved with community development work as well as pastoral services at Hamilton, Ontario.

Jerry Flueckiger has begun a three-year term as youth and Christian education director at First Church, Berne, Indiana.

Henry Goossen has resigned as pastor of the Goessel (Kansas) Church to become pastor of First Church, Halstead, Kansas, beginning October 1.

Maurice Hirschy, Berne, Indiana, has been serving as summer assistant at First Church, Beatrice, Nebraska. He is a second-year student at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana.

Lonnie Hofer, Bridgewater, South Dakota, was installed as interim pastor of the Hutterthal Church, Freeman, South Dakota, on July 9.

Harry Howard has again become pastor of Calvary Church, Aurora, Oregon, after a five-year absence. He had previously served this church for a thirteen-year period. During the time of his absence he worked as a trucker.

Jerry Kaiser has resigned as assistant pastor of Calvary Church, Washington, Illinois, to become pastor of Bethesda Church, Marion, South Dakota, beginning September 1.

Michael Klassen accepted leadership responsibilities with the Manhattan (Kansas) Fellowship beginning August 15. He is a graduate of the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, California, and a member of Zion Church, Elbing, Kansas.

Dick Koopmans has terminated as pastor of the Salem Church, Munich, North Dakota. *Kenneth Heppner,* pastor of the Swiss Church, Alsen, North Dakota, is serving the Salem congregation this summer as interim pastor.

Gerald Mendenhall has accepted a church planting assignment in Fort Wayne, Indiana, under the auspices of First Church, Berne, Indiana. He will begin work this fall. He previously served pastorates at a Friends congregation in Kansas City, Missouri, and at Calvary Church, Aurora, Oregon.

Calendar

October 5-9—National New Call to Peacemaking conference, Green Lake, Wisconsin

Canadian

September 16—MCC relief sale, Chilliwack, British Columbia

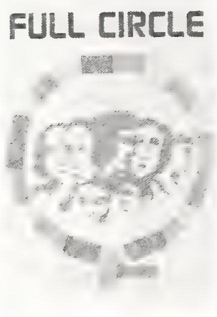
Central

September 8-13—Evangelism Explosion Clinic, Dayton, Ohio

September 23—MCC relief sale, Goshen, Indiana

Eastern

September 30—MCC relief sale, Fishersville, Virginia



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Workers

Wendell Badertscher, associate pastor at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio, from 1975 to 1978, has accepted a maintenance position at Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Michigan, beginning this fall.

Philip Bender began serving as principal of Elim Bible Institute, Altona, Manitoba, on August 1. He has been New Testament and theology instructor at Elim since 1976 and will continue to teach on a part-time basis.

Organizing of archival materials in the Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, Kansas, is a project being carried out by part-time staff members *Willard Claassen* and *Mary Valencia* of Newton and *Gladys Goering,* of Moundridge, Kansas.

Carl and Sandra Liechty, First Church, Berne, Indiana, are returning to Japan August 2 after an absence of four years. They will participate in Bible and English teaching, and also provide assistance to the Misato Mennonite Fellowship in Tokyo. During the past year the Liechtys studied at the Overseas Mission Training Center on the campus of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Indiana. Previously they served in Japan from 1963 to 1966, and 1969 to 1974.

C. Wilbert Loewen, Morris, Manitoba, has been appointed director of grain procurement for the Food Bank of Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) effective September 1. An active member of the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Conference, Loewen has served twelve years as lay pastor in various churches in Nebraska and Manitoba, some four years on the executive committee of Mennonite Disaster Service in Manitoba, and three years on the MCC (Canada) executive committee.

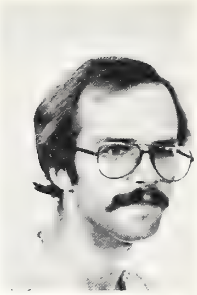
Donald Nester, Normal, Illinois, has been named coordinator of pastoral care at Mennonite Hospital, Bloomington, Illinois. He will be primarily responsible for providing pastoral counseling services for patients and their families. Nester has been a chaplain at Mennonite Hospital since 1972.

Dave Ochs of Bloomington, Illinois, has been named administrator of Eureka Hospital, Eureka, Illinois. Ochs holds a bachelor of science degree in business administration from St. Benedicts College, Atchinson, Kansas. The Mennonite Hospital Association, Bloomington, purchased the forty-six-bed Eureka hospital on May 1.

Loewen

Ochs

Quiring


Ramseyer

Schmidt

Wyse

Paul Quiring, recently returned Mennonite Central Committee program director in West Bank, has been named director of West Coast MCC, Reedley, California, beginning August 14. He is serving on a one-year interim basis while *Ken Neufeld* takes a leave of absence to study for a master's degree at the University of Southern California.

Donald R. Schmidt, North Newton, Kansas, who had been therapy supervisor at Methodist Youthville in Newton, Kansas, joined the social work department at Bethel College this fall as assistant professor of social work. After completing his degree in English at Bethel in 1969, Schmidt received his Master of Social Work at the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare.

Norma Wyse and Mark Ramseyer, Ann Arbor (Michigan) Mennonite Fellowship, have begun a one-year term of voluntary service with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana. They are serving as counselors and leaders of the unit in San Francisco, California. Norma is a graduate of Goshen (Indiana) College and has worked as a bilingual teacher in Goshen Community Schools. She is the daughter of Cora and Harold J. Wyse, Archbold, Ohio. Mark is a 1976 graduate of Goshen (Indiana) College and has attended the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. He is the son of Alice and Robert Ramseyer, Elkhart, Indiana.

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Letters

Standards and principles

Dear Editor: Moral and social standards have often been discussed in *The Mennonite*. Lately it seems that we are almost totally incapable of judging right from wrong.

In what seems to be a short while we have moved from a state of generally accepted moral and ethical standards to a state of everyone doing what seems right in their own eyes—be it in reference to alcohol, abortion, promiscuous sex, and now homosexuality (May 30 and June 6 issues). It seems to me there is hardly such a thing as "deviant" behavior anymore. After all, are they not a minority deserving recognition and even protection?

". . . the church should openly integrate the homosexual person into the church community," says Frank Ward. I see this as undermining the family structure which we as Mennonites have emphasized and which we feel the Bible speaks to very clearly. Indeed, our society and civilization's future rests on a strong family structure. For Christians, who know the value of our God-given form of family life and what the Bible says on the issue of homosexuality, not to take a stand against it will also have to take the blame for a worsening of the current trend. It is my contention that most gays are gay because they want to be, not necessarily because of insurmountable physical defect or inclination. It is also rather evident that they willfully promote their behavior in the hope that others will join them.

There are many unfortunate people around us. The physically, emotionally, and mentally handicapped are coming out of their closets. I believe in compassion. We need to be more so. With our help and encouragement their lives can become a miracle. That is the direction our so-called gay people need to seek and be guided into. God is in the life-changing business.

I find it interesting to see the coverage such a news item gets, even when there are a mere twenty-five people present. The church growth seminar held last April in Saskatoon involved almost 200 people from all over Canada and some from the United States. The three-day seminar received less coverage and took a long time to be published. Does that say something about priorities? We are strangely frank about issues that would do better not to be mentioned, and silent about the more important issues that need to be shouted from the housetops. *Mary Bartel, 1702 Avenue D. North, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7L 1R2* June 12

Christian shoplifting?

Dear Editor: I was overwhelmed after reading "A Letter from Two Lesbians" (June 6 issue).

My story is a little different but I "came out" too. My experience was with shoplifting. How would you respond to people who told you they were born-again Christian shoplifters? Is "loving the Lord" all that really matters?

I began shoplifting when I was only nine years old. It started innocently, as most habits do. I was raised in a good Mennonite church and knew what the Bible said and what was expected of me. My life became one of going to church every Sunday and shoplifting whenever possible. The force to shoplift was compelling and unknown to me then—addicting. I became more daring and somehow this challenge was exciting.

When I was twenty-one I was caught like a mouse longing after mellowed cheese, wanting more and more. To my utter surprise and relief I was not charged with any penalty. No one found out. I began to think, "Is God showing his love and mercy toward me?" It was then that I realized how God loved me as I was. I accepted him in my heart as my personal savior.

Yes, I accepted Christ but I still shoplifted. I rationalized: "God accepted me as I am. Other Christians do things they shouldn't. Really, everyone's dishonest one way or another. It's not that much. On the outside I'll be the person everyone wants me to be—no one will find out. You aren't saved by being good, so you might as well be bad. Do what you like, be free."

I noticed that the more I read my Bible, the more my conscience spoke to me.

While Christ ministered on earth he continually showed love, concern, and caring toward all people. This fact seems to be emphasized so much today that the other side of the coin goes overlooked. He is also a just God, one who is coming again to judge. Yes, Christ's blood covers all wrong and man cannot charge us. But is this covering a license to be bound to the world? Jesus did not condemn the woman who was caught in adultery and should have been stoned. But he did say, "Go and sin no more."

Thieves and homosexuals are mentioned together in several places in Scripture (1 Corinthians 6:9-10, for one). If you dare to say that homosexuality is alright, then shoplifting must be alright too. Is freedom in Christ a cover-up?

How big is your God? Did he save you to live a life of defeat? I really urge you to examine your life-style. Are you really listening to the Bible completely? Is that all there is to being a Christian? Just salvation?

I confided in a dear Christian friend who showed me Romans 7. Read it right now and count the I's. Now read Romans 8 and notice how many times Spirit is mentioned. There is a conflict between our two natures. Our natural self is one which constantly says "I. . .I. . .I," even though this believer knows Christ. Romans 8 says the flesh is weak, but victory can be obtained through the Spirit. We can, through the Holy Spirit, say "no" even to an addiction or something far smaller.

Jesus gave me real, true freedom—freedom from being a slave to my natural nature. I know he can do the same for anyone else.

My deliverance took a long time. Five to six years on the football field, fighting that old nature—back and forth seesaw style. But Christ has gained a complete victory. You can have it too. Give him the keys to your plane and say, "Lord, you're the driver now." Pray every minute you're tempted. Rely entirely on him.

The greatest gain in sharing this story would be if someone would leave his/her path of rebellion, whatever it might be, and come to know the Christ who is more than conqueror and loves us so. He paid a great price for us. Are we willing to give up our whole self to him? *Name withheld upon request* June 19

Heterosexual perversion

Dear Editor: I'm very glad you and your staff decided to contribute concretely to the dialogue regarding the issue of homosexuality—using *The Mennonite* itself as a kind of forum. I trust that congregations will find the June 6 issue helpful for initiating redemptive discussion on this topic.

Some months ago, while reflecting upon the message of the Good Samaritan story for our times (in the context of a sermon), I suggested that a merciful homosexual is closer to the kingdom of God than an unmerciful heterosexual. Those words were received with some consternation, but I reaffirm them again today. I know of some homosexual relationships that are very tender. I also know of many heterosexual relationships marked by violence. I believe the former are closer to the kingdom than the latter. We are all sexual beings—the challenge is to express our sexuality in loving, Christlike ways. There is no question that homosexual perversion is a problem within our society, but I question whether all homosexual behavior is perverse. Further, I believe heterosexual perversion poses a much greater problem for our churches and communities. Heterosexual perversion is alarming because it is so pervasive in our society and has such an insidious quality about it. The level of outrage against homosexuals is to me incongruous with the tacit acceptance of all kinds of manipulation, exploitation, and lording over others in our heterosexual relationships. We all have problems with our sexuality, whether we be homosexual or heterosexual, and we are called to bear with one another in our weakness.

Jake Enz's comments were especially helpful to me in calling for a sense of fairness and humility in relating to those who are experiencing homosexual bondage—to wit, what are our prisons from which we need liberation? Jake suggested that "gayness arises out of preoccupation with sex." That's provocative, but I'm not convinced. True, if one identifies himself or herself primarily as "gay," then that person is flirting with idolatry—the idolatry of sex. But the confession of the two lesbians is a witness to the fact that this need not be the case: "We must also realize that a person's sexual preference is not his/her totality. It is a part of his/her personhood, but it doesn't make a total person abnormal or unnatural." That kind of awareness, I affirm, is a signal of freedom, not preoccupation. *Doug Reichenbach, Box 67, Wayland, Iowa 52654* June 12

Concerns about Miller article

Dear Editor: I wish to express concern about the June 6 article "A Christian Approach to Homosexuality" by John W. Miller. I feel his statements concerning the causes of homosexuality are misleading and may cause unjustified guilt and anxiety on the part of parents, especially parents of homosexual persons. The psychological theory Miller refers to is highly debatable and is by no means totally accepted by those in the fields of psychology and psychiatry. It serves no purpose to saddle already confused parents with "blame" for their children's sexual orientation. I feel it is also detrimental to the growth of positive relationships between homosexual persons and their parents.

I also take issue with Miller's assumptions about the effects of the changing role of women. The women's movement aims toward building a society in which both women and men can recognize more fully their strengths and potentials. Too often gifts and talents have been stifled due to artificially imposed male-female expectations. The effects of the women's movement should serve to strengthen families, not weaken them.

Finally, I must say I found Miller's warning of the churches' "slow drift toward matriarchy" rather amusing. At the rate the churches are currently moving, the tipping of the balance "too far to the feminine side" will probably arrive with the next ice age. *Betty Detwiler Sommer, 44 Boyd Street, Cornwall, Pennsylvania* June 20

The Bible on homosexuality

Dear Editor: The June 6 issue of *The Mennonite* compels me to write concerning Bible teachings about homosexuality and the acceptance of homosexuals as saved individuals.

A homosexual is defined as "exhibiting sexual desire toward a member of one's own sex." It may come as a surprise to some to learn that an up-to-date topic of which they may read in any magazine would also be discussed in the Bible. One thousand years before Christ, a wise man stated, "What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; and there is nothing new under the sun. Is there a thing of which it is said, 'See, this is new'? It has been already, in the ages before us" (Ecclesiastes 1:9-10).

Rome during the time of Christ was a civilization in which the practice of homosexuality was participated in freely and openly. Paul speaks on the problem of homosexuality in straightforward terms: "They exchanged the truth about God for a lie. . . . For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. Their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural, and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their error" (Romans 1:25-27).

We should not be surprised that the Bible speaks so frankly. As long as there is humankind, the Bible will be timely, applying God's solutions to the problems of sin; whether or not we acknowledge our problems as sin.

The Bible calls homosexuality sin. In the Old Testament Jewish law homosexuality was punishable by death. "If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall be put to death, their blood is upon them" (Leviticus 20:13). The ancient city of Sodom was so full of homosexuality that male visitors to that city were propositioned and even attacked by other men. That civilization became so corrupt that God destroyed it (read Genesis 19). "Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise acted immorally and indulged in unnatural lust, served as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire" (Jude 7). It is not difficult to see that homosexuality was not and is not in God's plan for humankind.

God's law in the New Testament is just as outspoken about homosexuality as is the Old Testament. "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, . . . will inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). It is not cruel or unloving to believe that as long as an individual remains homosexual that he/she has no hope of eternal salvation. According to the Bible the Christian can in no way accept or tolerate homosexual activity but must strive to help homosexuals change by teaching them Bible truths concerning all sins that prevent eternal salvation.

The good news of the gospel is that with Jesus' help, homosexuality can be overcome and replaced with higher motives. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 6:11, says to the Christians at Corinth that some of them were homosexuals—but no longer. The homosexual's hope of salvation, as well as any other sinner, is in the changing of their lives from sin upon becoming a Christian. To remain in the saved condition the sinner may not return to the sin and dwell in it. God's loving forgiveness extends to every obedient believer in Jesus Christ (see Mark 16:15-16, Hebrews 5:9). God's promise for forgiveness is such that "their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 8:12). God's Word is plain that his mercy is extended to all who obey him. "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way to escape, that you may be able to endure it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

The Bible not only condemns all the sins we as Christians or non-Christians face or are tempted with, it also gives us hope of salvation if we obey God's will.

Please, study your Bible (2 Timothy 2:15). *Robert Graber, Church of Christ, Newton, Kansas 67114* June 20

Sinners Anonymous

Dear Editor: I have the uncomfortable feeling that homosexuality is being treated as a special case in the list of man's behavior because we don't want to reject the person involved. To check this out I substituted other behavior in place of gay in the report "Gays Dialogue with Church Leaders" (April 25 issue). One sentence may suffice:

"Although the church proclaims the loving noncondemnatory words of Christ, it also gives the message that being gay (jealous) is sinful and that a gay (jealous) person is to hate herself or himself."

Most of us would agree that jealousy is sin, but to hate oneself is not the Christian way out. Rather the church ought to be a Sinners Anonymous group helping each other overcome their failings.

I hear the gays saying this is the way we are and you must accept us. I have an uncommon amount of impatience and intolerance, but so far no one has been willing to dismiss me from trying to control it.

Who is a homosexual? Is it only those who engage in the act? I have difficulty accepting that as a natural and good activity for humans.

Is it one who has a preference for the same instead of the opposite sex? I would have difficulty calling that sin. Jesus' teaching about attitude and act is applicable, but as there can be wholesome relationships between persons of the opposite sex without marriage, so it should be possible with members of the same sex.

Is gay the new vehicle for displaying rebellion against society?

Now a word of discussion on the Holy Spirit. A sentence in the meditation "The Holy Spirit—Who?" (April 18 issue) is the kind which used to add to my confusion: "Let us trust God to strengthen our faith in the Holy Spirit. . . ." Is not the Holy Spirit also God? I cannot attribute anything to the Holy Spirit that would seem to be out of character for God.

It seems some difficulty arises from the emphasis on the Spirit as a person. The spirit of America is not something separate but an indivisible part. As it is impossible to comprehend and explain the incarnation, so I feel about God's nature. Perhaps it is no accident that the word trinity does not appear in the New Testament.

I have no difficulty accepting charismatic Christians, but I would like to inspect the fruit. When I see a congregation where the good of another is as significant as one's own, where offenders (legal, social, sexual) are finding acceptance, and where the parking lot is not full of the latest large-size cars, there I would be inclined to think the Spirit is present. *Willard Unruh, DCS, Butwal, Nepal* June 21

There is one judge

Dear Editor: Having been raised on the teachings of Jesus Christ, I was disturbed by the feelings expressed in the letter by C. R. Preheim "Homosexuality Is Unbiblical" (June 13 issue). It is unfortunate that the study of homosexuality, and how the church might deal with it, provokes such violent feelings. While the Scripture makes several references against homosexuality, it makes a much more important statement throughout the whole New Testament . . . a statement of love, of loving one's neighbor as one's self, of loving one's enemies.

There is another important message in the New Testament and it is found in James 2:8-10 and 4:11-12. "Brothers, you must never disparage one another. He who disparages a brother or passes judgment on his brother disparages the law and judges the law. . . ." "There is but one lawgiver and judge, the One who is able to save life and destroy it. So who are you to judge your neighbor?" It is unfortunate that the mere study of something as controversial as homosexuality incites the feelings it does. Isn't it time to adopt a more understanding position in dealing with problems that are unique to this time period? It is also unfair for the author to attack the editorial staff of a good magazine for attempting to show what is going on in the church community. *Tyler Klassen, 59451 CR 9 South, Elkhart, Indiana 46514* June 22

Give time to proclamation

Dear Editor: I take issue with two statements in the news section (June 20 issue) in the article concerning the payment of taxes used for military purposes. Perhaps I am oversimplifying the solution to a problem which is apparently more complicated than I realize, but it seems to me that one section of Scripture, Romans 13:1-7, makes it quite clear what is expected of Christians where taxation and civil disobedience are concerned.

Millard Lind counsels, "Biblical thought challenges the sovereignty of the civil authorities, calling it rebellion." However, the apostle Paul bluntly tells us to "be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God" (13:1).

David Schroeder states that "the New Testament speaks for civil disobedience," but Paul says that "he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment" (13:2).

Then in verses six and seven we are told, "For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. Pay all of them their dues, taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due." To me this is clear enough.

There are, of course, many examples of "civil disobedience" in Scripture. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, among others, were punished in Old Testament times for breaking the laws of the land. The apostles, including Paul, were imprisoned, beaten, stoned, and otherwise "disciplined" for going against civil authority. However, in each case these men were following the dictates of a higher law, namely, that we should have no other gods besides our Lord. When civil authority attempts to corrupt or prevent our worship or our proclaiming of the gospel, then our obedience must be to God rather than to men.

Jesus tells us that in the last days there will be, among other tribulations, wars and rumors of war. Rather than going against the teaching of God's word in a vain effort to forestall the inevitable, should we not give our time and energies to the worship of God and the proclamation of his gospel, so that we can do our part to hasten the day of his coming? *Karl Detrich, Route 1, Box 8, Lindsborg, Kansas 67456* June 23

Let's be careful

Dear Editor: I truly appreciate your efforts in surveying current controversial subjects that are deeply affecting the churches today. But I really felt that some of the opinions expressed were not biblical and I would certainly hope not embraced by the Mennonite churches (June 6 issue).

In Romans 1:25-27 the Bible states very clearly that homosexuality is a sin, being indecent and unnatural. But we as Christians should be careful not to overreact to this particular sin. I believe that in God's eyes sin is sin and that one is no worse or any more excusable than any other. I also believe this passage in Romans says that homosexuality is directly related to a person's failure to acknowledge God as Creator and Lord.

We also have to be very careful not to cast "the first stone." Romans 3:23 states, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Since we all are born, without a choice, sinful, we cannot rightfully justify our sinful behavior as caused by certain factors beyond our control.

I hope and pray that the Mennonite churches do not compromise their position of what is right and wrong and succumb to the pressure of trying to remain popular with an ever increasingly decadent society. *Pamela Schroeder, 141 East Fortuna, Atwater, California 95301* June 30

About letters: To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Brevity is encouraged. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations. Editor

Meditation

Saved through a common name

One of *those* days—routine—dull—tiring—and then the phone rang again. Automatically I answered, "This is Mary Troyer." The voice on the other end responded, "This is Laura Troyer." Even as I made a noncommittal acknowledgement my mind began racing in a search for the identity of a Laura Troyer. A relative? None that I knew of. An old acquaintance from Mennonite Central Committee days? I drew a blank there also. A recent introduction? The wheels came to a screeching halt as my ears became aware that the voice was continuing. "I am another Mrs. Lowell Troyer." Dull routine took over once more. This had happened so many times before—too many Troyers—even Lowell Troyers. Someone else was often getting our phone calls, our mail, even our guests. Why had I changed my very unique name for such a commonplace name as Troyer?

Laura had received a card addressed to Lowell. Yes, he was expecting a notification of his Civilian Public Service reunion. Yes, it would be fine if it were sent on to us, we did appreciate this—the usual routine.

And then the dullness broke as a tinge of excitement became apparent in Laura's voice. She wanted to share something. This was not the first time they had received our mail; they had also received any number of phone calls in the past. "So many times the caller would begin talking to me about the Lord, about the church, about spiritual things before they knew I was the wrong Mrs. Troyer." A pause, then Laura continued, her voice loaded with emotion, "That was before I knew the Lord. I think he used our common name to plant seeds of truth in my heart and mind. It took a crisis to bring me to him, but he used the many wrong numbers to gently lead me to him."

No more routine nor dullness now. Imagine witnessing because of a shared name! We chatted a bit, made tentative plans to meet each other, and as I thanked her again for calling I added, "You've made my day!"

Instantly her joyous voice rang back, "Yes, but he made my life!"

(The "other Mrs. Troyer" and I are happy to share with others the strange and wonderful ways the Lord uses to reach his "lost sheep." We both pray that he may receive glory and that we may all become more aware of the many little things that are so very important.)

Mary Troyer

You're almost there

Our family likes to vacation in the mountains and go hiking. On one particular day we had set as our goal Pawnee Pass on the Continental Divide in Colorado. To us inexperienced climbers (middle-aged parents and three teenagers) from Kansas, the distance on the map had looked easily conquerable. But five vertical miles, we discovered, is quite different from five horizontal.

Above timber line our breath began to come hard, sharp pains pierced our heads, and our feet became increasingly leaden. The bare rocks bounced the sun's rays into our aching eyes. We zigzagged meaninglessly along the trail which we knew would never reach the top, for the nearer we came the farther it seemed. Hikers coming down told us we still had a long, hard way to go. We began to wonder if it really was all that important to get to the pass. But we moved mechanically on, none of us able to be the first to call a halt.

All at once we noticed coming down the trail towards us an Indian youth, skimming so swiftly and gracefully over the rocks that he seemed to be flying. He stepped aside to let us pass and as our eyes met he smiled and said quietly, "You're almost there!" Then he continued on his way, out of our lives as suddenly as he had entered. But in that moment of encounter he had handed us a beautiful gift to cherish forever. Within ten rejuvenated minutes we reached the summit.

Mary Rempel

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CONTRIBUTORS

Lauren Friesen is the pastor, Lucy Harms and Peggy Newcomer are members, of the South Seattle Mennonite Church, 1911 5th Avenue West, Seattle, Washington 98119.

Lorne R. Buhr, 374 Knottwood Road West, Edmonton, Alberta T6K 2K4, former government publications librarian at the University of Saskatchewan, now holds a similar position with the Alberta legislature library.

Because of a letters deluge during the summer fortnightly publication schedule, we gave extra space to catch up on the backlog of letters from our readers.

The meditation writers are Mary Troyer, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana 46514, and Mary Rempel, Box 253, Hesston, Kansas 67062.

CREDITS

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The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Mini-reflections on a world conference

1. It seemed everyone at the Mennonite World Conference made an observation about the international quality of the meeting.

This newly appreciated cultural pluralism and its consequent diversity in faith and practice needs to be seen from at least two perspectives.

Diversity is a source of enrichment. But it also constitutes a threat to the underpinnings of a Mennonite faith which is still Western, often ethnic, and largely male-dominated. Can this cultural imperialism (and its consequent spiritual temperament) blend with new and other dynamics?

Pluralism also means that it is irrelevant to dream about a unified worldwide Anabaptist communion. Nevertheless, it is a judgment on the smallness of our charity, and our limited vision, that while we happily (even proudly?) paraded our international diversity in Wichita, and accepted it as a positive quality, we continue to indulge in schismatic mythmaking about sister North American Mennonite denominations.

2. Photographers at the Mennonite World Conference displayed a unique religious rite; they were the only persons to kneel and crouch before the stage.

During highpoints in a program there would be a continuous stream of photographers—amateur and professional—moving back and forth seeking the ultimate image. I was part of that religious order too. Thousands of photos were taken. It must be admitted that electronic flashes (mainly from nonprofessionals) and the movement of photographers vying for position were distracting.

Photography is an important ministry in the church. A sensitive photograph can tell a message which words can't. But it is also true that photography done insensitively also has a message. Without doubt the waves of photographers at the conference dulled the spiritual impact of some events.

Generally, all of us, whether photographers or not, have too much joy in fiddling with machines, and too little recognition of the need for receiving spiritual blessings from those who minister in word, gesture, and song. *Vic Reimer*

Labor Day

During the last generation there has been a marked increase in the percentage of married women working outside the home. Women, whether single or married, are increasingly contributing to the economies of the world in the statistically measurable ways that economists use.

Nevertheless, Doreen Schecter, assistant professor of psychiatry at Albert Einstein School of Medicine in New York, says it's a myth that things have become better for women.

Worst, she declares, are the demands put on a working married woman to compete in the labor market, and still have all the responsibilities of homemaking. These demands are contributing to a new breed of psychologically battered women, she observes, who are "physically brutalized, suffering from such symptoms as exhaustion, migraine, and hypertension."

I believe this because I know women who work, do the household chores, carry family responsibilities, and exhibit symptoms of being psychologically battered. (Of course, married men and single persons of both sexes can also become psychologically battered for various reasons.)

Why do married women work for pay? A common reason is to supplement what is seen as a husband's inadequate income. Another important factor is the need for identity and self-actualization.

Whatever the reasons, it is difficult for families to maintain relationships of love, intimacy, trust, and genuine commitment when both husband and wife seek employment. It takes huge amounts of emotional energy to create and maintain family relationships. Energy reserves are at a minimum after a day of work away from the home. Single parents need to cope with similar dilemmas, yet have fewer resources.

One approach to the problem is to evolve new patterns in sharing the responsibilities of earning money, family nurture, and household chores.

Another approach is to look at wage structures. Some husbands (husbands continue to be the major earners in most families) are not paid well enough to support their families in an average North American life-style. In these cases wives work outside the home as an economic necessity. Inadequate wages can contribute to family stress.

Mennonite institutions and local congregations, and private Mennonite employers, should be among the first to be highly conscious of how their wage structures could be contributing to the dehumanization of family life. *Vic Reimer*

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The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:32 SEPTEMBER 12, 1978

Fleeting meetings (at conferences)

Roberta Mohr

A friendly smile
the sudden light of recognition
followed by a warm embrace!
The years between are insignificant,
a minor interruption.
Friendship is renewed easily, freely,
as though eight minutes
not eight years ago
we parted.
The closeness is still there.
The souls we once laid bare
are still entwined.
The eyes, the touch,
say more than words
which spill out quickly,
asking superficial questions
when I really want to know
"How are you - down deep -
where the *real you* lives?"
Time is short.
We part too soon
and murmur things like
"Keep in touch"
knowing correspondence
will be meager if at all.
But it was good to touch
and it will keep.

A stove, a pulpit, & an organ

Ted Rising Sun hints at the lesson we ought to learn from the destruction of the outer building but retention of the essentials—the proclaimed Word, the praise in song, and the warmth which draws people in.

Menno Wiebe

"Right where this church building is standing there used to be a log church," began Oliver Rising Sun, pointing to the remodeled Mennonite Church building at Busby, Montana. "It was built in 1904, and in 1914 when I was fourteen years old it was destroyed by a tornado."

In the storytelling style of his Cheyenne people he went on: "I was out on the mountain just east of here with my uncle when he saw two black strips of cloud coming over us. Then they formed into a twisted hook and we knew it was a tornado. When the tip touched the ground there was a big cloud of dust going up. It was raining and hailing very hard.

"When it was all over we found out that the log church was completely destroyed. The logs from the building were scattered in a line halfway to Lame Deer, twenty miles away. Except for the chimney of the nearby mission log house no other building in Busby was damaged. Upon examining the site of the log church it was found that three items from the church remained. These were the stove, the pulpit, and the old reed organ. Tucked under the fallen pulpit were all the hymnbooks untouched."

Oliver Rising Sun, like several other Cheyennes from Busby, is quick to point out

Oliver Rising Sun stands in front of the remodeled Busby Mennonite Church.

Oliver Rising Sun stands with the pulpit that was "unharmed" by the tornado and still serves in the Busby Mennonite Church.

that the remainder of these three items has great significance.

The stove represents the warmth and the flame which will never die out; the pulpit represents the indestructible place from which God's Word is proclaimed; and the organ represents the joyful noise of praise to God.

Rising Sun, now seventy-seven, tells of his uncle Black Whiteman, a traditional Cheyenne medicine man, who claimed to have power over the winds and who cursed the Mennonite church for intruding into Cheyenne beliefs. This curse was then realized when the tornado struck. The fact that the three items were not taken by the wind is regarded as the permanence and power and indestructible qualities of the Christian faith.

After the 1914 disaster a new building was erected on the previous site, retaining the pulpit, stove, and the reed organ. In 1974 this church was remodeled again and an addition built onto it, but the Cheyenne Christians of Busby insisted that the pulpit and organ not be replaced.

Although there is much less denial of the medicine man's power by the Cheyenne Christians of today, they are convinced that the power of God supercedes negative traditional Indian forces.

This story of the tornado and Oliver Rising Sun's interpretation of it are widely known in Busby and surrounding Cheyenne villages. It has become a point of reference to validate the coming of the Christian missionaries and, now that there is tolerance for Cheyenne traditions by white missionaries, it is also told without inhibition.

Oliver Rising Sun became a Christian in 1955 when, in his words, he turned away from the Peyote, a native religious expression which left him empty. Rising Sun testifies vigorously that Jesus Christ is not a European import and that the Bible is not a white man's book. "Christianity is for human beings," he said, "and that includes me."

An additional interpretation of the tornado story also is intimated. Ted Rising Sun, son of Oliver, hints at the lesson we ought to draw from the destruction of the outer building but retention of the essentials—the proclaimed Word, the praise in song, and the warmth which draws the people in.

Ted Rising Sun, who is presently giving regional leadership to the Mennonite churches of the northern Cheyenne in Montana, hesitates over the administrative duties he is expected to carry out, especially where guidelines are prescribed too rigorously. For the Christian church throughout the Americas there remains a continuing conflict of religious concepts related to church architecture. Nowhere in Indian tradition are there temple or churchlike edifices within which the presence of God was always sought. His presence and his truth are sought in places and times removed from human restrictions.

There is a lesson here for us as the Indian churches move to Indian leadership. The white people should let the Indians develop church organizations and structures more in keeping with the traditions of the Hopi, the Cheyenne, and the Arapaho.

God, who is greater than tornadoes and any human structure, pours out his Spirit in his own way to his people.

Lord Jesus

Kim H. France

you draw me
by the magnet
of your cross

and pull me
to the terror
of your tears

you catch me
in the snare
of truth
you toss

and try me
on the edges
of my fears

you kill me
with the gravity
of grave

and fill me
with the vacuum
of your scars

you comfort me
before my senses
rave

and heal me
with the music
of the stars

you wash me
from the granite
of my sin

and feed me
with the dying
breath of light

you strengthen me
when trust
begins to thin

and blind me
with the silence
of your night

you free me
with the sound
of your command

and settle me
like darkness
in your hand

Those amazing VS workers

Charles Ludwig

Six months ago if I had been told about a Christian voluntary service organization, I would have been severely pressed to believe that it could really exist. My exclamation would undoubtedly have been, "Healthy college-age young people working for nothing? That's great!" But inwardly I would have muttered, "I don't believe it."

Then, after preaching to the Tucson Mennonite Fellowship (jointly affiliated with both the General Conference and the Mennonite Church), I went to dinner with the young people at the Tucson Mennonite Service Unit. As I ate with the workers, I became aware that VS is real. Needing explanations, I borrowed the VS handbook. From it, I discovered that there is a network of units across the continent.

The handbook explained the birth of the organization. "Begun in 1944, VS grew out of World War II as a way for young men and women of Mennonite churches to express their Christian faith through service and outreach while at the same time fulfilling military requirements. . . ."

Ranging in age from eighteen to seventy-five, VS workers represent several denominations. "They serve for one or two years as professionals or nonprofessionals," coming as "singles, young marrieds, families with children, and retired couples. . . ."

Still shaken that energetic young people in this period of strikes for higher wages would work for nothing, I made further investigations and visited some of the places where the members of the Tucson unit donate their services.

Among the workers I interviewed was Stewart Bauman, an energetic youth from near Elmira, Ontario. Members of the Bethel Mennonite Church, his parents are farmers. "How did you get interested in this kind of work?" I asked.

"Through reading in *Agape*."

"*Agape?*" I queried.

"Yes, that is a VS magazine of the Mennonite Church (OM)."

Stewart works as a carpenter. Sometimes he works for nothing; at other times he is paid $4.00 an hour—a very low wage for this type of work in Tucson. "What happens when you are paid?" I asked. "Oh, the money goes to the Mennonite Board of Missions in Elkhart, Indiana."

From further probing I learned that one-year volunteers receive their transportation costs, food, housing, medical insurance—and $25 a month. Thus, their basic needs are met.

Stewart brought me a form letter which volunteers hand to those for whom they work. A part of the letter reads: "Our purpose in Tucson is to show God's love by serving the physical and spiritual needs of the people. . . . To serve him we must follow Christ's teachings daily in our lives. . . ."

> "Six months ago
> if I had been told
> about a Christian
> voluntary service
> organization,
> I would have been
> severely pressed
> to believe
> that it could
> really exist."

Welcome
MENNONITE
SERVICE
UNIT

Thus, as Stewart pushes his saw and drives nails he knows that he is witnessing for Christ in a unique—and effective way.

Marj and Bruce Weber, the married couple in the unit, are from Elmira, Ontario, and are members of the Elmira Mennonite Church. Marj works at the La Casa de Los Ninos Crisis Nursery as a secretary. The purpose of this organization is to care for neglected, abandoned, and battered children.

In addition to operating the typewriter, Marj often helps dress and scrub the three-year-olds and older who occupy the building. Here she sees the seamier side of life. Working with children whose bones have been broken by angry parents is something she does not forget.

Like others, Marj and her husband were influenced to become volunteers by the testimonies of friends who had spent a year or two in this type of work.

Another secretary in the group is Carol Lichti from Stratford, Ontario. "How did you get interested in this work?" I enquired.

"Oh, I had cousins who volunteered," she replied with her attractive smile.

A member of the Maple Grove Mennonite Church near Stratford, Carol has several intriguing jobs. One of these is doing the typing for a professor on extended leave from Fuller Seminary, who is writing a textbook; and another job is keeping the office going at the House of Samuel.

The House of Samuel is a faith school set up on the outskirts of Tucson designed to teach neglected children. Among the students are thirty to forty Indian children from various tribes. Keeping books and typing in a cramped office ensconsed in a trailer surrounded by mountains and desert, Carol has the deep satisfaction of knowing that she is helping many an impoverished boy or girl to have a better chance in life.

That Carol feels deeply rewarded, even though she receives no pay, is evidenced by her inward and outward radiance.

Keeping the Tucson unit going costs money, and if all the volunteers work for nothing there is a problem. Food has to be purchased and utility bills have to be paid. Moreover, the volunteers cannot expect the board of missions to underwrite all of their bills. After all, there are scores of similar units. The solution to this problem falls on the shoulders of another volunteer—Kathy Moshier of the Maumberg Mennonite Church at Groghan, New York.

Kathy works at Tucson Medical Center for wages. All of these wages are used to pay bills. Like the other volunteers Kathy receives a minimum allowance from the Mennonite board.

Although her work is different Kathy feels as involved as any of the other workers. In addition her work is satisfying—and dramatic. She is employed in the coronary unit where emergency cases are routine. A while back one man, apparently crazed with sedatives, grabbed her stethosope and tried to strike her. At this moment one of her patients is awaiting a heart transplant.

There is an obvious happiness in the VS unit. When I went over to take pictures for this article I found most of them vigorously sanding a piano. "What are you going to do with it when it is finished?" I asked.

No one seemed to know. Nevertheless, they were having a happy time assuming that that piano has useful days ahead of it.

A favorite passage of Scripture with the volunteers is 1 John 3:16-18 as it appears in the *General Epistles* by Clarence Jordan. *Christ laid down his life for us and taught us what love really is. So we too should lay down our lives for the brothers. Now if somebody who has material things sees his brother in need then padlocks his concern for him, how does the love of God stay in him? My little ones, let's not talk about love, let's not sing about love. Let's put love into action and make it real.*

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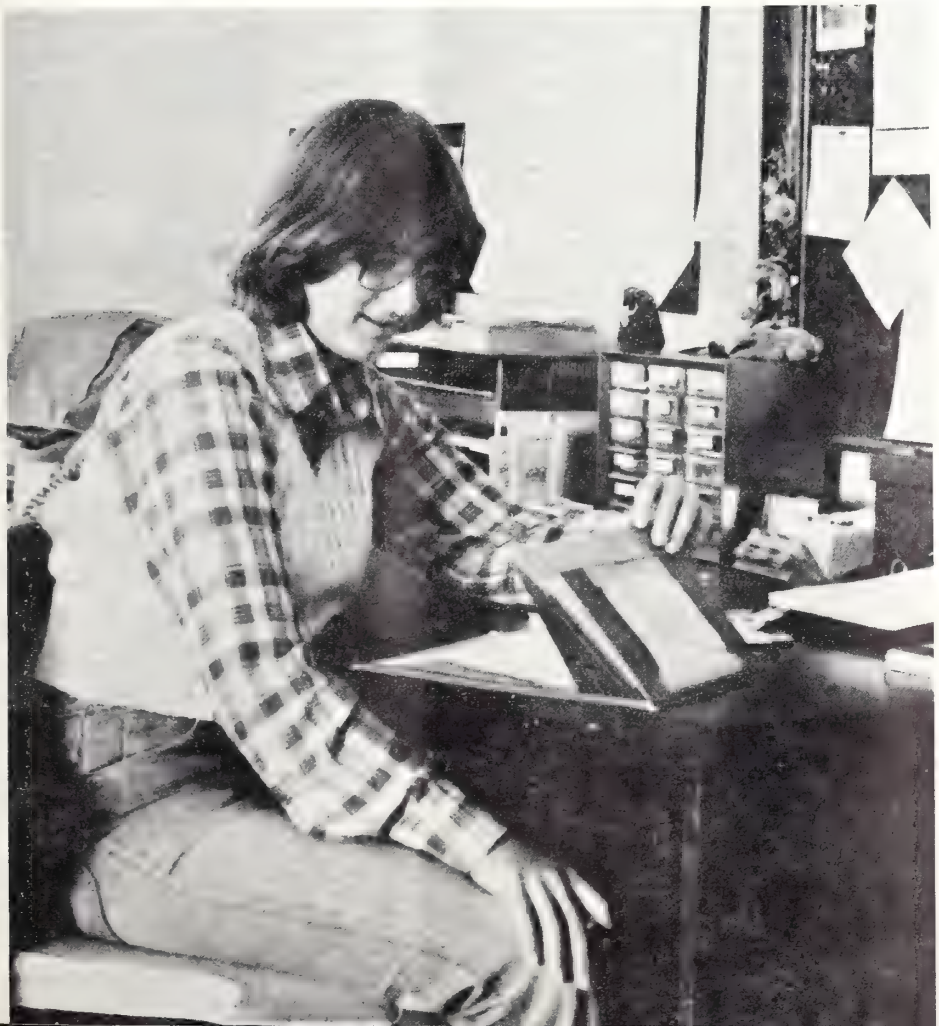


Stewart Bauman stands with the Tucson VS unit sign.

Marj Weber at work in the La Casa de Los Ninos Crisis Nursery

Peace churches represented by Ediger, Hill, Zimmerman

Ten Flats protesters to go on trial; others waive testimony

At a pretrial conference held August 1 in Golden, Colorado, an agreement was reached to allow ten out of sixty-five Rocky Flats demonstrators to stand trial for the entire group. The trial begins November 13 in Golden.

The conference was held before Judge Kim Goldberger, and attended by the defendants, their attorneys, and prosecuting lawyers from the Jefferson County district attorney's office.

According to the agreement only ten of the sixty-five defendants will testify. The others waive their right to speak and testify. They will also accept the verdict given to the ten. Three of the ten are members of historic peace churches.

Since April 29 antinuclear demonstrators have been blockading the railroad tracks leading into the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant situated northwest of Denver. Every five to ten days a supply train moves in and out of the plant. On these occasions the persons blockading the tracks are arrested.

Although more than 200 arrests have occurred, most individuals have been released with a summons. Some have pleaded guilty to the charges. One common charge is that of trespassing on Department of Energy property. Classified as a petty offense this infraction carries a maximum penalty of six months in jail and a $500 fine. The other charge is blocking a thoroughfare, in this case, the Rio Grande Railroad. This is classified as a misdemeanor and has a maximum penalty of six months in jail and a $750 fine.

Many of the demonstrators have pleaded not guilty to the charges, and some, depending on where the arrest occurred, face both charges.

The three peace church defendants are Peter Ediger, Bob Hill, and Jean Zimmerman. Ediger is copastor of the Arvada (Colorado) Mennonite Church; Hill is a teacher and member of the Arvada congregation; and Zimmerman, whose home is in Indiana, is a homemaker and a member of the Church of the Brethren.

The other members of the group of ten are Nancy Doub, Boulder (Colorado) homemaker; Daniel Ellsberg, San Francisco (California) antinuclear lecturer; Jack Joppa, Colorado resident; Skye Kerr, nurse in Boulder; Ellen Klaver, Boulder environmentalist; Anna Koop, Catholic nun in Denver; and Roy Young, Boulder geologist.

How will the case be argued? Steve Silvern, one of the defense attorneys, said in a telephone interview August 30 that one of Colorado's statues—the "choice of evils" law—provides a base for defense. In essence the law states that if there is an imminent public danger then an individual is justified in breaking the law, if breaking the law causes less danger than the harm the person is trying to prevent.

Silvern, Tim Correll, Bob Miller, and several additional lawyers will be acting for the defense. They have been donating their time in court appearances for the defendants and have also taken on the November 13 case gratis.

During the pretrial conference Judge Goldberger agreed to let the defense call in expert witnesses. The Rocky Flats Truth Force, which has maintained the witness at the nuclear weapons plant, wants to have nuclear experts testify, as well as church leaders, and the director of the Jefferson County health department. The Rocky Flats nuclear plant is located in Jefferson County.

"To do this," noted Peter Ediger, "we will need donations to cover the expenses of travel, and also various court expenses."

Gary Zimmerman, husband to Jean, one of the ten defendants, estimated during a telephone interview August 23 that the trial could last a week, and expenses could total ten to fifteen thousand dollars.

However, it will not be known until the trial begins whether Judge Goldberger will allow the jury to hear the testimony of the expert witnesses, although he has agreed to hear them himself, and then consider the applicability of the "justification" defense to the trial after a review of the testimony.

During the interval until the trial date, and also throughout the winter, the Rocky Flats Truth Force intends to keep a vigil at the railroad tracks.

On August 6 and 9 (Hiroshima and Nagasaki commemorative days) the Rocky Flats group staged "die-ins" on the access roads to the nuclear plant. About seventy people were arrested. According to Ediger about ten to twenty persons are at the tracks during the night, and about half that number during the day. The demonstrators are arrested when a train comes, and released only after the train has left the plant, if they are first-time offenders. However, if the demonstrators have had a previous arrest they will be in violation of a condition on their bonding which prohibits them from reappearing at Rocky Flats subject to forfeiture of their bonds. These persons are imprisoned and have to pay a higher bond prior to being released.

Recently the nonprofit Social and Economic Analysis Corporation of Boulder was promised a research grant to study the economic conversion of Rocky Flats. Whether there is a causal relation between the government funding and the witness of the last four months is not known.

The Rocky Flats Truth Force maintains an office at 972 Pleasant, Boulder, Colorado 80302. *Vic Reimer*

History contest winners chosen

Winners of the second Mennonite history contest for high school students have been announced by Herta Funk on behalf of the Heritage Committee.

Judges Jim Juhnke, Alvin Beachy, and Gladys Goering stated they were impressed with the grasp of Mennonite history shown by the contestants.

In the grades seven-through-nine category first prize was awarded to Jenny Von Gunten of Winnipeg, Manitoba, for her essay, "My Bernese Swiss Heritage." Paul Schrag of Newton, Kansas, won second prize for his paper titled "From Bern to Kansas." There were two third prize winners: Bernd Janzen of Newton, Kansas, wrote on the topic "Anabaptism Isn't Easy," and Michael Voth of Inman, Kansas, discussed "The Movement of the Mennonites."

In the grades ten-through-twelve division first prize was awarded to Charlotte Rempel of Winnipeg, Manitoba, for her biographical sketch, "The Life of Dietrich Wiebe." Second prize went to Alan Janzen of Henderson, Nebraska, for another life story, "Biography on the Reverend A. W. Friesen." Another Winnipeg resident, Connie Braun, received third prize for her paper titled "K. H. Neufeld."

Cash prizes were awarded.

The horror of Cambodia

The terror in Cambodia (now called Kampuchea), illustrated by this shocking picture of an invading soldier driving Phnom Penh shopkeepers from their stores in 1975, recalls the beginning of a monstrous bloodbath which has since resulted in the deaths of an estimated 2.5 million people, following the communist takeover. Agencies representing Britain's Anglican, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and other churches, issued a joint statement earlier this year, condemning the atrocities occurring in Cambodia. In June the Union of American Hebrew Congregations of the United States joined in the protest by calling on the United Nations to brand Cambodia a "criminal state" for committing "genocide" against its own population. Other religious groups have voiced similar outrage. The concerns of the churches were most recently supported by the startling suggestion of Senator George McGovern (Democrat-South Dakota) asking for international military intervention into Cambodia. He termed the terrifying conditions there, "the most extreme I've ever heard of. Based on the percentage of the population that appears to have died, this makes Hitler's operation look tame."

General Board retreat to deal with aims

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—Assessing the current realities of the General Conference and projecting goals for the next five years are the foci for a meeting of conference leaders and staff persons September 22-24.

The retreat will be held at Camp Friedenswald near Cassopolis, Michigan.

Those attending will be members of the General Board, the executive secretaries, and General Board staff persons.

The retreat is to deal with broad issues, and not with program details, although a business session will be part of the meeting Saturday afternoon and evening. "I see this retreat," reflects general secretary Heinz Janzen, "as enabling the General Board members and staff to work together on a sense of direction according to their constitutional mandate to provide general oversight to conference activities and programs."

Membership on the General Board consists of representatives (sixteen in total) from each of the commissions—education, home ministries, and overseas mission—and the seminary board and six at-large members. The executive secretaries are Palmer Becker, John Gaeddert, Howard Habegger, Heinz Janzen, Ted Stuckey, and the seminary president is Henry Poettcker. Staff persons include those involved in ministerial services and publications.

There will not be a keynote speaker. Instead, each participant is preparing a written statement on the characteristics and realities of the General Conference and of goals. Prior to the retreat a findings committee will summarize the input which will then be used as a basis for discussion.

Taiwan Church works to make itself known

The Mu-Cha Mennonite Church is trying to make itself known in a growing community. Located on a quiet side lane midway between two larger streets in a new housing development in Taipei, Taiwan, the congregation of twenty-three has no shortage of challenges.

First, there is the challenge of competition. In November 1977 the Methodist church opened a one-room chapel just around the corner from Mu-Cha. The Mennonite congregation was surprised, and even discouraged, but realized that they alone were not able to reach all the people in the neighborhood.

Second, there is the challenge of growth. Over the past two years attendance in Sunday school and morning worship has increased, and twice as many people are tithing. Programming has expanded to include a junior high fellowship group, and the Saturday night youth program has grown from an English class with some Bible to a more formal meeting boasting a variety of activities including Bible studies, singing, and films. The congregation officially organized in January 1978. Members are active in the choir, Sunday school, visitation, young people's work, worship, and fellowship.

Several persons from the community have become serious inquirers during the past six months. Two of them live within a two-minute walk of the church but had not known about the congregation until an evening stroll took them by the building. They had not responded to tracts (probably tossing them out as junk mail), but they did respond to the church sign—and, says missionary Hugh Sprunger, "It must have been the guidance of the Spirit that brought them to our door."

Another challenge to be faced is leadership. Until several months ago missionaries Hugh and Janet Sprunger provided church-planting skills and pastoral leadership to the congregation. But they left Taiwan to spend a year at Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas, as missionaries-in-residence.

The prospects for a full-time minister to replace them are dim. There is concern that in this period of challenges there is a need for a leader to maintain the momentum which has evolved over the past two years. This latest challenge is also a challenge to faith, a faith that God will provide what is needed when it is needed. *General Conference News Service*

Vietnam undergoing a revolution

Editor's Note: This report is excerpted from a two-part article by Luke S. Martin of Allentown, Pennsylvania, who was Mennonite Central Committee country director in Vietnam from 1973 to 1975. Part I centers on political changes in Vietnam. Part II, to be published next week, discusses the church in Vietnam. Information for the article was taken from European, Asian, and American periodicals; Vietnam Government statements; and personal sources.

Vietnam PAYS ESCLAVES
VIVE A RESISTA AU VIETNA
thong
U TRAN

Protesters called for the respect of human rights in Vietnam during a demonstration in Paris on April 30.

It is now over three years since the Peoples' Liberation Army marched into Saigon, bringing the long war to an end. It is an appropriate time to note what has happened since April 30, 1975, and to reflect on the direction of the Vietnamese nation today.

Vietnam is undergoing a revolution—a fundamental change in political, economic, and social structures. Some persons hail the new order while others criticize it. I aim to provide information and a perspective to help the reader make a reasonable evaluation and a Christian response.

The most significant political development has been the unification of the north and south. National elections were held in April 1976 for a National Assembly that officially proclaimed the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in July 1976. The domestic policies of the state are clearly shaped and firmly guided by the Vietnam Communist party, the Marxist-Leninist party put together by Ho Chi Minh in 1930. Party membership in 1976 was just over 3 percent of the total population. Unified Vietnam has around 50 million people.

The new government chose to deal with the supporters of the old Saigon regime by a program of reeducation where the Vietnamese conflict was interpreted from a Vietnamese revolutionary and Marxist perspective. Soldiers had to report for three days of political education but military officers and high government officials studied and worked up to three years. Several thousand are still detained.

In international relations, Vietnam is doggedly independent while retaining strong ties with the Soviet Union. Vietnam relations with China have become very tense; some 100,000 Chinese left Vietnam as a result of economic reforms. Relations with Laos are so close that many see Vietnam as virtually dominating her smaller neighbor, while Cambodia and Vietnam are in conflict.

Vietnam was admitted into the United Nations in 1977 and has relations with Canada and with most western nations. Talks continue between the United States and Vietnam, but outstanding questions have thus far prevented the normalization of relations. The greatest of these is the Vietnamese insistence on US responsibility to help rebuild their devastated country.

The Association of South East Asian Nations (Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia) is against substantial economic aid to Vietnam, fearing a Vietnamese economic challenge to them.

With the end of the war, the socialist economy in the north has given attention to domestic concerns. Agriculture still employs the dominant part of the working force, mostly in agricultural cooperatives and state farms. The capitalistic industry in the south was dependent on imported raw materials, which created many problems with the collapse of the American-supported economy. Industry is now moving toward more government control but individual enterprises are still operating. Most of the agriculture in the south is still privately done.

Millions of unemployed and underemployed urban people are being urged to go to the countryside. These new areas have not been as successful as the government anticipated. New settlers frequently find inadequate housing, tools, seeds, and educational and health facilities, and return to the cities. The central government has begun a program to resettle millions from the north in new agricultural areas.

The economies of the two zones have not been completely unified, but in May the currency was standardized for all Vietnam. Bribe-taking and other governmental corruption does exist, a problem particularly frustrating to people who thought the new communist government would clean up the corruption of the past. The communist party secretariat in late 1977 reported that "at present, in both north and south Vietnam the pilfering of state properties, corruption, bribery, . . . is on an upward trend."

During the war one million tons of grain were imported yearly. This is no longer received and Vietnam has to import grain to feed its growing population. Unusually cool weather and floods in 1976 and 1977 cut rice production. Food shortage is a serious problem, and medicines are hardly available.

Economic factors are the primary motivation for persons now leaving Vietnam, which is happening at the rate of 1,500 per month. Political factors also influence some to leave.

Other persons are returning to Vietnam. A number from France have already returned, but Vietnam is not anxious to see a massive return until the problem of unemployment is largely solved.

Israeli peace movement analyzed

Recent reports appearing in American newspapers have described the growth and development of an indigenous "peace movement" in Israel known as Peace Now.

The reader is often left with the subtle impression that the Peace Now movement is a harbinger of true Israeli feelings, which will eventually force Prime Minister Begin's government into greater accommodation with the Arabs. Interestingly, most local writers, including those sympathizing with the movement, remain cynical about its ability to influence the Begin government.

These differences between the Israeli and the western interpretation of Peace Now phenomenon are partially the result of perception. Western journalists hope for a softening of Begin's ideological stance and look for signs to justify such hopes.

For all its success to date the movement remains a surprising enigma. To many its leadership is unfamiliar, its policies unclear, and its real objectives unknown. The uncommitted ask themselves: "Is it a political movement or one of conscience?"

It is trying to be both. The initiators of the movement first went public last March when 350 reserve officers in the Israeli army sent Prime Minister Begin a letter calling on him to "choose peace over territory." Begin replied to the officers individually in what they regarded as a belittling manner and the officers responded by organizing the now-famous Peace Now! rally in Tel Aviv which attracted nearly 40,000 people. The rally convinced its organizers that there was considerable popular opposition to Begin's policies.

The movement has spawned pro-Begin imitators. The Movement for a Secure Peace and other ad hoc groups have also demonstrated that they can attract similarly large crowds in support of the government's tough stand.

Peace Now began and remains a protest movement. "Our objective is to sit in critique of government policy, to act as a watchdog when the government puts artificial obstructions on the path to peace," says one of the reserve officers who signed the original letter.

As Peace Now sees it, present obstructions are the Jewish settlements being built in the occupied territories and Begin's unwillingness to consider any territorial compromise on the West Bank.

They contend that the best way to modify Begin's policies—and ultimately to replace him as prime minister—is by destabilizing the present government coalition. If Begin's position is undermined he will be forced either to accomodate the moderates in order to regain coalition support or to ally himself even closer to the religious and rightist bloc—thereby further contributing to his isolation. This would pave the way for Begin's replacement or bring new elections which would bring a more moderate coalition into power.

The movement is in the midst of a campaign to attract additional followers. Although they currently represent a surprisingly wide spectrum of opinion, the supporters are generally homogeneous with respect to background, education, and age. Almost all are of Ashkenazi (western) background.

Another problem concerning growth involves Peace Now's relationship to the opposition Labor party. The movement must avoid identification with a particular party if it is to retain its true pan-partisan appeal. Many of Peace Now's potential followers are supporters of Labor and are reluctant to identify with the movement unless it moves closer to the Labor position. The Peace Now leadership has no illusions about the Labor party's willingness to compromise on some of the basic issues. Most of the settlements in the occupied territories were built while the Labor alignment was in power.

Thus, Peace Now is in a bind: if it compromises on its policy in order to attract greater support from its natural ally, Labor, it does so at the expense of the very positions which make the movement unique.

A poll published in *Ha'aretz* on May 18 revealed that 50.4 percent of the population is "satisfied" with Begin's performance and another 21 percent is "more or less satisfied"—making a total of more than 70 percent of the country which is "more or less satisfied" with Begin's policies.

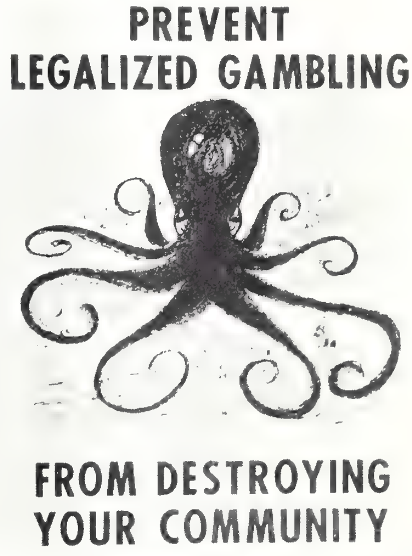
Despite the mixed odds given on the movement's chances for success, Peace Now remains a source of hope for many. "Because of the Peace Now movement, it is no longer a shame to say that you are a 'dove' in Israel," explains a movement organizer. And whatever its future, the significance of Peace Now extends beyond such expressions alone; it also says something about the nature of the support for the Begin government.

Peace Now's organizers recognize that Begin can do what he is doing only because the United States fails to publicly recognize Begin's positions as obstacles to peace. Continued token US opposition to Begin's maximalist line will only escalate the present danger.

Peace Now challenges Israelis and Americans to help create an environment in which Peace Now's logic will be made convincing to the Israeli People. *Paul Quiring, MCC West Bank.*

Words & deeds

Hague (Saskatchewan) Mennonite Church will celebrate its seventy-fifth anniversary October 7 and 8 in conjunction with its Thanksgiving services. Organizers are requesting former members and friends of the congregation to submit photos or other articles of interest. For meal and lodging reservations write to Robert Riekman, Box 447, Hague, Saskatchewan SOK 1XO.



Legalized gambling is debated. This vintage poster depicts gambling as an evil which reaches its tentacles into every aspect of community life. State governments are increasingly trumpeting legalized gambling as a means of raising revenues for education, welfare, property tax relief, law enforcement, and a multitude of other purposes. Strong opposition has come from many major Protestant churches, some Roman Catholic leaders, and Jewish groups who claim that gambling is immoral, often leading to personal misery and widespread social problems. There is no evidence legalized gambling reduces illegal gambling, according to a survey of seventeen large cities by a federal agency, Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, which supports findings of the 1976 Gambling Study Commission. These studies and others have documented the facts that legalized betting on horse races, the numbers game, lotteries, off-track betting, and casinos creates new gamblers, spurs illegal gambling and other organized-crime activities, and hits the poor the hardest. Proponents of gambling often succeed at legalizing it through wearing down the opposition by winning government sanction for only one type of gaming operation, and then expanding to other types.

Record

Workers

Officers recently elected to the executive committee at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario, are *John Giesbrecht,* chairperson; *Bill W. Dick,* vice-chairperson; *Harold Sherk,* secretary; and *Milton Good,* treasurer.

Fredrick H. Gusweiler of Cincinnati, Ohio, has been named associate professor of education at Bluffton (Ohio) College for the 1978-79 school year. He holds an MS in education from the University of Cincinnati and is completing doctoral work at Cincinnati.

Arnold and Grace Harder, First Church, Mountain Lake, Minnesota, are returning to development work in Zaire. They will be living at Mukedi Station where Arnold will be serving in a counseling role with two different church-related community development programs. They return in August.

Jacob and Gertrude Heinrichs, General Conference missionaries in Mexico for the past eighteen years, have terminated their work and moved to Winnipeg, Manitoba. Three General Conference churches of the Cuauhtemoc area in the State of Chihuahua held a farewell service for them on June 11 at the Quinta Lupita Church. Education has been the focal point of the Heinrichs' ministry, starting in Santa Clara and continuing in Steinreich, Cuauhtemoc, and Kronsgart. They have also shared pastoral duties and have been active in various Sunday school programs. The Heinrichs' plan to continue in the educational field.

Curtis R. Jahnke, president of Curtis Investment Company, Santa Barbara, California, has been appointed for a three-year term to the president's council of advisors at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

Jacquelyn S. Kinder has been appointed vice-president for nursing at Mennonite Hospital, Bloomington, Illinois, effective August 7. Kinder has served as director of the Mennonite Hospital School of Nursing for the past twelve years. She holds a PhD in education from Illinois State University in Normal.

Becky Koerner has been named loan accountant at Bluffton (Ohio) College. She is a 1970 graduate and has served as admissions counselor and dean of women at the college. From 1976 to 1978 she was comanager of the Mennonite Cooperative Bookstore in Elkhart, Indiana. In addition to her new position, Koerner has begun serving as assistant pastor of Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio, on a half-time basis.

Eleanor Mathies, Leamington (Ontario) United Mennonite Church, is returning to Paraguay August 22 after a two-year leave of absence. She will continue her work in rehabilitative therapy with leprosy patients at Kilometer 81. During her leave she enrolled in continuing courses in physiotherapy, and also worked with the Canadian Leprosy Mission. Mathies is being sent by the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission, but will work under the Mennonite Conference of Paraguay.

Gordon Nickel has been appointed assistant editor of the *Mennonite Brethren Herald* beginning in October. He replaces *Allan Siebert,* who is accompanying his wife in a year-long stint of studies in England. Nickel has attended Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, British Columbia, and graduated this spring with a degree in English from the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.

Dwight Platt, professor of biology at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, has been granted a sabbatical for the coming year to work on the revision of the prairie curriculum which he wrote in 1975, and to do general writing on natural history subjects.

Julia Quiring has been named director of nursing education at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, effective in August 1979. She is currently serving as associate professor of nursing at Rush University in Chicago. Bethel College is planning to secure several nursing faculty during the next year as the new curriculum is designed, clinical affiliations are developed, and state accreditation is sought. The first full freshman class of prenursing students will be enrolled in the fall of 1979.

Robert and Alice Ruth Ramseyer, Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Indiana, are returning to Japan to initiate a church planting effort in Hiroshima under General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission. From 1954 to 1972 the Ramseyers worked in various church planting and Christian nurture ministries in Japan. Since 1972 Robert has been director of the Overseas Mission Training Center in Elkhart, Indiana, located on the campus of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries. He will return to direct the center in 1982. They left August 23.

Earl and Ruth Roth, Grace Church, Albany, Oregon, have returned to Zaire after a two-year furlough. Their assignment is to serve as support staff—purchasing, shipping, coordinating, government relations—in the capital city of Kinshasa for the missionary and national community in the interior. They will also relate to several Mennonite congregations in the city. The Roths have worked in Zaire since 1954, and returned in August.

As part of its reorganization, Mennonite Mutual Aid has named four of its present staff to new positions. *John H. Rudy,* Goshen, has moved from director to general manager of financial services, including the Mennonite Foundation. *James Kratz,* Elkhart, director of office services since 1974, has been appointed director of administrative services. *Lamar Reichert,* Goshen, director of mutual aid services since 1961, will be responsible for mutual aid operations in health, life, and automobile programs. *Larry Welty,* Goshen, has moved from director of accounting to manager of MMA's data processing services.

Leona Schrag, First Church, Pretty Prairie, Kansas, will return to Zaire in mid-August. Since 1968 she has been active in Christian education efforts and will continue her work with the Zaire church's department of Christian education.

John K. Sheriff, associate professor of English at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, has received an Andrew W. Mellon Senior Fellowship in the Humanities for postgraduate study at the University of Kansas during the spring semester of 1979.

Recently elected to the board of directors of the Bethel Deaconess Hospital, Newton, Kansas, were *Robert Suderman,* Halstead; *Carol Claasen,* Whitewater; *John R. Suderman,* Newton; and *Eleanor Nickel,* Newton.

Kathryn Thieszen has been appointed administrative assistant of the Consortium on Peace Research, Education, and Development (COPRED) on a volunteer basis beginning in August. She will be working from Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, the new location of COPRED's national offices. Thieszen is a 1978 graduate of Bethel College with a major in German. She is the daughter of Harold and Esther Thieszen of Moundridge, Kansas.

Faculty and staff appointments at Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, British Columbia, for the 1978-79 school year include *Wally Unger,* president; *George Schmidt,* academic dean; *Sven Eriksson,* dean of students; *Arnie Froese,* dean of residence and part-time librarian; and *Dennis and Jeanne Janzen,* residence supervisors, with Dennis also heading the institute's athletic department.

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Wouldn't it be nice if you could show people in other countries the knowledge you have about farming and agriculture? There is a way, even if you can't go yourself. You can say "I Care" with your checkbook. Our agriculture missionaries overseas help farmers help themselves. That's the best way for lasting results, but it takes money. Won't you send a check so we can actively care about the plight of our brothers and sisters?

General Conference Mennonite Church
Box 347/Newton, Kansas 67114/316-283-5100
600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4

Letters

Avalanche of propaganda

Dear Editor: In the May 30 and June 6 issues of *The Mennonite* we have an avalanche of homosexual propaganda. The writers were all in agreement to the idea that the homosexual life-style is normal and acceptable. So the aim seems to be to get the average layman to agree.

Another thing of interest is the place all these writers give to God and his Word. The old saying seems to apply; "I have made up my mind, please don't confuse me with facts." Yes, not one argument in all these articles was supported by God's Word. The reason for not doing so really is that nowhere in God's Word is such a life-style encouraged; but whenever spoken of, is condemned.

In the May 30 issue, Frank Ward says, "In the Old Testament women are never prohibited from homosexual practices, although men are." However, in Romans 1:26 it says, "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature." Then verse 27 speaks about men and verse 28 says, "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient" (women and men alike).

In the June 6 issue John W. Miller argues that homosexuals are not responsible for their life-style; other experiences may have caused them to be that way. So he says being a homosexual is not a freely chosen condition by an individual. He refers to Romans 1:25 but Romans 1:24-25 makes the individual solely responsible. "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: who change the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen."

Also in the June 6 issue on the editorial page, in the article, "God Loves Gays Too," Enz shows some very childish reasoning, such as, if a child is caught doing something wrong and the parent admonishes; the child says, "But so and so is doing this and that, which is also bad." Then the parent says, "It's okay, honey, keep on doing it." Such action is all too often mistaken for love and practiced in our society. This however is a far cry from God's love. God's love does not gloss over sin or permit everything. God's love in itself contains justice and judgment.

In reading Romans 1 does it sound as if God is pleased with the life-style portrayed there and that he dearly loves those who do such things?

Then we have the letter by the two lesbian women in the June 6 issue. The very fact they did not sign their names would indicate that they are still in the closet trying to hide their sinful life-style from God and man.

They and also Frank Ward make quite a plea to have the freedom to choose their own life-style. That freedom they have and nobody can take it from them, because God has created us as free moral beings. But with this freedom God also gave us a Book of Instructions in which he plainly tells us what the consequences of different choices will be. So the choice is altogether our own, but the consequences also will be our own. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). It seems the editor is also on the fence about this homosexual bit. Maybe it would do all of us good to read and put into practice what is says in Joshua 24:14-15.

Jesus also said in Matthew 6:24 "No man can serve two masters; either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other; Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

All sin can be forgiven when confession and repentance are made, including the sin of homosexuality but to argue there is blanket forgiveness for all sin including homosexuality is not found in God's Word. *Harry Kaufman, Marion, South Dakota 57043.* June 20

Antidote for despair

Dear Editor: I find some of *The Mennonite*'s articles, editorials, and even letters an antidote for despair.

Despair seems to follow misplaced hope and unwarranted faith (idolatry?). There is, as you suggest, a tendency to place hope and faith in our government. Such a hope for "participatory democracy," a belief that the conversion of the democratic majority is possible, necessary, and effective, seems broken. This hope, however, is only one of many from "divine right" to "why not the best" which obligated the hopeful to submit to the government. The submission to evil (no government has been free of it) produces despair.

I believe that love of my fellow humans is fundamental to not only Mennonite faith but to Christ's message. If I am compelled to violate that message by hiring killers and providing weapons, I despair. For me, no charitable contribution undoes the evil I unleash by paying taxes that are used for such ends. Fortunately the practitioner of the simple life can reduce his wage and thus avoid the income tax used for evil.

The sadness caused by evil is bearable, but the despair caused by my perpetration of evil is unbearable.

My thanks to the writers for *The Mennonite* who treat despair. *Paul W. Andreas, Box 222, North Newton, Kansas 67117* June 28

From someone age 80 plus

Dear Jake Enz: Thank you for your letter in *The Mennonite* (June 6 editorial page). I am reminded of two lesbians (we didn't call them that back in the 1920s), both graduates of Bluffton College, whom, when I learned what they were doing, I shook off as friends. I am ashamed now.

They were non-Mennonites from Lima. One, who had been truly a close friend, became ill several years after graduation and died of a lingering illness. At the time I thought of it as a punishment, but as I grew older I realized God doesn't cause suffering in order to punish.

I had really forgotten my narrow attitude at the time until this issue of *The Mennonite* appeared. I really know no one now who is "gay," but I know that I need a heart of love for the many who are. *Sylvia T. Pannabecker, 410 West Elm Street, Bluffton, Ohio 45817* June 26

Need call to repentance

Dear Editor: Why is it that we seek to try to get around the judgment which God brings upon us as individuals or community (June 6 issue)? Is it really true that if "God gave them up—" (Romans 1:24, 26, 28) then this is the normal state and there is really nothing to be done about it, only to try and make the best of it; after all, God did it? Or, if it is judgment, do we show God that we know how to handle it? Do we not need light or insight that the judgment of God is upon us and that we as a people and as individuals need to repent and seek the mercy of God if we want to live? Is it not still true that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4)?

How painfully sad are the reports and commentaries that announce the "success" in dealing with the situation without repentance or a call to repentance. *Henry Dueck, R.R. 2, Leamington, Ontario* June 30

I want inspiration

Dear Editor: I have been receiving *The Mennonite* for some time. I would like to enjoy its inspiration, but somehow I cannot, especialy when reading the article of two lesbians (June 6 issue). I do not feel our Lord is pleased with even *allowing* such "testimonies" to be printed in a Christian(?) magazine.

With all the pornography we are forced to encounter every day, why must we also read this garbage? There are many other fine Christ-centered magazines coming through my mail every day. Please, why clutter my mind with such issues as *The Mennonite* printed recently? *Dorothy Loewen, 1140 Normandale Road, Bloomington, Minnesota 55437* July 4

Thanks for the courage

Dear Editor: I applaud *The Mennonite* for its courage in trying to take an honest look at homosexuality. I've read letters and articles expressing varying viewpoints. There is an awful lot of misunderstanding about the nature of homosexuality, about sexuality in general, and for Christians a lot of confusion over what the Bible seems to be saying on the subject. Certainly we wouldn't want to condone irresponsible sexual attitudes or actions, but isn't there room for more *loving and responsible* expression than we've allowed?

I recommend to anybody an excellent book, *Is the Homosexual My Neighbor?* by Letha Scanzoni and Virginia Mollenkott (available through Harper and Row). They clear up a lot of misconceptions about homosexuality, they are true to biblical authority, and they have a responsible, loving attitude toward everyone: persons of varying sexual orientation and persons of varying opinion on the subject.

I personally want to lend my support to the Mennonite lesbians who wrote an open letter to all of us in the July 6 issue of *The Mennonite*. The same goes for the gay person who wrote a letter to the editor (June 27 issue), and for others of you who choose to remain silent. They have more patience with the church than I would have in their position! Perhaps this is because they know that Christ loves them, and that eventually we will all be together in his kingdom. Let's not chase them away. We all need each other.

Who do some Christians have to *ask* for acceptance? Why do some of us insist on using the Bible as a weapon against people we don't understand? Please take the time to study what was intended by Scripture. Please be understanding of gay persons . . . to misrepresent them might be to bear false witness against your neighbor. Remember that not so long ago some very sincere Christians, who also wanted to be true to Scripture, owned slaves and did so using the Bible to back their position.

I suspect that I might receive some "hate mail" over this, but I am a "straight" Christian who is publicly putting my arms around my gay brothers and sisters in the name of Christ. I'm "coming out of the closet" in their support.

My prayer is for understanding among all of us! *Sherrie Zimbelman, 3620 North Fremont, Chicago, Illinois 60613* July 4

Advice for homosexuals

Dear Editor: After reading the June 6 issue I turned to the Bible. I've only been a *Christian* Mennonite for four of my thirty-four years.

I felt that Miller aptly fell into one or both persons described in Romans 16:18. I think our "Christian" approach to homosexuality is in the Bible.

Give a warm welcome to anyone who wants to join you, even though his faith is weak. Don't criticize him for having different ideas from yours about what is right and wrong (Romans 14:1, Living Bible). Tell them (homosexuals) of God's love for them and of his plan for salvation. The next step is up to them—acceptance. "When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. He is not the same anymore. A new life has begun!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

But there is more for the "gay" person, as with anyone else, and here seems to be the hard part. "Those who belong to Christ have nailed their natural evil desires to his cross and crucified them there" (Galatians 5:24). Have they tried? Honestly? No one said it was going to be easy.

Then there's Galatians 5:19-20: "But when you follow your own wrong inclinations your lives will produce these evil results: impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, idolatry, spiritism (that is, encouraging the activity of demons), hatred and fighting, jealousy and anger, constant effort to get the best for yourself, complaints and criticisms; the feeling that everyone else is wrong except those in your own little group—and there will be wrong doctrine." Isn't this how Smith, Russell, and Armstrong got started?

I'm beginning to see and hear "gays" as Paul did in writing in 2 Timothy 3:5: "They will go to church, yes, but they won't really believe anything they hear. Don't be taken in by people like that." Are these two lesbians the false teachers Christ spoke about in Matthew 7:15-23? I think so for their fruits seem bitter and vile.

In the "Letter from Two Lesbians" it appears to me that their concern is not of being accepted—rather it's fear of being rejected. Fear they should for we are told in 1 Corinthians how to deal with this situation: "When I wrote to you before I said not to mix with evil people. But when I said that I wasn't talking about unbelievers who live in sexual sin, or are greedy, cheats and thieves and idol worshipers. For you can't live in this world without being with people like that. What I meant was that you are not to keep company with anyone who claims to be a brother Christian but indulges in sexual sins, or is greedy, or is a swindler, or worships idols, or is a drunk and or abusive. Don't even eat lunch with such a person."

It isn't our job to judge outsiders. But it certainly is our job to judge and deal strongly with those who are members of the church, and who are sinning in these ways. God alone is the judge of those on the outside. "But you yourselves must deal with this man and put him out of your church" (1 Corinthians 5:9-13).

If you are Bible believers then read what it says about homosexuality and sexual sin and ask the Spirit for understanding and discernment. If you have trouble finding anything, read the Letter from Jude.

How are we then to treat homosexuals?

1. *Outside the church*—show them love as persons created by God and share a knowledge of the Lord and offer salvation—after that have nothing more to do with them.
2. *Inside the church*—I do not approve of letting homosexuals who continue to "do their own thing" and live in sexual sin to use the church as their sanctuary. *Paul Karstedt, 7802 South Mark Road, Canby, Oregon 97013* July 4

Sin no more

Dear Editor: This letter is in response to the articles on homosexuality.

Speaking in general terms, sinning is to "fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). More specifically, according to 1 John 3:4, "Everyone who sins breaks the law: in fact, sin is lawlessness." The very purpose of the law is to expose man's sin. Therefore what is or is not sin should be determined in light of God's law.

God has given us his law on both tables of stone through Moses and on the fleshly tables of our hearts. We can know what is sin through the writings of Moses in Exodus and Leviticus and from what our own heart or conscience tells us. Romans 2:15 says, "Since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them."

That homosexuality is a sin according to

God's law is evident. Leviticus 20:13 reads, "If a man also lie with mankind as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them."

The New Testament also is a witness against homosexuality. We read in Romans 1:26-27 that because of godlessness and wickedness, "God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion."

Now the question is, can a brother, one who is born of God, be a homosexual? A better question is, could he live in or continually practice sin? First Corinthians 9:10 says that homosexuals will not "inherit the kingdom of God." We also read in 1 John 3:6 that "no one who lives in him keeps on sinning."

So then, while a child of God might commit a sin, even a homosexual sin, he could not continue to live in his sin. One who claimed to be a brother but continued to live in sin felt no guilt or remorse, and therefore never repented, could not be a child of God. We are not saved by our works but our works are evidence of our spiritual condition (Luke 6:45, 1 John 3:7-10).

If a brother has committed a sin of homosexuality or some other gross sin, how should the church react? Paul instructs the Corinthians to "hand this man over to Satan," and in verse thirteen, "expel the wicked man from your number" (1 Corinthians 5).

But what about forgiveness? And what will result from expelling a brother from our number? We find in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, chapter two, that the one who was expelled was made sorry because of his punishment. In other words he sorrowed unto repentance. Then Paul instructed the Corinthians to forgive their brother. Repentance and forgiveness, in that order, are also set forth by our Lord in Luke 17:3. "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him."

How can the church show love to the brother who has sinned? From Proverbs 13:24 we read that a loving father chastens his son. Hebrews 12:16 says, "The Lord disciplines those whom he loves and punishes everyone he accepts as a son." So we too can show our love to a brother who has sinned by punishing him so that he will repent, be forgiven, and come back into a right relationship with God and his people. (New Testament quotes are from the New International Version; Old Testament quotes are from the King James Version.) *Kim Coursey, Route 3, Box 17, Versailles, Missouri* July 4

Against "gays", for Graham

Dear Editor: I came to the conclusion sometime ago that in trying to win someone to Christ, I will never give them *The Mennonite* to read.

They would think that the only sin was fighting a war or paying war taxes, and that almost any other sin goes. We just have to love and accept the sinner into the church.

I agree completely with A. W. Ratzlaff (June 27 issue) on the subject of "gays", which is a misnomer if there ever was one, since there can't be that much gaiety in their lives.

I realize that "gays" are mostly the result of their upbringing and most of them have homosexuals leanings through no fault of their own. They should certainly try, through asking God's help and psychological treatment, to change their preferences.

Their inclinations aren't the sin, but fulfilling their inclinations certainly is, as the Bible plainly states in Romans 1:21-32.

Though I may be considered an old fogey at sixty-four, I believe that premarital sex is a sin, as did most of my generation. We had the sexual drive as well as this generation but we kept it under control until after marriage. So should a homosexual (with God's help) keep these feelings under control.

I certainly feel sorry for them and pray for them but I do not condone their practices.

The following is in answer to Bob Ross of Dallas, Texas (June 20 issue). You say you use drugs to come closer to your "god." He must be of the devil. Jesus very plainly states, "I am the way the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

There is no way you can come to God through mind-altering drugs.

We are not condemning your beliefs; it is God who condemns them. We only know what is right and what is wrong by studying his book.

Where did you get your information that the Holy Spirit lives in others besides Christians? There are other spirits who live in people which are certainly not of the Lord.

Sometimes *The Mennonite* has criticized Billy Graham. In the April 25 issue the article "Children of Broken Churches" condemns criticizing the preacher. Why not be consistent?

The articles about Graham not spending enough time relating to social needs, should note Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Corinthians 12: 8-28, telling us God called some to be evangelists, some pastors, some teachers. The early church was told to appoint deacons to take care of the social needs of the church.

I am sure Billy Graham knows what the Lord has called him to do better than any of us, though I received literature from him which stated that they had already sent $238,000 to the victims of the terrible storms in India, and that they were sending more.

He was also criticized for socializing with the president of the Philippines. Didn't Christ also eat with publicans and sinners? How else do we win them? *Mrs. Dorothy Liechty, 306 Hoosier Street, Berne, Indiana 46711* July 10

Too lenient or too cruel

Dear Editor: There has been quite a discussion in both *The Mennonite* and the *Mennonite Weekly Review* regarding homosexuals; but it seems to me there are some angles that have not been touched. To be homosexual is not normal, of course, but is it always the fault of the homosexual? I have not had any experience along that line. How can I tell?

Perhaps taking examples from other areas will throw some light on the question. It is normal to have good vision and be able to see God's beautiful world, but some people are born blind. It is normal to hear the voices of loved ones and touching music, but some people are born deaf. It is normal to jump and skip but some people are born crippled.

Do we blame any of them? But the Israelites in Bible times evidently did, else the disciples would not have asked Jesus, "Who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?" And in the Old Testament (Leviticus 21:18) no one was permitted to serve in the tabernacle if he was blind or lame or had a broken nose or any extra fingers or toes or had a broken hand or a humped back or was a dwarf or had a defect in his eyes or had pimples or scabby skin or even imperfect testicles. Today we would hardly take any of these into consideration when ordaining a minister or a missionary. We do not pay any attention either to the mixture of fibres in our clothes, but the Israelites were told (Leviticus 19:19) "Nor shall there come upon you a garment made of two kinds of stuff."

We would not expect commands from God, as the Israelites claimed to receive repeatedly, to avenge themselves on their enemies and to kill every last person.

It seems to me we must listen to God's voice as it comes to us through the twentieth century to people of our day and not only to those of the first century and the centuries before Christ. I would rather err on the side of being too lenient towards the homosexual than on the side of being too cruel. *Marie J. Janzen, Box 205, North Newton, Kansas 67117* July 10

Meditation

What do you see?

An interesting thought just came to me as I saw my flashlight on the counter and wondered if I even needed to take it with me. You see, when I began taking walks at night, I didn't give it a thought; I automatically took my flashlight along so I could *see the way*. Though I continued to take it along I used it less and less until I didn't use it at all anymore—just packed it along with me. Without the light on it seemed I could see and enjoy so much more—the outline of the trees and fenceposts, the mountains in the distance, shadows cast across the way, the hilltop just ahead, the warm glow of the lights in my neighbors' homes, and the white of Maggie's tail curled up over her back, waving happily from side to side. I cannot help but believe that in using my flashlight I was limiting myself to seeing the "way" and missing the thrill and peace of the exclusively night beauties around me.

Maybe I've been missing other quiet beauties in my life because of the lights along the way, beauties like the gentle touch of a friend in the crowds of the day; the warmth and strength of a quiet place alone amid the clamor of daily duties; the peaceful valleys among the majestic mountains; the longing eyes of a little child in a school full of faces; a kitten; a buttercup; that still small voice . . .

Ruth Ann Hiebert

Images we project

The classified ad section in a college newspaper recently carried the following announcement: **For Sale:** *75 pound, genuine leather-backed stone tablet Bibles. Good for holding heathens down while you save their filthy souls. First twenty copies autographed by author. Write: Christ-o-matic, Zion, Illinois.*

Apparently written as a joke on a segment of the campus Christians, frequently called "The God Squad," the ad does perhaps reveal to Christians the image that we are projecting. Whoever originated the above hoax may well have been given up for "lost" by resident Christians for not believing just as they did. Or perhaps not a believer at all, this person had been treated by the student evangelists as a filthy heathen. We can only speculate as to the origin of the hoax.

It is a fact, however, that we Christians in our zeal sometimes forget that those outside the church were also created by God, and in forgetting this we sometimes project unlovely images of what Christ's disciples are like. Would not true disciples love those who differ from them, rather than holding heathens down while saving their filthy souls?

Anthony R. Epp

Two symbols

Coming out of the sanctuary one Sunday morning, I passed the hall table. On the table someone had placed a Bible and beside the Bible—a hammer. Incongruous as these items seemed, and I certainly don't mean that they are equal, it occurred to me that here was a lovely symbolism. Mennonite missionaries, ministers, and laypeople carry Bibles; PAX, MCC, and MDS workers carry hammers and other such tools.

The items were soon reclaimed; their owners oblivious to the still-life setting they had momentarily created. A Bible and a hammer—two tools for spreading God's love.

Elsie Stucky

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CONTRIBUTORS

Roberta Mohr, Route 2, Bluffton, Ohio 45817, wrote her poem after attending a conference.

Menno Wiebe works with Native Concerns for MCC (Canada), 1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8.

Kim H. France, 7839 South Shore, Chicago, Illinois 60649, is a free-lance poet.

Charles Ludwig, 7217 East 30th Street, Tucson, Arizona 85710, is a frequent writer for Mennonite publications.

Paul Quiring has just completed a four-year term as MCC program director on the West Bank. Quiring is currently director of West Coast MCC in Reedley, California.

Ruth Ann Hiebert, Compton, Arkansas 72624, is a schoolteacher. This is her first article in *The Mennonite.*

Anthony R. Epp, 7424 Holdrege, Lincoln, Nebraska 68505, has written meditations for us before.

Elsie Stucky lives at 3748 Fremont, Topeka, Kansas.

Because of the backlog of letters received during the summer, we continue to give them extra space.

CREDITS

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The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Emergency

Everything seemed to be going fine. The summer schedule was on target. We were enjoying the usual vacation company.

On Wednesday morning, July 19, after a sleepless night which I considered the consequence of a severe flu, I agreed to go the emergency station at our local hospital. Perhaps they could give me something to settle down my "angry" stomach and a pulsating headache. That would probably let me fall asleep and get through this bout with the virus.

When the emergency staff saw me and tested my symptoms, I have never seen a staff swing into action faster. Before I realized what was going on, I was horizontal and was totally (well, it felt that way) covered with wires, tubes, and other hospital paraphernalia. I wondered about this response but felt too miserable to object.

After at least five doctors in a row (Penner, Bhayana, Tanner, Davidson, and there were others whose names I never caught) had tried to talk to me and each one asked questions, it became clear that they were afraid of it being a stroke in process. They were taking every possible precaution to cope with a heart problem.

I was hospitalized and closely observed, X-rayed and tested for three days. My feeding was intravenous and a gastric pump kept my stomach empty.

The results all agreed; there was no heart problem. That was a welcome message.

But why the panic in the first place? I had not come in because of a heart ailment; I thought I had the flu.

Our doctor explained to me, before I was discharged, that my symptoms had been too similar to a stroke for them to be ignored. He said, "Your case had us scared out of our wits for a while; we didn't know how to treat it." Apparently some intestinal blockages have almost identical reactions to a heart attack. They believe now that it was an intestinal obstruction but were unable to discern the cause. I was asked to continue some tests at the clinic.

It was a serious reminder and a good lesson. We never know when our time on this earth may be up. When I realized their attitudes in the emergency room, I suddenly thought of many unfinished conversations. I wanted still to tell many people about God's love and care for them, and I wanted so much to be able to demonstrate God's care with my own love and care. For at least a while I will be more careful not to put off such opportunities.

I also thought about my family. Had I made adequate preparations for their future? Had we discussed enough about death that they would be able to cope? We need to talk more freely about this eventual fact.

Among the other patients that I saw, I felt that many were afraid and lonely. They were hungering for affirmation, love and also spiritual nourishment. In our busy workaday schedules, do we really give enough time to the sick? I was reminded of James 1:27, "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world." These people weren't necessarily orphans or widows, but they are people in need.

I was deeply moved by the compassion of doctors, nurses, and other hospital staff. We hear of carelessness, malpractice, and indifference; but my experience was regular, honest reporting, frequent checks on my welfare, and a readiness to go the "second mile" on the part of most people in the healing team.

By Sunday, July 23 I was preaching in our home church and Monday I was back at the office. Somehow the three days' emergency experience seemed remote and unreal. But it happened.

As I think about it today, I know that God isn't finished with me yet. He has given me more time in his beautiful world. This time of living is a gift and a heritage—opportunity and responsibility. I thank God for each day he gives me. It is my prayer that my life and work will be a faithful stewardship of his gift.

One day the emergency will come again—for you and for me—and one time we will not recover. All of us will one day die. Now is the accepted time; now is the opportunity. Let us put our "houses" in order—be open about death in our families—and also put our discipleship into practice—the fields are white unto harvest—while we are strong and healthy.

Somehow I recall no fear at any time. The Lord's presence was with me. That assurance has deepened my faith. *Bernie Wiebe*

The Mennonite
Overseas Mission
Edition

encompass

SEPTEMBER 12, 1978

Lesotho – Should We Be Involved?

Opportunities can be found. They are already waiting. The question comes in two parts: are we the ones to meet the needs, and are we able to meet the needs?

Robert W. Gerhart

Lesotho is a beautiful corner of God's world—the setting for peace and solitude, marvellous sunsets, and unbelievable rainbows. Much of this mountain kingdom, the highest nation on earth by virtue of its highest "low elevation," was originally limited to summer grazing of cattle and later sheep. Today, land that should still be limited to seasonal grazing as high alpine pasture, is grazed year round and extensively cultivated as well, with devastating erosion as a result. The creeping fingers of the *dongas,* or deeply eroded gullies, are mute testimony to the pressure on the land by a population that has grown from the quarter million a century ago to the 1.3 million of today.

Surrounded by the Republic of South Africa and Transkei, Lesotho survives as an entity because of the large section of the population that works in South Africa for varying lengths of time, primarily in the mining and agriculture industries, and by the heavy dosages of development aid money given and loaned by a variety of nations and organizations. Until recently earnings sent home by labor outside Lesotho exceeded the entire gross domestic product. Mine labor earnings alone provided much of the basis for a cash economy in large areas of the land.

Since the country lacks extensive mineral resources and is limited in viable agricultural land, the long term view for Lesotho is bleak. But a courageous determination to survive as a people, and a continuing optimism, albeit largely dependent on aid, characterizes the Basotho nation.

How does the Church fit into such a Situation?

The history of the Christian church and the history of the nation are practically one. The first missionaries arrived within nine years of the founding of the Basotho nation more than 150 years ago by Moshoeshoe the Great (pronounced: Mo-shway-shway). Those first missionaries used a necessary strategy of working directly with and through the Paramount Chief's household since they had been invited by him in the first place. Always sympathetic, Moshoeshoe himself made a profession of faith toward the end of his life in 1870.

Early Mission Efforts

The early mission efforts of the Paris Evangelical Mission Society (PEMS), the Anglicans, and the Roman Catholics resulted in the three largest and most influential churches today, including the Lesotho Evangelical Church, a Presbyterian-type church that grew out of PEMS. Other groups—Methodist, A.M.E., Assembly of God, and several much smaller groups—together make up a relatively small part of the total church membership. Approximately two-thirds of the Basotho claim one of the branches of Christianity as their faith. This includes the African Independent Churches (AIC's), who in Lesotho are rather weak and few in numbers compared to neighboring countries. Deep loyalties to clan, church, and political viewpoints have made interdenominational endeavors virtually non-existent or difficult at best.

Mennonite Missions

The Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) and the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) came on the scene in 1973 with explorations conducted in several areas. MCC has placed teachers in both church-operated and government schools and provided personnel for the Lesotho Christian Council, two nurses' training programs, the fisheries department of the Ministry of Agriculture, and both public and private health organizations.

AIMM used the Mophato, a youth training and conference center operated by the Lesotho Evangelical Church, as a base for its first couple, the Allen Busenitzes. Their assignment included develop-

Lesotho herd boys and their little brothers

Mosotho horseman

The only way to hospital and town. Someday, maybe a bridge-----

ing youth and student Bible studies and explorations for wider involvements on the part of both AIMM and MCC.

A second rather unusual opportunity opened with the request to AIMM for pastoral leadership at the Maseru United Church, an English-medium, multi-racial, and international congregation that was struggling to survive. The Robert Gerharts were placed here in 1974. Additional contacts were made and more open doors disclosed both through the now growing group and beyond.

As a next step, Stan and Lorri Nussbaum of Fort Wayne, Indiana, were sent to develop Bible teaching ministries in village settings primarily designed for African Independent Churches and their pastoral training. Most of these ministers are without training and unable to leave their homes and churches to attend traditional type training schools. Since his arrival in March 1977, Stan has pioneered in using creative teaching methods including the utilization of visual aids rather than depending on extensive reading.

Agriculture and Evangelism

Most recently the open door of a combined ministry of agriculture with evangelism-Bible study is being pursued with the arrival of John and Tina Bohn. This is an attempt to apply sound principles on a small-scale, village-based approach. Plans also include the importance of having such a project be related to the local church, possibly an Independent Church group.

Additional qualified persons could be used almost immediately in village-based Bible classes-pastoral training. There are continuing needs for a simple-to-produce Sunday school curriculum in Sesotho, for visual aids, for temperance education materials, for student ministries both on primary and secondary levels, and for basic Bible study materials for adult groups. Much of this requires proficiency in the Sesotho language, a factor that delays responding to these needs. Time—to understand problems, to get to know people, to assimilate histories and cultures—is needed by those who seek to meet the needs. But patience is also required on the part of the sending constituency, patience while the language is being absorbed, when there is little to show for the investment, in delays and changes that are inevitable in being available to local leadership.

Can We Meet the Needs?

As Mennonites in general or AIMM in particular, are we the persons that must meet these needs? We have no historical obligations to this part of Africa. It was pioneered by others. We cannot lay the foundation or even, in many places, plant the seed. But if we are willing to build on the foundations already laid or water the seed already planted and not be concerned about who gets the credit when God gives the increase, we may have a role that is needed. For we come without previous identity, not tied to past divisions or feelings or mistakes. We can come as Paul declared to the Corinthians, "We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor. 4:5). If we are willing to lose some of our denominational identities in order to be servants to Christ and His Church, while maintaining the biblical and doctrinal distinctives, there remains a reason for our presence. No, we may not be the sure-all and end-all, by any means, to the complex problems or deep divisions that the Lesotho churches face. But we can be brothers and sisters with gifts and perspectives, willing to assist believers to be the church in their corner of the world. Yes, there is reason for us to be involved here.

But are we able? That depends on whether or not we are able to make the sacrifices necessary in sending and going. An assisting ministry is not nearly as dramatic or productive of success stories as one where we can be completely in charge and control our own programs. It is easier to preach ourselves, but that will not last very long in this situation. Nor will we be able to stall indefinitely in responding to requests here when the holdup is the lack of personnel or funds "back home."

Lesotho *is* a land of opportunity—*if* we are ready to respond.

NEWEST COLOMBIA CHURCH CELEBRATES REAFFIRMATION

Membership in the Mennonite Community of Chapinero in Bogota is not a "once and forever" situation. Rather, those persons who desire to continue to be part of the community annually reaffirm their interest, intention, and consecration to God and their fellow believers.

More than eighty persons were present in the church-in-the-home setting on May 28 when the Community celebrated its first anniversary. Gerald Stucky writes that "it was heart-searching as well as heart-warming" to hear the people, one after the other, tell of their relationship to the community and to God, "and then see them sign their names on the membership charter." The three-and-a-half-hour meeting was climaxed with the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Since the Community meets in a fourth floor apartment and scarcely fits into an ordinary sized livingroom, there is deep concern about the future program of the group. It would appreciate prayer support from others of God's people.

COLLEGE INTER-TERM PROGRAM IN COLOMBIA

Each January young people from Bethel, Bluffton, Kansas Wesleyan, and Manchester Colleges enthusiastically participate in a college inter-term program operated by Peter Stucky, son of Colombia missionaries Gerald and Mary Hope Stucky. The students gain an appreciation of the problems of Latin America as they study and observe the Colombian way of life. Professors from Bethel and Bluffton have also participated in the program.

Information concerning this study can be obtained in the participating colleges or from Peter Stucky, Apdo Aereo 53-024, Bogota, Colombia.

After One Hundred Years –

Has Christianity Made an Impression?

It is a warm, humid evening before our departure from Taiwan. The people in the market are still busy selling. The temples are still graced with some visitors. Numerous taxis (I counted thirty at one intersection) are still looking for passengers. The crowded buses are hurrying down their routes. Small children are playing close to their mothers and/or fathers who are operating small shops.

Yes, people are alive and active in their day to day living.

As the last article is packed, the last cupboard emptied, the last floor washed, I wonder, what can I share with you from the many experiences which were ours in this academic year spent in Taipei, the capital city of Taiwan?

The gospel of Jesus Christ has been in this province for a little more than one-hundred years. When I see the numerous shrines and temples I ask myself, "Has Christianity made a dent or even a scratch into the belief system of the people?"

Let me tell you about one person I met who has been influenced by the gospel and in turn is influencing others.

Her name is Carol Chou Adams. Born in Taiwan, she is a fourth generation Christian. Her grandmother already experienced the Christian liberating of women and as a result attended the Theological College in Tainan. Carol's mother also graduated from Tainan Theological College and Carol attended two years. Then she left for the United States of America and graduated some years later from the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.

She is the first Taiwanese to be sent to her native country as a theological educational missionary by the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the first P.C.U.S. missionary to be ordained by a national church—the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan.

Carol Chow Adams

Carol says her challenge is "to find my identity in a multicultural setting, and to bring Chinese culture and the Chinese way of life into the content, method, and theory of Christian education in order to lead people into a better understanding and experience of the Christian faith and life."

It has been interesting getting to know Carol. We have had many good times together and enjoyed rich fellowship, whether we have been shopping together, eating together, or having her serve her first communion in Taiwanese.

Just as the city is busy, likewise many national Christians, like Carol, are industriously preparing classes, sermons, Bible studies, and so forth, so that the church of Jesus Christ can grow and mature.
Jeanette Janzen Neufeld

(Joe and Jeannette Neufeld served as visiting professors at the Presbyterian seminary in Taipei for one year. They live in Regina, Saskatchewan.)

Encouraging Signs at Fukuoka

As long as you can see a house going up before your eyes and you are deeply involved in making plans for new outreach, it is easy to detect progress, for everything is visible. "Now that our work has become more routine again," writes George Janzen of Fukuoka, Japan, "we sometimes wonder just what progress, if any, is being made."

Although attendance at the regular meetings of the Fukuoka church fellowship has not been growing and the distribution of literature and invitations to more than 1,000 apartments brings only a negligible response, there have been encouraging signs of interest in Christianity in the Hill of Blessing city.

A Sunday school has been launched. Martha Janzen has been taking the lead in this, but increasingly Japanese friends have been lending assistance. "We are highly pleased with this development," say the Janzens.

A married lady has opened her home in the eastern sector of the city for cottage meetings. This was totally unforeseen earlier, since all indications for working in the western sector of the city were more favorable than elsewhere. Every Friday morning co-pastors George and Nomura sensei go to the home for Bible study, prayer, and singing. They hope to expand this witness through wider publicizing.

Baptism is anticipated in the Kurume household in western Fukuoka, where Bible study and prayer meetings are continuing.

Teaching English at the large Baptist university is a special opportunity for George. "I face about 100 students a week and enjoy the work," he states.

"Perhaps our biggest joy is Mr. Ishiya," concludes George. This young man has just resigned from an excellent job, "something you just don't ever do in Japan—a job he thoroughly enjoyed, in order to pursue the Christian ministry. In an English class last week he volunteered: 'I want to study the Bible and prepare myself to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to my people.' That was encouraging indeed."

My Aim Is to Help!

In reflecting upon the twenty-five years of my usefulness, I have reason to rejoice. I have had numerous opportunities to assist those who needed a lift with their financial burdens. A whole array of persons, in as colorful an assortment of vocations, has found in me a source of help. These persons include farmers, weavers, gardeners, carpenters, drivers, clerks, printing press men, teachers in the primary school, teachers in the high school, cleaning women at the hospital, night watchmen, cooks, evangelists, pastors, chaplain, doctor, nurses. I have helped them buy, rent, or register land, build or repair houses, dig and bind wells, procure work animals, and in a couple of exceptions, have helped young people in vocational training. One of these young men has rendered a commendable service as a veterinary in the dangerous robber-inhabited areas of Bastar state.

My success in life has been due to wise controls and limits placed on my operations. My loans were granted to those who promised to repay in full within a year. Someone with sufficient financial means signed the bond as guarantor, in case default for any reason became an issue. The repayment of the loan was made easier by a systematic monthly payment rather than in a lump sum at the end of the year. No one was permitted to have more than three loans, so that more could benefit from my help. For valid reasons, no loans were given for weddings.

The objective of this loan arrangement was to help people help themselves. Many found it possible to build their own homes, purchase land to support their families more adequately, dig wells for a good water supply, possess one's own work animals or buy tools and implements for gardening and field work. As a result of good water supply, many have begun gardens and are making a good income from them, as well as having fruit and vegetables for family use.

When, where, and how did my pilgrimage of usefulness begin? A young man had a vision and a heart to help the ordinary man in need. After a five-year term of service in India, working shoulder to shoulder with the common man, he left a sum of Rs. 6,000 as an expression of gratitude to God and concern for his fellowmen. This became a revolving fund, and has been administered by the missionaries on the Jagdeeshpur station. On this my twenty-fifth anniversary, I am stepping out into a new venture. I will be guided by the same time-tested and workable guidelines as heretofore, but as of April 10, 1978, I am being administered by the Bharatiya General Conference Mennonite Church, through its Stewardship Committee.

In the twenty-five years of my activity, I have helped 133 different persons. The initial amount of Rs. 6,000 has, as a revolving fund, benefitted people to the extent of more than Rs. 68,000. The loss in default is minimal—a mere Rs. 547.

Many call me blessed. My name is Schrag Loan Fund. *Helen Kornelsen*

IGLESIA CRISTIANA MENONITA
BIENVENIDOS
CULTOS

Sign at new church will still say, "Welcome"

NEW STRUCTURE FOR IBAGUE CONGREGATION

Members of the Mennonite Church in Ibague, Colombia, are engaged in erecting a modern sanctuary, parsonage, and educational building. The total structure should be adequate for about 200 persons and will cost approximately $50,000 or 1,800,000 pesos. The congregation has received a loan of $35,000 from Church Extension Services and hopes to repay the money within ten years.

Jaime Caro, the pastor, is also Executive Secretary of the Mennonite churches in Colombia.

INVITATION FROM THE VICTORY CROWD

Susan Martens

Four staff members gathered in my nursing office at Hwalien Christian Hospital on a particular September afternoon. The doors closed quietly. Then the purpose of the meeting was announced: "Pray for my father. He is losing weight, coughing—he is not a Christian." The concern of Mrs. Wu, department head of hospital housekeeping, was taken to the heavenly Father. Amazing as it may seem, now and then some persons have the assurance that "it will come to pass." Mr. Lin's discharge took place after several weeks.

The months passed into November. Then Mr. Lin was again admitted with chronic cough and fever. A lapse of quiet days followed. Again the cough increased and his appetite waned. More and more family members were making more frequent visits, among them Mr. and Mrs. Wu. (Both are active members at Meilun Mennonite Church.) Several other Christian family members witnessed to Mr. Lin, at first more through deed than word since they were not certain if "word witnessing" would be acceptable to the patient.

One December evening Mr. Lin asked the attending family members to join him with "the host of white-clad persons shouting and waving victory." The family attempted to reorient him, but he could not be deterred. "How is it that you cannot see this host of beckoning persons?" he asked. Mrs. Wu finally concluded that he had experienced a vision from God.

A week later the hospital staff celebrated Christmas with song. Mrs. Wu remained with her sick father. He told her to go and join the singers, but when he learned that she wanted to stay with him, he was deeply touched. Audibly she prayed with him. His grateful response made her ask, "Father, do you believe now?" He nodded.

Mr. Lin's drawer contained his Bible, other Christian literature, and a diary. Among his writings was the request that he not be given a Bhuddist funeral.

Can We Influence Culture?

I look out of the window, which happens to be in an American-styled apartment house, and I see a split-level, somewhat unique, Mexican-style house being built. More impressive than the style is the fact that there is no electricity being used in the building process; there is no cement mixer, no backhoe, no running water. The water is hauled in, the cement used for the cement block and burned brick walls is mixed by hand. There are no trucks or autos by the house because the four working men walk to work.

The sight is rather familiar and would represent more the native, Mexican style of construction than that of the immigrant, native Mennonite. Ways of doing things are not easily changed. However, construction in the Mennonite villages has changed almost completely to pouring cement walls with the use of a tractor-operated mixer.

Now that is only brick and mortar, but what happens to us as persons? I went to the bank to cash a check and experienced a somewhat familiar incident. I was in no particular hurry, but stood in line, at least I thought I did. (Queueing is not an art here.) A Mennonite from the village came along and stood in front of me. I was somewhat perplexed. I looked at him, but he looked the other way.

I asked, "Didn't you see me standing in line?"

He merely answered, "No." He continued to press forward. He got around the next person and deliberately dangled his check in front of the teller. To my surprise, she took him next in line, while others ahead of him waited.

When he was finished with his banking, he turned around to chat with his wife, and, with no appearance of being in a hurry, slowly walked away.

Does culture affect us or do we affect culture? We are inclined to say—both. Here was I, trying to be polite by waiting my turn, while my brother in name said, in essence, "I'm born here, my culture has shaped me to be this way. You, too, will soon learn."

We must make a decision on which route to take; I prefer to affect culture by using the best of the various cultures to which I have been exposed. I would like to shape community. If I can use modern conveniences and know-how, I'll use them. The people here have come to see how Casa Menno was built and furnished, so that they might learn. Politeness and manners, furthermore, still belong to the Christian faith and I want to exercise my faith.

Presumably the contrasts are greater when one steps on foreign soil, but to affect culture for the good is within the reach of everyone. It is not always clear who or what shapes whom, but shaping does take place. *Aaron J Epp*

The Singing Grandmother

Standing near Mother Stephen's bed, I asked her son Samuel, "How old did your mother get to be?"

He replied, "We don't know exactly, probably eighty-eight or eighty-nine."

After a brief pause he said softly, "She was a good mother to us. She never complained and was always so patient."

Ruth Bai was brought up in the Methodist Church. She spent her early years in the Harnabagh boarding school in Jahalpur. She married the teacher, Balamdas Stephen, who later became an evangelist.

Around 1919 Rev. P. J. Wiens invited the couple to join him in the preaching ministry. Ruth Bai served as a Bible woman for twenty-seven years.

Balamdas and Ruth Stephen came to Jagdeeshpur in 1950 to make their home with their son Stephen and his wife Helen. Two years later Balamdas was called to his heavenly home. Ruth Bai survived her husband by twenty-eight years.

A hip injury slowed Mother Stephen's walking pace, but not her zeal for the Lord. During the many years she spent in bed she read, sang, and prayed. She was always delighted to have visitors and would sing to them in Hindi and English of her joy in the Lord. "I will make you Fishers of Men" was one of her favorite choruses.

When at times she would feel useless and a burden to those who cared for her, Samuel would give her a prayer list with names of persons and church and conference matters to pray for. She found it acutely trying not to be able to read and begged that a cataract operation be performed on her eyes. This was done, but her eyesight could not be restored. That her hearing, also, was badly affected made communication with her almost impossible. Towards the end her mind, too, lost its clarity and she could not recognize people, not even her grandchildren, Shireen and Anand.

She died in her sleep at her son's home early on the morning of April 18, 1978. Very fittingly, at her funeral service her grandson played a tape of her favorite song, which he had recorded during her singing days. *Helen Kornelsen*

Ruth Bai with her husband, Balamdas Stephen

For Brazilian Christians
Life Is a Struggle

Angela Rempel

"Como está a luta?" This question took me by surprise and I asked Dona to repeat it.

"How is the struggle?" she asked again as part of her greeting when we met before the evening worship service. It was her way of asking how things were. We have learned that this is a common greeting. Many of the people here find life a constant fight. To a large degree they accept life's struggles with somewhat of a fatalistic attitude.

Money

The main struggle is the lack of money and this in turn is the basis for some of the other problems. Able-bodied members of the families do work. But while salaries remain low, the cost of living soars at more than forty percent annually. A few unexpected expenses may leave a family without food until the next monthly pay check arrives.

Health

Health is another struggle. Some of the problems are certainly due to poor nutrition. However, health care, although mostly free, is not of the best quality. When we learned that free dental care includes only pulling teeth, not filling, we understood why so many people have missing teeth.

Family Size

The large size of families certainly contributes to the struggle. We have met women who have given birth to more than fifteen children, although only half of them live. The four main families in our church have six, seven, nine, and eleven children. A household often includes other friends and relatives, such as mother-in-law, invalid brother, orphaned nieces, and married child with grandchildren. Every person contributes to the well-being of the family, but also to its tensions.

Housing

Housing usually is a problem because of money. A few people have been able to purchase houses with low monthly payments. Those who must rent find fees very high and are constantly moving. One man says his family has lived in six different shacks in six years.

Housework

The women's lives are a constant struggle as they need to run a large household. Menu planning is not a worry, since the food is always the same, but it takes a lot of work to prepare rice, beans, vegetables, salad, and bread twice a day for twelve to twenty people. Even though it seems things get dirtier here, women work hard to keep clean and have higher standards for floors and clothes than I had in the United States. Few women have washing machines so the laundry is done by hand when there is water. Drying clothes is a problem year round because of the rain in rainy season and blowing dust in the dry season.

Our Life is Easier

When we look at these things, we decide our life is very much easier. Per person we have four times the amount of expendable income that they have. We can afford to go to private doctors and get better health care. In our seven-room house we have only four people, while in seven rooms they have fifteen. Our house is easier to clean—I have automatic washer, vacuum cleaner, steam iron, and perm-press and knit clothes. I do share with the ladies the problem of drying clothes as I don't have a dryer.

Another thing that makes our lives less complicated is that we are products of several generations of Christian families. In our families God's principles for living as well as a firm discipline have been taught. Here, the people are first generation Christians. Many of their problems with people-relationships stem from the lack of application of biblical principles and of a very permissive manner of raising children.

Our Struggle

But we do have struggles also. Probably the main one is knowing how to relate to these our friends and brothers and sisters in the Lord in their struggles. Although we can't always understand their problems, we can help them find the passages in Scripture which give comfort and encouragement. The new Christians here don't have an easier life, but it is thrilling to see them find their strength in the Lord.

Pray that the Lord will give us understanding and wisdom in knowing how to relate to the people for whom life is such a battle.

Street in Gama, Brazil

Wood vendor

Exploiting the Opportunities

In their fifth term of service, Levi and Eudene Keidel still encounter a few problems.

Levi Keidel

What do you do . . .

. . . when at 5 a.m. Africans outside your hut door are still beating drums and dancing for joy that you've come to see them?

Answer: Ask the Lord to give you grace for a new day.

. . . when an African evangelist standing before twenty-seven young men, who have answered his invitation, looks at you and says, "Go to work"?

Answer: Lead them to Christ.

. . . when inside your hut at night spreading itch caused by some invisible mite threatens to drive you willy-nilly?

Answer: Discard the sheet and sleep on the mattress.

. . . when village women insist on a private meeting with your wife, and then send a message: "We're keeping her; go on your way"?

Answer: Forget about your schedule and wait until they are done.

. . . when after driving for hours into hot sun on a make-it-yourself road, you arrive at a river and, with a splitting headache wait one and a half hours for ferrymen who never come?

Answer: Drive four miles back to a pastor's house, break out your cots, and go to bed.

Nyanga, Zaire, is a fifty-year-old "mission station" located in a rural heavy concentration of Bapende tribespeople 450 air miles east of Kinshasa, fifty-five air miles northwest of Tshikapa. Here we have a large church, a hospital, an agricultural development center, and a variety of schools with a total of 1,200 students. We live in a sturdy old house with stone-faced adobe-brick walls, cement floors, and corrugated metal roof. Thirteen white people live at Nyanga, including the Missionary Aviation Fellowship pilot who serves our entire field from here.

Rev. Mukanza Ilunga (whom we are assigned to help) is director of the Department of Evangelism and Church Life for the Mennonite Community of Zaire, (which is) comprised of some 30,000 believers; congregations are scattered across a primary geographic area roughly half the size of the state of Illinois. Mukanza and I began consultations on the kinds of activities which hopefully the Holy Spirit might use to inject new life into the church.

Eudene, Mukanza, and I were on the road twenty-eight days in March and early April to undertake such activities. We travelled by four-wheel pick-up 725 miles; held a four-day seminar for twenty-five church leaders; conducted twenty-one services attended by 4,951 people; sold $690 worth of Bibles and Christian literature; counselled with eighty troubled believers; and helped thirty-six persons accept Jesus as Saviour.

In one area we were baffled to find thousands of hungry sheep converging upon our few workers in hopes of finding something to eat. Some, disillusioned by cults or feeling abandoned by their traditional church, are seeking a new shepherd. Others are lost. At this point in time I recognize four focuses of crucial need to which Eudene and I might directly relate:

1. to help these searching people find a vital personal relationship with Jesus Christ and set roots in His church.
2. to help rectify the current dearth of Christian literature.
3. to assist church department heads (medical, educational, agricultural, etc.) sharpen the focus of their activities upon serving the aims of the church and to exploit their current opportunities for evangelism.
4. to continue providing leadership training seminars at strategic centers toward the goal of providing every leader with one such experience every two years.

If you can identify with what we are doing, you can help us by praying for us regularly (for health, insight, learning the new language, positive relationships), sending some hard cash to the mission board (there is a real pinch for support money), and keeping the letters coming (address: B.P. 4081, Kinshasa II, Zaire).

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The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:33 SEPTEMBER 19, 1978

The river of life flows on ceaselessly, never stopping, and along the way it constantly mixes and churns, experiencing always new forms ~ never returning exactly to the old ~ sometimes it moves very fast and with great force ~ sometimes it is a very small trickle of newly melted snow ~ sometimes it runs deep and quiet ~ but it always moves on through new bends and turns ~ sometimes it mindlessly crashes through time and space ~ sweeping along everything in its path as it runs wildly out of control ~ but then it returns to its path ~ to dutifully follow its course ~ marked not by itself and yet by itself that preceded ~ who can understand the river ~

continued

Who can understand life ~ who dare rise and say I know where the river will go tomorrow ~ the river is not by itself ~ it comes from its source ~ the very heavens, and flows into the joining of all rivers to begin again ~ we all flow...connected...yet separate...willful but helpless ~ yet it is we who give together the river ... its force ... its depth ... its majesty ... its flood ~ in the churning and the mixing we have often met and touched each other's lives ~ now we ride the rapids together ~ and yet in our own way ~ but when we're through this bruising, crushing fray and again enter the silent, deep channel ~ we will understand that it is we ~ not the rocks, that have won for we are the river ◆

Dan Steiner

Let God's gusto grab you

Nature is an excellent psychiatrist, tranquilizer, and stimulant, all rolled into one.

Mike Shadick

One evening last February our family gathered around the dinner table "in conference" to plan our summer vacation. We pledged to forsake the helter-skelter pace that has characterized many a past vacation. "This year," we vowed to each other, "things will be different!"

It isn't vacation *fun* that we're after. For we've discovered that the more fun we seek, the less we find. What we really want is a *meaningful vacation experience,* one that will help us live our lives the rest of the year.

Who are we as God's creatures? What are we as a Christian family? Those are questions we plan to investigate on vacation. In years past we've seen new places and experienced new sights. This year we plan to experience new *insights* into ourselves and our relationship to God.

How will we achieve this? A better question might be, How will we give God the freedom to achieve this in us? We've chosen to go camping—real camping—with backpacks and a tent and a cookstove for the fish we hope to catch.

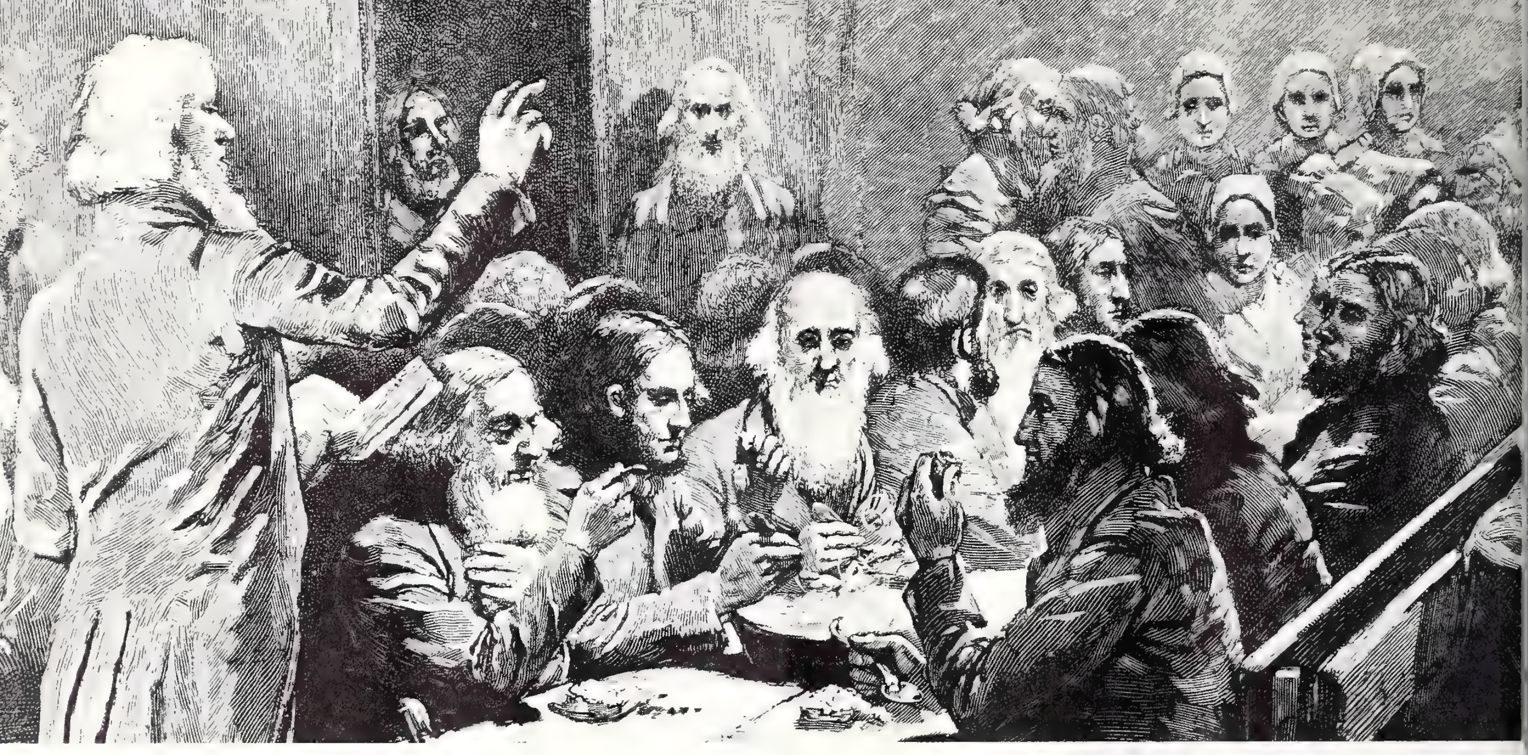
Jamie and Rob, our two teenage sons, are at the age where they don't want to even be seen with my wife and myself, much less take a vacation with us. But when I suggested camping, I couldn't believe how fast they took to the idea. They seem to have a strong desire to get back to nature, back to basics. Carol and I plan to help them in this quest. In the process, we hope to become a closer-knit Christian family.

Briefly, the "physical" preparations we've made include: (1) trips to the library, where we discovered a wealth of camping information; (2) selection of a wilderness camping area in advance. The boys have opted for a spot close to home, "to cut down on pollution"; (3) a visit to a reliable wilderness outfitter for gear and advice. Our initial wilderness foray will be a modest encounter—three or four days and nights.

We've come up with ten *vacation guideposts* as goals for our camping experience.

- Instead of finding new vistas to conquer, we plan to discover ourselves.
- In past years we preplanned our vacation time hour-by-hour, almost minute-by-minute. But this year we know where we're going and about how long we'll be staying—and that's it. We're going to get more out of our vacation instead of it taking so much out of us.
- Our spirits will be lifted, as well as our insights and insteps. We plan to return refreshed and renewed, instead of pooped and peeved.
- The spirit of past vacations has often been close to the advertising slogan, "You only go around once in life—so grab all the gusto you can." This year our motto is: "Let God's gusto grab us." We'll give nature the time and opportunity to enthrall us with her beauty, to inspire us with her handiwork, to renew us with her grandeur.
- Our vacation will be a physical and spiritual experience. We plan to investigate our identity as God's children and as a Christian family.
- Instead of ending our vacation *beside* ourselves, we plan to get *inside* ourselves, gaining new insights into our personalities and relationships.
- We will bring back memories, not only on film or on tape but imprinted on our souls. Instead of lamenting the money we spent, we will praise God for the new feeling of worth he has given us.
- In vacations past we've grown anxious to get back to the relative peace and quiet of the workaday world we were so recently so eager to leave. But this year we plan to return with a new zest for life, having rediscovered the wonder of God's creation and our place in it.
- Jamie and Rob plan to gain a fuller understanding of who they are and who they want to be in life.
- All four of us will become closer through the experience. We will know each other better, and be better able to communicate.

It sounds idyllic. It may be; but not because of us. All we want to "do" is provide the freedom for God's re-creative Spirit to work his wonders in us. We want our vacation to stand for something.



A love feast among the early Dunkers

Who are the Brethren?

Glee Yoder

If each head-of-state today could choose an official religion for the state as the rulers of each province had the power to do in Central Europe three centuries ago, it's doubtful if the choice would be Brethren, Mennonite, or Quaker. All three groups tend to be nonconformists who disturb the complacency of society and government even now as they did then. Though alike in some aspects of their faith, each has its own particular heritage, belief, and practices.

The Brethren emerged out of the Pietist movement in the early eighteenth century. The Pietists emphasized more intense study of the Scriptures, more involvement of the laity, no force in religion, and the living of Christian ideals in daily life.

As this group of Pietists gathered to read, study, and discuss the Bible, it began to understand the church in much the same way as another nonconformist group called the Anabaptists. The Mennonites were a part of this movement that emphasized the gathered community of persons who were truly converted. They taught believer's baptism, nonresistance, strict morality, and close church discipline.

Awakened and influenced by these forces, this small band of persons concluded through prayerful study that a strong fellowship was essential to their obedience to Christ. They were also convinced that infant baptism, practiced by the state church, was not founded in Scripture but that believer's baptism by immersion after a confession of faith was required.

Cautioned by Alexander Mack, their leader, to "count the cost" of discipleship, eight persons (five brothers and three sisters) gathered at the Eder River near Schwarzenau, Germany, for baptism in 1708. Their repudiation of the state church and their refusal of military service brought persecution. Learning that some religious groups had found refuge in the Quaker colony of Pennsylvania, Peter Becker, with a sizable group of Brethren, crossed the Atlantic in 1719. The major settlement was in Germantown where the Mennonites and Quakers were already established. Another large number followed in 1729, leaving few Brethren in Europe.

The group's first church in America was established on Christmas Day, 1723. Peter Becker, chosen as elder, led twenty-two members down to Wissahickon Creek for the baptism of six new members. The love feast and organization followed.

Following the war, during which many suffered for their pacifist stand, the Brethren, mostly farmers and artisans, sought out good land where they could establish communities to preserve their beliefs. From pioneer settlements in southern Ohio and northern Indiana, they pushed on into Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Oregon, and on down the Pacific. In the twentieth century many of them, like their neighbors, moved to the city and changed occupations. Today the majority of Brethren are members of urban, suburban, or small town churches, although there are still many strong congregations in rural areas.

The Brethren have never spelled out their faith in lengthy theological terms. They believe that the New Testament contains God's will for his people and it is their creed, the discipline of the church. The Christian life is regarded as a process of continuing growth on the part of both the church as a body of believers and the individual as a seeker after truth.

In the Brethren understanding of the gospel, one emphasis central to discipleship is peacemaking and reconciliation. This includes not only opposition to war and violence, but love of neighbors and enemies that leads to forgiveness. It was this shared belief that drew together the three groups—

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the Mennonites, Quakers, and Brethren—and continues to bind them together in their dream and work for a world of peace. At the time of the American Revolution, the Brethren and the Mennonites joined in the classic statement of 1775: ". . . we have dedicated ourselves to serve all men in everything that can be helpful to the preservation of men's lives, but we find no freedom in giving, or doing, or assisting in anything by which men's lives are destroyed or hurt."

Peace also means no force in religion. In the Brethren interpretation of the New Testament, baptism is always associated with a free act of faith. Peace is basic for a Christian life—peace with God, peace within the Christian individual, and peace with neighbors by creating a brotherhood of love.

The simple life is seen as responsible stewardship of life, time, talents, and possessions. The earth's natural resources are held in trusteeship, conserved so they can be shared with others now and in future generations. The gift of life is sacred, and anything detrimental to clean and wholesome living is to be avoided. In earlier years the wearing of a distinctive garb identified the Dunker life-style.

The Brethren have four ordinances which are symbolic acts in obedience to Christ: (1) *baptism,* a voluntary confession of faith in Jesus Christ by immersion three times face-forward from a kneeling position; (2) the observance of the *Agape meal* or *love feast,* patterned after the Last Supper in the Upper Room—washing one another's feet, a symbol of humility and love demonstrated in service, and a simple meal around the table where the communion, with the breaking of bread and partaking of the cup, celebrates and renews the covenant of believers; (3) the *anointing* for healing, a symbol of the ever-available healing power of God physically, mentally, and spiritually; and (4) the *laying on of hands,* symbol of the bestowing of spiritual gifts, used at baptism to bring cleansing and faithfulness, at ordination to the ministry to consecrate and strengthen, and at other times in recognition of special ministries of the church. The ordinances are corporate experiences.

While the early Brethren urged each other not to conform to the world, they later expected each other to conform to the order of the church. As the members scattered and became more prosperous, the churches became more diverse so it seemed that requirements for membership needed to be more specific. Thus, the dress became more a sign of membership to protect their identity than that of living simply. Powerful leadership developed with differing ideas regarding authority in the church, methods of working in it, and life-styles.

In the 1880s a three-way split took place. The Old German Baptists or "Old Order Brethren" took a more conservative stance—plain dress, free ministry, and opposition to Sunday schools, foreign missions, higher education, and musical instruments in their worship. Annual meetings have been held since 1881, and an active church continues with about 4,800 members principally in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Kansas, and California, with a small colony in Brazil.

In 1882 the Brethren Church, then termed the progressives, left for almost opposite reasons. Impatient for more radical change, its followers wanted a paid ministry, Sunday schools, and more freedom in self-governing in local churches. Numbering about 17,000 today, the Brethren Church has its headquarters at Ashland, Ohio, where its college and seminary are also located. In 1939 this branch was divided by a fundamentalistic movement which became the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, with a college and seminary at Winona Lake, Indiana.

The Brethren have never spelled out their faith in lengthy theological terms. They believe that the New Testament contains God's will for his people and it is their creed, the discipline of the church.

In 1926 the Dunkard Brethren, "seeing no way to reform the church," adopted the 1911 decision on plain dress and left the main body. This group objects to the use of musical instruments and drama in the church, but favors Sunday schools, missions, and education. Numbering about 1,200, its members are concentrated in Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Divergent though they are, these Brethren bodies have assembled informally and unofficially in recent years to explore and celebrate their common roots. Initiated by M. R. Ziegler, a Brethren Encyclopedia is projected as a major reference work, to be edited by historian-educator Donald F. Durnbaugh.

Of about 240,000 Brethren in America, three-fourths are in the Church of the Brethren, the official name since 1908. It is this body, through its national staff at Elgin, Illinois, and its twenty-four districts that is officially part of the New Call to Peacemaking involving Friends and Mennonites. One-fourth of the congregations and members reside in the southern half of Pennsylvania.

Within the Church of the Brethren today can be found several groups with varying degrees of organizational relationship to the denomination—the Brethren Revival Fellowship, the Brethren Peace Fellowship, the Women's Caucus, the Holy Spirit Conference group, charismatic fellowships, and communities of persons demonstrating alternative life-styles. Worship services vary throughout the brotherhood—some traditional, others innovative and less formal.

Related to the Church of the Brethren are six colleges, one seminary, twenty-four homes for the aging scattered from coast to coast, and one hospital. The church cooperates with other denominations in the publishing of church school curriculum and materials for study in its thirty summer camps. *Messenger* as a family magazine, and Brethren Press books and literature keep members in touch. The church has in the past two generations joined in ecumenical endeavors, giving leadership in both the National and World Councils of Churches.

A strong overseas mission program has been in existence for more than a century. The growing edge today is in Africa. From work begun in 1923, the membership of Nigeria's now independent church numbers over 25,000, growing by more than 4,000 baptisms a year. Former mission enterprises in India and Ecuador also have been indigenized, engaging local or national personnel as pastors, educators, evangelists, and administrators.

The deep conviction about peace, reconciliation, and relief of suffering led to the development of the Brethren service program which during and after World War II carried on extensive relief work in Europe and which in the decades since has placed workers in Ireland and the Middle East and pioneered an agricultural exchange program with Poland. Since 1948 when Brethren Volunteer Service was instituted, thousands of youth have given one or more years of service inside and outside our country's borders. Currently there is an emphasis on volunteer service by mature adults.

Brethren have been leaders in such ministries of mercy as Church World Service, CROP, exchange programs, Heifer Project, Agricultural Missions, and more recently, Disaster Service. Edward K. Ziegler sums it up well: "Brethren do not believe that there is a personal gospel apart from a social gospel, but that there is one gospel of God's loving concern for all persons and for the whole person. They insist that a true presentation of the gospel must be by proclamation, by demonstration, and by loving service."

While respecting their own heritage and sensing their mission as unique in the world, Brethren realize they are only a small, but vital part of the community of faith. They are open to learning from others who also seek to be obedient disciples of Christ.

News

Ontario seminar seeks connection between separatist faith and involvement in world

Anabaptist theology is inadequate to give guidance for our involvement in professions and in social structures. This was a dominant theme in the graduate seminar held at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario, August 15-20.

Thirty-five participants from British Columbia to Massachusetts struggled with the issues of applying the Anabaptist faith to the various disciplines which they represented.

"The significance of the conference," said one of the organizers, "is that it showed how Mennonites are capitulating to the modern age."

This conclusion, probably shared by most, was not taken as an indication that Mennonite scholars are leaving their faith behind. The papers revealed an intense awareness of the task of relating a separatist faith to a growing involvement in the world.

Ted Koontz, political science student at Harvard University, led off by stating that Christian ethics and political ethics are incompatible. Beginning with the assumption, however, that Christians must be involved in political structures, he suggested that our witness take into account "enlightened self-interest" on a national scale, but work toward a universalistic ethic which moves beyond national interests alone.

Bob Janzen, a lawyer from Ontario, echoed the problem of bringing two different ethical norms together in a profession that is concerned primarily with upholding the law, and not with justice and equality.

Conrad Brunk from Conrad Grebel College argued that Mennonites are impoverished in their understanding of social systems and must begin to fashion an ethic from within the institutions of which they are a part.

Peter Harder, employed in the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa, echoed Brunk's optimism about taking one's place squarely within the given systems. He explained the history of the social gospel movement in Canada as a valuable model for Mennonites to follow in working out their political responsibilities.

A backdrop to the prophetic vision theme was a paper by Werner Packull from the University of Waterloo. Summarizing the state of Anabaptist research at present he emphasized that although the "Bender generation" of scholars has been superseded, the new groups are just as interpretive and as subject to bias as was the older group.

John Miller from Conrad Grebel College led four Bible studies on prophecy and wisdom in the Old Testament. He proposed that wisdom, or human knowledge and activity, has also led to a knowledge of God, but this aspect of the biblical tradition has often been forgotten.

Miller's emphasis, said Ted Hiebert from Harvard Divinity School, "reminds us that hard human thinking is not ungodly. It has in fact always been accepted no less by Jesus than by the Old Testament, as a fruitful, even necessary activity for the religious person."

Discussion at the conference was vigorous as participants attempted to strike a balance between rational, human understandings and the biblical mandate. Several people lamented the absence of a perspective from the arts, a perspective less governed by the empirical, rational criteria of the other disciplines and not as preoccupied with the "Mennonite obsession" with ethics.

The seminar was sponsored by the student services committees of the General Conference Mennonite, Mennonite, and Canadian Mennonite Brethren churches. John Rempel, Waterloo, Ontario, and Robert Charles, Elkhart, Indiana, planned the event. *Margaret Loewen Reimer*

US church membership matches population growth

Increases in United States church membership kept pace with population growth during 1976, the most recent year for which data are available.

The *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches 1978,* published by Abingdon Press for the National Council of Churches, reports that both church membership and population in the United States were up 0.7 percent in 1976 over 1975.

Reporting on the National Council's survey of 223 US religious bodies, the *Yearbook* places total church membership at 131,897,539. Last year's survey of the same number of religious bodies showed a membership of 131,012,953.

The growth of evangelical and Pentecostal churches and the simultaneous membership decline in "mainline" churches has combined to keep church membership as a whole relatively stable since 1970. In a typical week 42 percent of Americans attend church.

The Roman Catholic Church, the nation's largest religious body, and the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest Protestant denomination, both grew faster than the population during 1976, reporting gains of 0.9 percent and 1.5 percent respectively. The Roman Catholic Church claims 49 million adherents and the Southern Baptists list about 13 million.

Apparently the fastest growing religious body was the Assemblies of God, which reported 1,302,318 members, up 5.1 percent from 1975.

Among other religious bodies that grew rapidly in 1976 were the Christian and Missionary Alliance, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Seventh-Day Adventists, Church of God of Anderson (Indiana), Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints, and the Evangelical Covenant Church of America. All registered gains of about 3 percent.

The 1978 edition also includes a preliminary report of a survey released in March by the National Council on the status of women clergy. The survey showed that fewer than half of US Christian religious bodies ordain women to the ministry, and in those that do, women compose only about four percent of all clergy.

Church membership in Canada rose slightly during 1976, following a drop the previous year. Total membership in 1976 was 14,859,237, up 361,395 over 1975, according to the *Yearbook.*

In 1975 Canadian church membership fell by nearly 600,000. As in the US, the declines were primarily in mainline churches.

More than 200,000 of the 1976 gain was accounted for by the Roman Catholic Church. Canada's second largest denomination, the United Church of Canada with 2.1 million members, grew by about 9,000 in 1976. Membership in the Anglican Church, next largest, continued to drop, but at a slower rate. The million-member church lost only 6,000 members in 1976, compared with about 42,000 in 1975.

COM okays CIDA grants and foreign exchange trial

Two major actions were taken by the Commission on Overseas Mission during meetings September 1-3 in Newton, Kansas.

COM decided to actively seek funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for development work in COM's overseas program. The commission also decided, subject to firm guidelines, to begin exchanging dollars into foreign currencies at the international exchange rate.

During its February meeting the commission had given approval in principle to applying for CIDA funding. Since that time definite information on procedures for requesting funds and how the funds are handled has been collected. The commission was satisfied that the procedures outlined by the development agency did not compromise a Christian witness and hence reaffirmed their earlier decision.

Approximately $125,000 worth of agricultural and community development work currently funded by COM would be eligible for grants from CIDA. COM's annual budget is more than $2,000,000. Programs in Upper Volta, Lesotho, Zaire, and India could receive some of their 1979 funding from CIDA. Applications for the grants will be made through Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) since CIDA prefers that all Mennonite agencies channel their proposals through one organization. MCC (Canada) is also the liaison for applications which MCC (International) makes to CIDA.

Commenting on this decision, COM executive secretary Howard Habegger said, "These grants will help us to do projects we otherwise would not do. Nevertheless, our primary source of funding remains the General Conference constituency."

The second major action was prompted by substantial losses experienced by the commission in exchanging dollars into foreign currency at the official exchange rates. The problem is compounded as the dollar weakens and as international inflation contines.

Beginning January 1, 1979, COM will use the international rate for a period of two years, after which it is to be reviewed. COM will pay all overseas budget commitments in foreign currency bought through money brokerage agencies. Dollars will not be sent overseas. This policy is subject to consultation with the national leaders. COM will not use the international rate in any country which prohibits it. Zaire is the only country in which COM has work which forbids using international exchange. There, although the official government rate is about .8 zaires to the US dollar, the international rate is about 5 zaire to the dollar.

"There is a lot of confusion in people's minds," noted Habegger, "about 'official' exchange rates, and 'international' exchange. Money is a commodity which can be bought and sold. Many countries grossly overvalue their currencies relative to the dollar. Banks in that country are instructed to exchange dollars at that official rate. But in the international market a country's currency shows its more accurate value. The world's currencies are being bought and sold daily, and we as a commission are convinced that the free floating money market gives a truer picture of the value of a currency than the official rates."

Generally international exchange tends to give a better rate than the official one. By buying foreign currencies at the official exchange rates COM annually loses thousands of dollars relative to the foreign currency that could be bought with the same dollars at the international rate.

In other actions the commission reaffirmed its present policy of retirement for missionaries at age sixty-five, but stated it is open to special short-term assignments for overseas workers after that age. COM also accepted the manuscript of the history of General Conference world missions written by James Juhnke. *Vic Reimer*

Food outlook better in Bangladesh as farmers diversify

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—"There are many things to be optimistic about in Bangladesh," reports Paul Meyers, Mennonite Central Committee Bangladesh director since 1975.

Although there is still a severe food deficiency throughout the country the last three years have produced good harvests. In the year ending June 30 agricultural production rose 17 percent.

That increase does not mean that all is well, says Meyers. The Bangladesh population has increased seven million since 1975. A large quantity of food must still be imported.

As well as assuring a sufficient quantity of food a continuing problem in the country is the need for diversification of crops. A greater variety of crops is needed for a nutritious diet. Advancement has been made in this, due partly to MCC workers who have aggressively promoted crop diversification for the past five years.

Progress began as farmers learned to plant a winter wheat crop as well as the traditional summer rice crop. Other winter crops gaining acceptance are sunflowers, soybeans, potatoes, and vegetables such as carrots. Not only are farmers learning to produce these crops but Bangladeshi are learning to incorporate them in their everyday diets.

Meyers also reports that farmers and commercial banks are now aware of the advantages of rural credit. Initially the banks in Noakhali district would not take the risk of loans to poor farmers. But by guaranteeing the loans up to 100 percent MCC broke this barrier. Now farmers borrow for seeds, fertilizer, and insecticides. Both they and the banks have learned to take risks, and higher food production has resulted. The concept of rural credit is now widely accepted.

Many problems still exist in Bangladesh, observes Meyers. About 75 percent of the people are illiterate, average workers earn only ninety-five dollars annually, many persons have no employment, and life expectancy is well below fifty years. But as medical, agricultural, development, family planning, and employment programs continue development agencies are confident there will be growth.

Giving near 50 percent of budget

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—Donations to General Conference ministries were 49.6 percent of the 1978 budget by the end of August. The 1978 budget is $3,179,883.

Giving by August 31 totaled $1,577,520, as compared to an eight-month total of $1,374,596 in 1977. Although month-by-month receipts this year have generally been higher than corresponding months in 1977, August receipts were down by $23,260 in comparison to 1977 August receipts.

During the last four months of 1977 General Conference constituents gave $1,465,000. To meet the 1978 budget donations during the last four months of 1978 will have to be approximately $140,000 higher than the 1977 total, or $1,605,000.

Women in Mission, whose budget is separate from the General Conference, continues to receive generous support. By the end of August WM had received $129,580 of its $178,000 budget.

How does one serve and witness in a Marxist society?

Luke Martin, pastor of the Allentown (Pennsylvania) Mennonite Church, and Mennonite Central Committee country director in Vietnam from 1973 to 1975 concludes his two-part series on Vietnam with a report on religious affairs.

HỘI THÁNH TIN LÀNH
VIỆT-NAM
TIN LÀNH

Townspeople linger in front of the Evangelical Church in Hanoi.

"Anyone who wants to go to the pagoda or to church may do so as he wishes and no one can forbid him. . . . We punish only those who use religion to oppose the revolution. . . . We communist people consider the policy of respecting the rights to freedom of thought, speech and creation . . . as a measure to continue the advance of the revolutionary undertaking. . . . However, we forbid all acts which oppose the socialist regime" (*People's Army, March 1977*).

The above was a response by the Government of Vietnam to international concern that the Vietnamese government was violating human rights by holding thousands, including a small group of religious persons in reeducation camps. Vietnam answered that reeducation is the correct way to deal with those opposing the revolution. The right to freedom of belief is "guaranteed by law" and no one is held for religious conviction, it was asserted.

Religious activities are restricted to church properties. Christians continue to meet for services. Catholic Christianity, though not the largest religious group in Vietnam, has exercised a dominant religious influence for many decades. Most leaders and lay Christians oppose the communist ideology, but a number of bishops and the archbishop of Saigon, Nguyen van Binh, have called publicly on Christians to support the new government.

In October of last year, archbishop Binh addressed the Conference of Bishops in Rome and called on the synod to aid Vietnamese Catholics in finding appropriate ways to serve and witness in a society with a dominant Marxist political ideology. He said, "We have taken our stand (to cooperate with atheists) but the fundamental problem remains: How should we cooperate with the communists to construct the country while remaining Catholic and, as such, make our specific contribution in that common task?"

Buddhist response to the new political structures has been somewhat different. The Buddhists have developed a good deal of political influence, which blossomed in the mid-sixties with many institutions such as orphanages, elementary and high schools and a Buddhist university.

Threatened with the loss of influence, some southern Buddhist leaders have challenged the government's power to control all social institutions.

Evangelical Christians continue their witness in a changing environment. People returning to the countryside swelled some rural congregations. In some areas the government gave resources for congregations to rebuild places of worship destroyed during the war. The Evangelical Church has a significant pool of leadership persons to pastor congregations. The Evangelical Churches in the north and south generally operate independently. Discussions toward reunification of the two branches have been under way for several years.

The Evangelical Church in the north lists its membership at around ten thousand; baptisms of new members take place frequently. Bui Hoang Thu, the general secretary of the church in the north, has long been a firm supporter of the government and therefore is considered suspect by some leaders in the south.

The larger southern branch of the church is likely hesitant to unite if it means relinquishing leadership to persons in the north. Ong van Huyen, the general secretary of the church in the south, is a highly competent and respected leader, who is committed to the church's noninvolvement in state politics.

The Mennonite congregation in the Saigon area in 1975 became affiliated with a movement called the United Evangelical Church which brought together several smaller evangelical groups with the aim of forming a united Vietnam Evangelical Church for the whole country. This movement has diminished since its leader died in late 1976. The Mennonite congregation was pastored recently by Huynh van Thien who was assigned by the executive committee of the Evangelical Church responsible for the Saigon area.

Christians in the ethnic minorities, about one-third of the Evangelical Church, face more difficulties. Many of these minority groups have long supported movements for independence from any Vietnamese government and communist authorities have indicated that FULRO, a prominent independence movement, is still operating. Vietnamese authorities may want to restrict meetings of minority peoples for security reasons.

Specific ways in which North American Christians can support Vietnam Christians could include urging President Carter to lift the trade embargo, urging Congress to send assistance for Vietnam reconstruction, giving reconstruction assistance from our own resources, considering an advocacy role for Vietnam Christians whose human rights appear to have been violated, working for the reunification of separated Vietnamese families, and communicating with our brothers and sisters through letters, visits, and radio broadcasts. There is much we can learn from them.

Vietnam churches struggle with new trials

Editor's Note—James Stauffer, Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities staff person in the Philippines and missionary to Vietnam from 1957 to 1975 was part of the five-person Mennonite Central Committee delegation which visited Vietnam in July. His report centers on the church in the southern area of Vietnam, and complements Luke Martin's analysis on the facing page.

Before 1975 Tin Lahn (Evangelical) Church life in Vietnam was geared to public evangelism. The Catholics, on the other hand, relied on their institutional programs for growth and outreach. The war's end brought a quick end to those channels of activity for both churches.

The Tin Lanh's public and mass evangelism is no longer permitted. Former Catholic social, medical, and educational institutions are now fully controlled and operated by the state. The practice of organized religion is generally limited to worship.

As a delegate of Mennonite Central Committee I was able to meet with thirteen persons associated with the Evangelical Churches and six Catholics during a July visit to Vietnam. I had extensive private conversations with church pastors and other leaders and learned more about the complexities accompanying this greatly reduced scope of religious activity.

Church leaders reported that they now have to get governmental permission to conduct regular services. Permission for anything special, such as an annual conference, requires a tremendous amount of time and red tape. Pastors must be careful what they say in their sermons. One was arrested because he mentioned in a sermon on the Second Coming that "Russia will be destroyed."

The Tin Lanh Church always professed to be "neutral" as far as political party allegiance or ideologies were concerned. They did not want to be involved in politics. However, it was known that they were generally anti-Viet Cong, anticommunist, pro-American, and to a much lesser extent, pro-Diem or pro-Thieu.

Church members felt it their obligation to allow their young men to be drafted into the armed forces of South Vietnam. Inviting a high military official to open an annual conference was accepted practice. Providing chaplains for the armed forces was looked upon with favor because of its potential for evangelical outreach.

Now, in the new Vietnam, church leaders are constantly being reminded that they "were involved in politics" by condoning the status quo and by neglecting to raise their voices against the injustices of the old regimes.

Why did they collaborate with the intervention of a foreign military power? Why didn't they protest the Americanization of their economy and culture? How can they prove they were not CIA agents? These are some of the issues that make the Tin Lanh suspect today in the eyes of the new regime.

The church is looking for ways to prove its innocence on these charges. Some pastors are now members of local government committees. This no doubt is more of a compromise of their concept of separation of church and state than former cohorting with United States Army chaplains or high ranking South Vietnam officials. It is more difficult for them to work with communist officials than it was with former Catholic or Buddhist officials.

What is said here about the Tin Lanh would also apply to the Mennonite believers in Vietnam. Mennonites have heard of the Anabaptist teaching on church and state, but in actual practice are not visibly different from the mainstream of Tin Lanh Christians.

Some events usually associated with religious or spiritual revival have taken place since 1975. Very conservative moral standards have accompanied the socialist revolution. Some new government officials are puritanical in nature. For example, pornographic materials, trashy Western novels, and decadent capitalist books were collected and burned in the streets after April 1975.

Now most of the prostitutes and drug addicts have been reported reeducated and cured. Stealing has been greatly reduced. These claims by the government tend to weaken faith in supernatural cures for the sins of humanity. We sensed this especially among Catholics.

One priest mentioned that while the Catholics only comprised 10 percent of the population, 25 percent of the prostitutes claimed Catholic membership. He went on to praise the government for doing a job that the church had obviously failed to do.

Although the churches are struggling with new trials and testings, we were reassured that their spirit has not been broken. We must continue to pray that they will be granted wisdom and faith as they continue to be faithful.

Words & deeds

The Church of the Nazarene in the Times Square section of New York raised $84,000 last month to begin its new program, Lamb's Center for Girls, to provide redemptive care and rehabilitation for female prostitutes and runaways. Commenting on the new program, Paul Moore, head of Lamb ministries, said there is yet "no significant treatment given in the name of Christ" for the thousands of teenage prostitutes operating nightly in the Times Square area.

The 1980 Consultation on World Evangelization will be held in Pattaya, Thailand, according to an announcement by Leighton Ford, chairman of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE). Ford added that the consultation, originally scheduled for January of that year, would be held from June 14 to 28. The Thailand meeting will assess evangelization progress since the 1974 International Congress of World Evangelization, develop post-1980 strategies, foster coordination of efforts, and encourage sharing of resources.

The shipment of fourteen used treadle sewing machines to the west African country of Ghana has begun to meet the needs of tailors and seamstresses there, reports Laurence Horst, moderator of the Ghana Mennonite Church.

Ground was broken in special ceremonies for the new Immanuel Mennonite church building in Delft, Minnesota on July 9. The visual act was the climax of many months of study and planning by both the building and finance committees.

Disco, with its stunning profusion of lights, sounds, rhythms, motions, drugs, spectacles, and illusions, is making it big today, writes music critic Albert Goldman in *Esquire* (June 20), because man has so "dulled and dimmed his senses by living in an overstimulating industrial environment that nothing but sensory overkill can turn him on."

Thousands of refugees are fleeing Laos and Vietnam in small boats. Unfortunately, there is little welcome awaiting them. Most are refused permission to land and are left to wander aimlessly among the shipping lanes of the South China Sea. Many die from starvation or attacks of pirates. Although unable to pick up these boat people because of political complications, World Vision has chartered a relief ship with a medical staff, and all types of supplies needed to help these people survive.

Are you a writer? The department of literature development of the Commission on Education would like to develop a pool of writers. Persons interested are invited to send a short description of the type of writing—feature, curriculum, poetry, fiction, news, writing for children—which they have done or would like to do. If published, please list publications; if unpublished, a sample of work is requested. This information may be sent to Writers' Pool, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and its five subsidiaries recorded a combined deficit of $3.2 million last year, which may result in ministry cutbacks this year, largely in areas of radio and television. Combined assets for the Graham association and its five affiliates were listed at $17.3 million.

FULL CIRCLE

FULL CIRCLE, Stories of Mennonite Women
edited by Mary Lou Cummings

The book contains stories of 19 Mennonite women. "I never thought much about what a 'woman' should do. My main concern was to know what God wanted me to do, and I knew He would help me do it," says Dr. Ella Garber Bauman. Through the simplicity of these words, a great power is unleashed. This power, this focus, is an unspoken theme in many of these biographies. Each biography is a story, of a woman on a journey with God through this imperfect, real world.

214 pages, paper back
INTRODUCTORY OFFER (expires Oct. 31, 1978) $4.95
Regular price $5.25

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Robert Jastrow, director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, writes in *The New York Times Magazine* (June 25) that "the universe had, in some sense, a beginning—that it began at a certain moment in time and under circumstances that seem to make it impossible—not just now, but *ever*—to find out what force or forces brought the world into being at that moment. . . . The astronomical evidence leads to a biblical view of the origin of the world (the word the Bible used to describe the universe)." Jastrow, a self-acclaimed agnostic in religious matters, says that reaction on the part of fellow astronomers has not been good. "It turns out that the scientist behaves the way the rest of us do when our beliefs are in conflict with the evidence. We become irritated, we pretend the conflict does not exist, or we paper it over with meaningless phrases."

Duane and Elizabeth Friesen, North Newton, Kansas, recently participated in the International Workshop on Conflict Resolution, held at the University of Haifa, Mount Carmel, Israel. Friesen, associate professor of Bible and religion at Bethel College, read a paper at the June 19-22 conference on the "Ethical Dimensions of Conflict Resolution." All conference participants stayed at Beit Oren, an agricultural kibbutz which also runs a guest house. In addition to many Israeli participants, some of the countries represented included Canada, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, England, and the United States.

The Troyer-Sloan Health Award was presented (below) to Merle Schwartz, MD, general practitioner and Dorothy Schwartz, registered nurse (both of Normal, Illinois) on August 6 in recognition of their many years of service as medical missionaries in Zaire, Africa. The Schwartzes arrived in the Congo (now known as Zaire) in 1942. They worked as hospital missionaries in that area intermittently until 1976 when they officially retired. The two continue to do volunteer work in central Illinois. The award was given by the Mennonite Hospital Association of Bloomington, Illinois.

Record

Ministers

Allen Martin has accepted the pastorate of First Church, McPherson, Kansas, beginning August 15. He had been pastor of the Calico Rock Church in Arkansas.

Harold Miller was licensed and installed as pastor of the Kingman (Kansas) Church on July 2. He is a graduate of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana.

Don Pahl, associate pastor at Ebenezer Church (Bluffton, Ohio) was ordained July 30 by the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Conference of which he ia a part. *Dan Dalke* was called to serve another term as pastor of Ebenezer.

Marvin Penner terminated his services as pastor of the Butterfield (Montana) Church and First Church, Butterfield, on July 16. He plans to complete his studies at Grace Biblical Seminary, Winona Lake, Indiana.

Arlie D. Rauch has resigned as pastor of the Zion Church, Bridgewater, South Dakota, after four years of service. *John J. Hofer* has since assumed the pastorate of the Zion Church.

H. B. Schmidt has been serving Calvary Church, Liberal, Kansas, during the summer months. He served a former pastorate at Deer Creek (Oklahoma) Church, and an interim pastorate at the Hebron Church, Buhler, Kansas.

William Steele has resigned as pastor of Bethany Church, Quakertown, Pennsylvania, to become assistant minister of the First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ontario. He will be completing his seminary studies at Toronto.

John Svendsen, a freshman at Westminster Seminary, will be serving as assistant to the pastor at the Kempton (Pennsylvania) Fellowship during the next school year.

Audiovisuals

Telecommunications and the Church—Part I and Part II—are two full color one-hour video cassette presentations produced by Multi Media Productions, a national video consulting firm specializing in church telecommunications. These vital comprehensive video presentations are an introduction to telecommunications for churches and are accompanied by full packages of printed study materials. For further information, contact Multi Media Productions, P.O. Box 1041, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23451.

Workers

Melita Dyck, First Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, is serving a two-year Mennonite Central Committee term in nursing in Appalachia. She received her nursing diploma from Kelsey Institute of Arts and Sciences and has been employed as a nurse at Saskatoon City Hospital. Her parents are John J. and Sara Dyck.

Irwin Friesen, Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, has been elected chairperson of the Mennonite Central Committee Food Bank. Friesen served for seven years as an inspector with the Plant Products Division of the Canadian Department of Agriculture in the area of education and publicity. He has been a member of the board of directors of the Food Bank since its inception in 1976.

Tom and Ruth Friesen are returning to Freeman Junior College after a year's leave of absence. The Friesens spent the past year in Bolivia, South America, as directors of the Mennonite Central Committee program in that country. Tom will teach Bible and social science and assist with certain administrative assignments and Ruth will teach Spanish and German.

Delmer Hofer has been appointed to administrative staff for Freeman Academy and Junior College. He has been a teacher and administrator for eighteen years. He is presently employed in the School of Education at the University of South Dakota.

Paul King, First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, has been named acting director of development and public affairs at Bluffton College. He will serve until a director has been named to replace Richard Ramseyer, who resigned this summer.

John A. Lapp, dean of Goshen College, and his wife Alice have begun serving a ten-month term with Mennonite Central Committee in Jerusalem, West Bank. During his sabbatical year Lapp will serve as MCC consultant for the West Bank. *Alice Lapp* will be teaching English at Bethlehem University, founded in 1973, which specializes in career training for Palestinians.

Patricia A. McLean, Kingston, New York, has been named assistant professor of health, physical education, and recreation at Bluffton College. McLean has served as an instructor of physical education and recreation for five years at Ulster County Community College in Stone Ridge, New York. She holds a BS in physical education from Spalking College in Nazareth, Kentucky, and is completing work on an MS in physical education from Springfield College in Massachusetts this summer.

Diane L. Moffat, Pandora, Ohio, has been named director of public information at Bluffton College. Moffat holds an MA from Kent State University in journalism and public relations. She will develop and maintain continuing patterns of public relations through news releases, feature articles, and TV and radio programs.

Leslie Ortman resigned as president of Freeman Junior College and Academy on July 31. *Leroy Saner* has been named acting president during this interim period. Saner has been on the faculty for twelve years and has served as academic dean for the past five years. He received a BA from Bethel College and an MA in English from the University of South Dakota.

Richard Ramseyer resigned as chief administrative officer for Development and Public Affairs at Bluffton College on August 3. He leaves private higher education to share management responsibilities as one of three principal owners of Bixel and Carey Enterprises.

Linda and Weldon Rupp began a period of voluntary service for Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, on July 1. They will oversee the general housekeeping and light maintenance of the women's and men's residence halls and will assist with the maintenance of the educational buildings, including the Fine Arts Center and Student Center, and the campus grounds as needed. The Rupps recently completed a year's Mennonite Voluntary Service assignment as resident managers of Yarrow Gardens, a low income housing complex in Arvada, Colorado, following their retirement.

Ingrid Schultz, Sherbrooke Church, Vancouver, British Columbia, will begin a thirty-month teaching assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Bolivia. She has been teaching at the Silverthorne Elementary School in Houston, British Columbia. Schultz received her BS in education from the University of British Columbia. Her parents are Sigmund and Annie Schultz.

Fortieth anniversary celebrations
of the
Springstein Mennonite Church,
Springstein, Manitoba,
will be held October 15
at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
All former church members and friends are cordially invited. Lunch and *faspa* will be served.

Daniel J. Schwendeman, Wellston, Ohio, has been appointed associate professor of social work at Bluffton College. Schwendeman holds a MSW degree from the University of Utah with concentrations in administration and group work. In 1976 and 1977 he was the district manager of the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation in Jackson.

Marlene Steiner, First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, has assumed responsibilities as director of retention studies and academic advising for the 1978-79 academic year. Steiner holds an MA from Bowling Green State University in college student personnel work and a BA from Albion College in sociology. She will be responsible for directing programs and studies related to retention.

Norman and Hortensia Unternahrer, Ames (Iowa) Fellowship, are serving a three-year term with Mennonite Central Committee in Montero, Bolivia. Her parents are Francisco and Olga de Mendez of Oruro, Bolivia. She has received her RN from Evangelical School of Nursing and has been employed at an Ames nursing home. Norman, son of Noah and Barbara Unternahrer, holds a BA in sociology from Iowa State University and has been employed in construction. His assignment will be follow-up work in agriculture and community development. He has served previously with MCC in Bolivia in public health work.

Dyck

King

Moffat

Schultz

Steiner

Unternahrers

MCC is the church
where two or three
are gathered together
and 700 workers
are scattered apart.
MCC has no pews
but many workers.
No pulpit
but many ministers.
No Sunday school
but many teachers.

MCC is the church
because you are the church.
MCC exists
because the church is called
to service.
Christ's gathered body
sent us first to Russia
then throughout Europe,
Asia, Latin America,
Africa and back
to our Jerusalem —

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sheltering the destitute
binding up the wounded
and loosing the captives.
Because the church
continues to call us
to victims of disaster,
drought and poverty
in 60 lands,
we need your prayers
and support.

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Where two or three are scattered in my name. . . .

Letters

Cancelling subscription

Dear Editor: I was amazed by the series of articles you printed concerning homosexuality—in particular the letter written by two lesbians (June 6 issue). They have *not* the same Father in heaven as we do . . . and we say "Amen" to that! Our Father heals all kinds of sickness. Liberalism is *not* what we wish to be fed . . . we want to be fed the true Word of God so that we may grow.

For these reasons, please cancel our subscription. *Mr. and Mrs. Roger Kraus, Rural Route 1, Danvers, Illinois 61732*
July 7

Choice has consequences

Dear Editor: In the May 30 issue you reported a workshop held by the Kansas City church where they had dialogue with a self-confessed homosexual. I tried to visualize the apostle Peter or Paul under similar circumstances. Can you hear Peter saying to Ananias: "Now, brother, this is really generous of you; we can use your gift and I am sure the Lord will overlook your little white lie. I can appreciate the circumstances that made you act this way. Go and sin no more." No, Peter said what the Lord told him to say and they carried Ananias's body out to be buried.

Paul writes to the Corinthian church regarding a case of immorality: ". . . concerning him that has done this deed, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ . . . to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, . . . " (5:3-5). "If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator . . . put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (5:11-13). This is a far cry from putting your arm around him and saying, "I love you."

In the June 6 issue was a letter signed by "two persons, born again, Mennonite, lesbian." This is a contradiction of terms. Oh, that these persons would read Romans 1:26 to the end of the chapter and be enlightened as to their true condition.

Three homosexuals on a Vancouver talk show brazenly admitted that they chose to live that way and they wanted inroads to the elementary schools to present their life-style to the pupils. They maintained that it is their God-given right to live that way and every child should have the right of choice as well. I agree. God does not control anyone; every person has the right of his will, to choose his destiny. The Bible says, "Judas went to his place," indicating that he chose that place for himself. It is a right with a terrible responsibility of choosing rightly. You can either accept or reject God's proclamation for living in purity; but to live in sin by personal choice and consider yourself "born again" is utter self-deception.

If the educators in our institutions of higher biblical learning cannot take a firm stand on the written Word of God, then they will be equated with the blind leaders of the blind. Are we as Mennonites already in the condition of the church of Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29)?

Is there no light left in God's people, that we will raise the moral standard of lifelong fidelity in marriage, and be shocked at the slaughter of the unborn innocents more vile than Herod's action at Bethlehem? Do we hesitate to indicate to doctors who perform the abortions that they are accessories to murder? Can't we renounce the spirit of this age that has allowed various forms of occultism, spiritism, and heathen rites to have easy access into our institutions of learning.?

If there is to be repentance by the church members and pastors, it should be repentance for the fact that we allow adulterous persons to remain in the brotherhood, in leading positions, who show no sign of repentance, or cannot repent because of God's Word in Hebrews 6:4: "For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened . . . who have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, if they then commit apostasy, since they crucify again the Son of God and hold him up to contempt."

It is cause for tears, remorse, and sorrow that our natural relationships are held in higher esteem than God's Word, and we disobey God and still expect him to reveal his power to us. Oh, for a cleansing in the church according to 2 Chronicles 7:14 before it is too late. *Peter G. Harms, 2325 Grant Street, Clearbrook, British Columbia V2T 2M8*
July 8

MMHS consultant is needed

Dear Editor: I agree with Mr. Raudenbush's letter (June 6 issue), that "Retarded Are Important." Mennonite Mental Health Services are again "letting things get lost between the cracks."

Many good things were beginning to happen in the interest of developmentally disabled persons and their families through churches, homes, and schools. Now MMHS decides to change the system, eliminate the job of the developmental disabilities consultant (Nancy K. Williams), and supposedly divide her responsibilities between the various Mennonite mental health centers.

The MMHS Board must have completely ignored the results from the evaluation conducted on the consultant's work in the past year. From many individuals and institutions recommendations were received to continue because of the excellent work being done. Families with retarded children found there was someone who cared enough to come visit them, offer encouragement, counsel, and helpful resources; churches were stimulated and inspired to minister to the *whole* body of Christ, including handicapped persons; students considering careers in developmental disabilities had a listening ear and were given helpful resources through Nancy.

How can the mental health centers (who have their hands full taking care of persons with quite different needs than those of the developmentally disabled) meet all of the crying needs of developmentally disabled persons and their families? I feel MMHS should take a second look at *what they have eliminated.*

I would like to encourage people who have received help from the developmental disabilities consultant to raise their voices in protest to the action taken by MMHS. Either write to the executive director of MMHS: Vernon Neufeld, 4905 N. West Avenue, Suite 118, Fresno, California 93705; or to the editor of your church paper. Thanks to Raudenbush's letter, I was sufficiently stirred to write my feelings on this matter. *Marjorie Ediger, 10102 West 64th Place, Arvada, Colorado 80004*
July 7

MMHS responds to Ediger

Dear Editor: This is in response to the letter by Marjorie Ediger of Arvada, Colorado.

1. Mennonite Mental Health Services in the early 1970s was given a mandate by the Mennonite Central Committee to assume inter-Mennonite responsibility for services to the mentally retarded and other developmentally disabled (DD) persons. An initial two-year experimental program (1974-75) was launched, later expanded to five years (through 1978), with MCC approval and funds, whereby a broad educational and consultative task would be undertaken in Canada and the United States. The five-year plan will be completed this year.
2. An evaluation of the DD program (not

the consultants) was undertaken in 1977 by MCC with MMHS cooperation to determine the future after the completion of the five-year plan. The response to a questionnaire sent out by MCC (Akron) and MCC (Canada) to selected individuals was excellent and strongly favored continuation of the DD program. A number of suggestions for modifying the program also were made.

3. The MMHS developmentally disabled advisory committee in April 1978 considered the future possibilities and drew up several guidelines for the direction of the DD program after this year. These were shared with the MMHS board in April but no action was taken. They also were shared with the MCC executive committee on June 26 and approved as guidelines for developing a program plan. Briefly, though tentatively, the guidelines provide for a sharper focus of the program (one cannot do everything), a larger reference council to guide the program, some central office staff to consult and to coordinate the program, and the appointment of area resource persons for better local coverage.

4. The advisory committee is now working on the plan for 1979 and beyond. A final program plan will be developed for the October MMHS board meeting. If approved, it will then be presented to MCC in December as part of the overall MMHS projection and budget. MCC approval is required before the plan can be put into effect.

So, more to the point, you should know: (a) The consultancy is not being eliminated; the plan, if approved by MCC, is to continue the program and build on what has happened so far. (b) The work which the consultants have done will not be divided among the several mental health centers, although it is conceivable that one or more center staff members will become area resource persons if otherwise they are qualified. (c) The MMHS board has not ignored the results of the evaluation; indeed, it is because of these results that a program beyond 1978 is being planned and proposed. (d) the MMHS board has not taken any action yet; this will occur in October, so there is no action to protest. The future of the DD program is still in the process of being determined and should be decided within the next six months. *Vernon Neufeld, director, MMHS, 4905 North West, Suite 118, Fresno, California 93705* July 17

Review

Today's Pastor in Tomorrow's World, *by Carnegie Samuel Calian (Hawthorne Books, New York, 1977, 153 pages) is reviewed by Melvin Koehn, pastor of the Mount Olivet Mennonite Church, Huron, South Dakota 57350.*

Calian's position is strongly reflected in the book. His conclusions often are more liberal than those of our theological persuasion, which can be expected from his position as an instructor in a broad ecumenical field. His basic premise in the book is definitely within the scope of our persuasion. He calls for tomorrow's pastor to be a grass roots theologian. That is refreshing, solid, and biblical. It is a challenge to pastors of all theological schools, although we may be unwilling to acknowledge it and yield to it.

There is a desperate need to return to theological thinking in a world where the pastor often surrounds himself with organization and activities which occupy our total time. Calian calls on the pastor to be instrumental in teaching the people how to relate the Christian message to the human situations confronting people in their professions.

A breakdown of eight distinguishable types of ministry is described. His definitions serve as a valuable guide for evaluating one's personal ministry. The challenge increases with his call to a revival of the pilgrim concept for both pastor and laity, in contrast to being only tourists. It becomes a personal challenge.

Flags of caution need to be raised at a number of points. His promotion of women as grass roots theologians is based on our equality in Christ. But he fails to make the biblical distinction between equality of worth and equality of role. The Lord does make a strong case for distinction of role both in the church and in marriage. Calian implicates that a pastor's call to the pastorate and ordination vows are subject to change, striking at the concept of a lifelong commitment.

While the main premise to which he calls today's pastors is old, it is a stimulating challenge to become active in tomorrow's world. His challenge is necessary and demands our response.

Beside my Bible

Mary F. Heisey

The Fateful Years, 1913-1923, *by Gerhard Lohrenz (Christian Press, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1977, 141 pages).*

This historical novel about a decade that made a difference examines the twentieth-century European Mennonite viewpoint of nonresistance. In it, Peter Braun, a young Russian Mennonite of German descent, serves in the forestry service, a Red Cross unit, and the *Selbstschutz* (self-defense) movement.

Despite its old-fashioned narrative style, this fact-filled story richly portrays human nature. It informs, it shocks, it blesses. Its readers will sense some of the turbulence, anguish, and heartbreak which invaded peaceful Mennonite villages of the southern Ukraine long ago in this century.

Storm Tossed, *by Gerhard Lohrenz (Christian Press, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1976, 205 pages).*

Put this personal story of a Canadian Mennonite from Russia on your fall reading list. Its masterful prologue, written out of deep love and great disappointment, throbs with Russian sadness. Life in Zagradowka, World War I, the Russian Revolution, service in two armies, emigration, farming, teaching, and pastoring in Canada were all part of the incredible faith journey of Gerhard Lohrenz. No doubt his sense of humor, refreshing views, and lifelong respect for education enlarged his strength during adversity.

Storm tossed, yes, but his memoir preserves the rainbow in Mennonite history.

Growing Places, *by Jay Kesler (Fleming H. Revell Company, Old Tappan, New Jersey, 1978, 128 pages).*

This book chronicles the faith-changing experiences of Jay Kesler, president of Youth for Christ, with honesty, humor, and humility. Kesler has learned that life is "a continuous process of relying on God. I can never 'arrive.'"

Meditation

So great salvation

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews presents a very challenging question in chapter 2, verse 3: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" What is the meaning of this salvation that the writer to the Hebrews has in mind? Webster defines salvation as the act of saving, or the state of being saved from loss or some calamity. But the meaning in question here is spiritual—the setting free of the soul from sin and death. The death is spiritual death, to be lost eternally if one "neglects so great salvation."

Why is this salvation so great? It is so great because of what it cost and what was required to make it a fact. It cost heaven's best, God the Father's own beloved Son, who left heaven's glory to take upon himself the form of man, and to die upon Calvary's cross for the remission of our lost sinful condition (John 3:16). Still another reason why this salvation is so great and what it includes is found in 1 John 3:1-2, which speaks about our sonship.

Let me suggest two types of neglect. First, neglecting to *appropriate* this so great salvation, this free gift. The second type of neglect is failure to *propagate* or to make known the way of salvation to a lost and spiritually dead humanity.

Salvation embodies all the processes and redemptive acts of the gospel such as redemption, grace, justification, forgiveness, propitiation, imputation, sanctification, and glorification. Redemption means to buy back, to set free, as redeeming one from slavery of sin. Grace (imparted) is the kindness and love of God our Savior toward us—undeserved favor. Justification means to be cleared of all committed sin, to be freed from every charge. Justification originates in grace through the redemptive and propitiatory work of Christ.

Forgiveness and remission as used in Scripture, mean to send away, to send off. The sinner is not to be kept charged. But the primary scriptural meaning of forgiveness is to separate the sin from the sinner who has come to Christ for salvation. Propitiation and reconciliation are another two words that work in harmony for our salvation. Propitiation is the act of Christ in sacrifice on our behalf, in satisfying the righteous demands of the law through his death on the cross of Calvary. Here God is propitiated; he is satisfied with Christ's sacrifice. God is not reconciled, but he is propitiated and the sinner reconciled. Imputation is another act of God that describes the greatness of salvation. It means to reconcile, to set to the account of. It is an act of God whereby he accounts righteousness to the believer.

Sanctification is another great inclusive word of salvation. The word itself means to be separated, to be set apart from the old unregenerated sinful nature to a redemption purchased through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and this separation is for a holy purpose. First, we are sanctified positionally through the blood of Jesus Christ; we are set apart in Christ. This transaction is perfect; it is complete. In practical sanctification we, who are set apart for God by the blood of Christ, are now called upon to walk in this world in holiness of life daily. The third aspect of sanctification is progressive. As we daily meditate on God's Word, we learn his will for us and we walk in obedience to the Word of God.

Glorification is the last of the redemptive acts and is the ultimate progress of our salvation. Webster defines glory as honor, distinction, the beauty and splendor of the divine nature. The moment a lost sinner comes in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ and accepts him as Savior, he receives the complete process of salvation. He is a new creation and is, as such, glorified, and has a glorious and exalted position of having become a son of God.

Arley Sprunger

A five-step sermon

In the crowded sanctuary a tiny hand slipped into mine.
We walked together for five steps
before her trusting heart skipped a beat,
and, eyes searching, she scampered to her father.

The aura of the five steps—
warmth, trust, love, security, joy—
was not shattered for me.

Vic Reimer

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CONTRIBUTORS

Dan Steiner, 1717 Morehouse Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana 46514 is a teacher of handicapped children. He wrote *The river of life* for a friend, Len Smucker, who has cancer. Len did the calligraphy. Both are members of the Hively Mennonite Church.

Mike Shadick, 2375 Como Avenue West, St. Paul, Minnesota 55108 is a free-lance writer.

Glee Yoder is a member of the Church of the Brethren General Board, 1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, Illinois 60120.

Mary F. Heisey, 56 East Street, York, Pennsylvania 17403 does regular book reviews for *The Mennonite*.

This week's meditation writers are Arley Sprunger, Swiss Village, Berne, Indiana 46711 and Vic Reimer, associate editor of *The Mennonite*.

CREDITS

531, RNS; 533, Church of the Brethren; 536, MCC photo by Herold Jantz; 538, Mennonite Hospital.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

From Russia with questions

Thirty-eight of us (thirty-one from Canada, seven from the United States) visited the Soviet Union from August 9-23. Ours was not a business or study trip, but a Menno Travel tour. We spent time at Leningrad, Alma-Ata, Tashkent, Zaporozhye, and Moscow. From Zaporozhye we drove out to Chortitz and to the Molotschna.

I had been to the USSR in 1976. Now, two years later, it was markedly evident that things are changing. The food was more varied, hotel rooms had been repaired, people were better dressed, the atmosphere felt more open, and the people were even friendlier than before.

Of course, in a controlled society, the guides gave us a "party line." In Leningrad, the "Venice of the North," they repeated the story of their heroic resistance to the Nazis during the 900-days siege of World War II and their ultimate victory. Many monuments stand as reminders of this feat. Not only here, but in all of the USSR, the naive person could easily get the impression that history began on October 20, 1917. Gigantic exhibitions of economic achievement portray the accomplishments of "Soviet power." In only one circumstance did a guide refer to something having had its beginnings pre-1917 (in 1912).

From Leningrad we flew about 2,000 miles to Alma-Ata, capital of the Kazakhstan Republic in Soviet Asia, a city of about 900,00. Here we had our first minor crisis (no soap and no toilet paper). The soap we were able to buy in a store, but the *Moscow News* had to serve in place of tissue paper.

At Alma-Ata, "place of apples," many of our group met their relatives. Because Bernhard Sawatzky, one of the USSR delegates to the World Conference, had told me that the Alma-Ata Church-Mennonites congregation had been recently registered, I and three others visited this group on Sunday, August 13, for their afternoon German worship service. They have about 170 members; about eighty attended the four-hour afternoon service, following a three-hour morning service in Russian. Of this afternoon group, over a third were young people. Following the sermon by Jacob Penner the youth sang a number of special songs to guitar accompaniment. It was at this time we noted that half of their hymnbooks were hand copied, including the music. Then elder Cornelius Wiebe made the closing. As part of it, he invited us to introduce ourselves and tell something about our churches. They also told us the story of their congregation.

When the service was over, we had a beautiful time of fellowship. Suddenly the young people's leader asked me if I'd be willing to respond to some questions from the young people (in Low German). This began another two-hour session of exchange and singing. The adults also all participated. The group reported twenty conversions in their congregation so far this year.

Their warmth and enthusiasm to us was deeply moving. The questions began about baptismal form and dress. Then they asked about young people in our churches, the songs we sing, our theology—is it evangelical, how are church leaders chosen, and about the World Conference. They pledged their prayers for us and requested ours on their behalf.

For me Alma-Ata was the high point of our Soviet stay.

Our next stop was Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, a city of 1.8 million. Again, many of our group met relatives and friends. We thoroughly enjoyed eating watermelons and cantaloupes.

Zaporozhye still felt like home to many in our group. They visited buildings in the region where they once lived and worked. For some the tears of recognition flowed freely. Others found that all has changed since they left the Ukraine.

The last stop was Moscow, the city of eight million, feverishly busy in anticipation of the 1980 Olympics. New hotels under construction and fresh paintings and restorations of old buildings are evident all over.

I left the USSR on August 23 with a lot of questions. At the end of two weeks in a one-channel press and media I was starving for news about the rest of the world. I was also hurting for those peoples who still feel daily police pressure. I choked on the propaganda.

But I had a strange experience in West Germany. As I saw a group of young people littering the sidewalk and freely necking in public, I felt angry towards them. Why is it that we in our free society are so careless?

We have a lot to learn. The church had a lot to do with bringing the revolution to Russia in 1917. Its history pages deserve to blush in shame. And that may also apply to some of our Mennonite history in Russia.

More important to me is a reflection upon what the Christian church is doing today in the West. Are we contributing to pressure that will collapse free society? What do you think? I suspect that we are.

Bernie Wiebe

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:34 SEPTEMBER 26, 1978

Inside this issue:

Young children

The teacher

Are we called for such a time?

To live is Christ

Walter Klaassen

Young children (condemned sinners or children of God)

Mennonites have become increasingly conscious in recent years of the ambiguities surrounding the place of children in the church. There is an awareness of a reversion to child, if not infant, baptism. Moreover, modern studies in psychology have raised serious questions concerning traditional ways of understanding the behavior of children. With the rest of Protestantism Mennonites have for a long time practically accepted the view of the total sinfulness of even very small children. This is now being challenged.

The Anabaptists, ancestors of the Mennonites, already strongly challenged that view in the sixteenth century. It was part of the controversy they had with Catholics and Protestants. The old teaching was that the child was conceived through an act of sin, which then made the child that was born totally corrupt. Infant baptism developed in the church in part to deal with this crisis. Baptism came to be the rite by which the corruption was washed away.

With that view of children baptism was very important. It is therefore not surprising that there was such strong resistance to Anabaptists who denied that the child was totally corrupt, and who therefore also denied the necessity for infant baptism.

One can find hundreds of statements from Anabaptist writings in which they defend the innocence of children. The child is regarded as being in God's gracious and fatherly care until, as one Anabaptist said, "he spoils himself with the works of his hands." A time comes in children's lives when they learn to distinguish good and evil. When that happens the child becomes responsible and then baptism upon confession of sin and faith in Christ becomes necessary for salvation. Until then sin does not harm the child.

One of the most perceptive Anabaptist leaders was Pilgram Marpeck. It appears that he accepted the evidence of human life itself for making his judgments and was not inclined, as were other Anabaptists, to press human reality into a framework of doctrine. The story of Jesus blessing the children was regularly used to give biblical support of infant baptism. Marpeck, however, said that to identify children as evildoers was to condemn them. Thus the church condemns children, he wrote, but Jesus blessed them and received them. Whose word ought one to take?

Because children are accepted by God, the argument continues, they ought to be accepted by the church as well. Consequently, children were considered a part of the Christian congregation until the child made its own decision when it came to the age of discretion. This position was clearly taken by Marpeck when he provided for the rite of infant dedication or consecration in a writing of 1532. The complete statement follows:

"The infants shall be named before a congregation and God shall duly be praised for them; thanks and blessing shall be given to his fatherly goodness that, through Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior, he has also had mercy on the innocent creatures and that, without discrimination, he has taken them in his hands and assured them of the kingdom of God. We rightfully owe him gratitude at all times for his goodness. In the liberty of the Spirit and Word of Chirst, we should pray for everyone, and also for the child, that God would also in future give us knowledge of his gracious will. . . . We admonish the parents to cleanse their conscience, as much as lies in them, with respect to the child, to do whatever is needed to raise the child up to the praise and glory of God, and to commit the child to God until it is clearly seen that God is working in him for faith or unfaith."

Parents are to faithfully train their children in God-awareness, to assure them that they are accepted by God and that they belong to God as his children.

This action places children firmly in the community of faith. If God has accepted them who are we to reject them? The rite naturally places responsibility on the parents of the child. They are faithfully to train the children in God-awareness, to assure them that they are accepted by God and that they belong to God as his children. For all of this the parents clearly have the support of the church.

After all that, God may work in the children for faith or unfaith; that is to say, we don't really know why some come to faith and others don't. Marpeck seems to imply that if children do not come to faith in Christ, the parents may not simply be charged with neglect or with not having taken their responsibility seriously. Thus both children and parents remain free under God. The children are not burdened with having to preserve the reputation of the parents, and the parents don't have to take the responsibility for the actions of the children after they have come to maturity.

All of this, it seems to me, is implied by the rite of child dedication and the view of the child, as accepted by God, which underlies it.

I personally accept Marpeck's view on this question and by implication reject all those views which, even today, make condemned sinners of small children. I reject also what is today's parallel to infant baptism even among Mennonites, namely the pressure on young children to confess their guilt and accept God's grace. The effect of this process is normally the creation of a load of guilt which the child carries into adulthood and, only too often, into the grave, thus being condemned to a lifetime of slavery. But children can accept, easily and joyfully, the friendliness and graciousness of God, and thus live as truly free people. The best gift parents can give their children is to help them do this.

The teacher

Margaret Froese

"I see the mind of a five-year-old as a volcano with two vents; destructiveness and creativeness. And I see that to the extent that we widen the creative channel, we atrophy the destructive one." Sylvia Ashton-Warner

Legend has it that Rabbi Schneur Zalsman, one of the great Hasidic rabbis of the early nineteenth century, was imprisoned in St. Petersburg on false charges. The chief of police, a thoughtful man, was struck by the quiet majesty of the rabbi. He would often engage in conversation with the rabbi and one day their discussion turned to the story of the Garden of Eden. Why was it, the official asked, that a God who was all-knowing had to call out when Adam was hiding and ask him "Where art thou?"

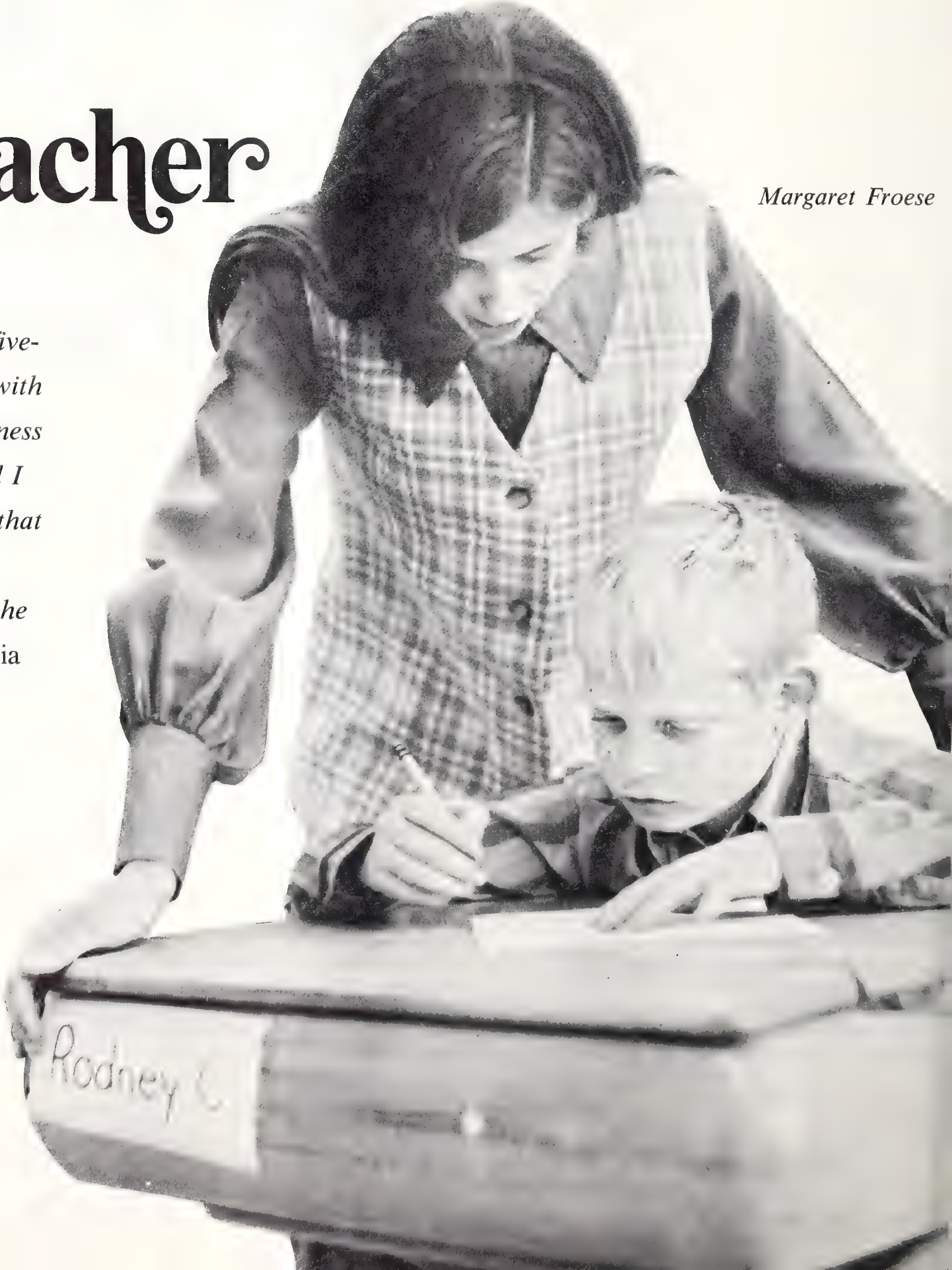
"You do not understand the meaning of the question," the rabbi answered. "This question God asks of every person in every generation. After all your wanderings, after all your efforts, after all your years, O man, where art thou?"

It is a question asked of societies as well as of individuals. In the twentieth century we must not only take stock of where we are but also of where we are going. Ours is a new era of evolutionary history and one in which rapid change is a dominant consequence. If we believe that our educational structures (home, school, and church) are the foundations of our societies, then we must admit the urgent need to examine and reevaluate these structures.

What is wrong with education in this century that shaped men like Hitler and Stalin, who were cheered and worshiped by their countries' masses? What's wrong with education that permits us to tolerate the genocide in Africa and Asia? What is wrong with education on this continent where, in the name of progress, we have polluted our air and water so as to endanger the lives of all its inhabitants?

It is obvious that the educational institutions of the recent past have created a society which records too many examples of man's inhumanity to man.

In the last quarter century a frenzied effort has been made by educators, psychologists,



"What goes on in the classroom is an international matter and inasmuch as creativity is suppressed in childhood, it will violently erupt in adulthood." Sylvia Ashton-Warner

and sociologists in the Western world to try and take hold of the enormous task of remaking our educational system, in the hope that we will be able to create and maintain a more humane society.

My sixteen years of involvement in the education of younger children has been, for the most part, exciting and enjoyable. I became aware of the tremendous challenge and responsibility that a teacher accepts after our oldest daughter started school. This awareness prompted me to continually search for new ideas and insights to improve my classroom environment.

The book *Teacher* by Sylvia Ashton-Warner has had a great influence on me and my development as a teacher. This author was teaching Maori children in New Zealand and found that the imposed British curriculum didn't work in that culture. So she designed her own curriculum, which she called "organic teaching." Ashton-Warner believed that she had discovered a method of teaching that can make the human being naturally and spontaneously peaceable. She writes:

"I see the mind of a five-year-old as a volcano with two vents; destructiveness and creativeness. And I see that to the extent that we widen the creative channel, we atrophy the destructive one.

"So often I have said in the past, when a war is over the statesmen should not go into conference with one another but should turn their attention to the infant room, since it is from there that comes peace or war. And that's how I see organic teaching. It helps to set the creative pattern in a mind while it is yet malleable, and in this role is a humble contribution to peace."

If she is right, then one of the most urgent concerns for us today is the kind of adults that are teaching, especially our younger children. In a society where the institution of the family is seriously threatened and going to church is not very fashionable, the school is often the only place children can go for the love and guidance they need in the developing years.

At another point Ashton-Warner claims, "What goes on in the classroom is an international matter and inasmuch as creativity is suppressed in childhood it will violently erupt in adulthood." Is that one of the reasons for the tremendous increase in violence and crime in the world today?

I believe that parents should have more say in the selection of teachers for their children. We can pick and choose our doctors, dentists, lawyers, and plumbers, yet we have very little control over the adults who are in charge of our children for five and a half of the most productive hours in a day for ten months of the year.

The only alternatives, for those who can afford it, are the private schools. We Mennonites have been operating private junior and senior schools for a long time, but what about private primary and elementary schools?

The late C. C. Neufeld, Winnipeg, told a group of us twenty years ago that it would become very difficult for our children to acquire the Mennonite faith and maintain our traditions in an urban environment. He strongly recommended private Mennonite primary and elementary schools.

In my experience, children have a voracious appetite for love, knowledge, and justice. If it is the theme of human conscience and the wisdom of love that is woefully lacking in our present learning institutions, then we can best fill this gap by exposing our children to adults who possess these virtues.

Let us never forget that the purpose of knowledge is to improve the human condition. Knowledge and life are indivisible, even as life and death are inseparable. We *are* what we know and think and feel. Our recently acquired ability to destroy or to create life itself has left us with unlimited and unprecedented choices for good and evil.

"The school should be conceived as a creche of living where people can still be changed," observes Aston-Warner. Persons must be restored to the fulness of personhood while deepening and enhancing our communion with the universe.

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News

Master stone carver retires with Adam

Washington, D.C.—Roger Morigi, above, has spent a lifetime carving stone figures. But that's not what he would say. He would say he was building a cathedral. For twenty-three years the master carver has been carving stone furnishings for the ever-continuing process of building the Washington Cathedral, begun in 1907, the same year in which Morigi was born. Morigi's last piece is the almost completed sculpture of Adam shown above. The cathedral, seat of the Episcopal Diocese, is made of Indiana limestone without a single steel beam. It may be the last great Gothic building to be built anywhere according to a United Press International report. Money has run out and there is a debt of $11.5 million so work has almost stopped. Morigi regrets the way buildings are made today. The cathedral, he says, will last 1,000 years and will never need repair. The sculpture of Adam was installed in the church's west entrance during the summer.

Scripture distribution waxes but Mennonite support wanes

New York (ABS)—Although over 400,000,000 Scriptures were distributed for the first time in a single year by the Bible societies of the world, the 1977 report released by the American Bible Society shows a continuing decline in support from Mennonites.

Last year Mennonites of all affiliations contributed $30,340, or approximately twenty-two cents per member to the American Bible Society. This was a decrease of more than $2,000 from 1976. Donations by Mennonites to the ABS peaked in 1970 when the total was almost $42,000. However, the semiannual report for 1978 shows an increase of $5,000 in comparison to the first six months of 1977.

Worldwide the United Bible Societies have a goal of doubling contributions by 1980 to the budget for distributing Scriptures.

The 1977 report highlights certain events. In Latin America the distribution of New Testaments increased 57 percent. Mexico reached a distribution of more than 220,000 New Testaments as compared with 90,000 in 1976. For the first time in many years Cuban churches received permission to import 2,500 Bibles and 2,500 New Testaments.

In the Muslim countries of Iran, Iraq, and Jordan more than 19,000 Bibles were distributed in 1977 as compared to less than 3,000 the previous year. Distribution throughout all of Asia increased to 171,000,000 Scriptures, up 50,000,000 from 1976.

Distribution opportunities for complete Bibles and New Testaments are limited in many areas of the world because the level of literacy is so low. *Good News for New Readers* is a graded series of Scripture selections for those just beginning to read. These are now available in more than 300 languages.

Chinese Christians plot evangelization strategy

Toronto, Canada (LCWE)—The third North American Congress of Chinese Evangelicals, held at York University here in mid-August, heard repeated calls for evangelization of all segments of the Chinese community, coupled with cross-cultural outreach to the non-Chinese world.

Professional people and students figure largely in many of the 280 congregations that have emerged in Canada and the United States. The 300 delegates to the Toronto congress were warned that they should not neglect important groups in their ethnic community. Specifically the elderly, the North American-born Chinese, and working people were cited. Failure to evangelize them could mean that congregations would continue as "middle-class, affluent churches existing in the midst of a heterogeneous (Chinese) community," stated a report.

Delegates were also reminded that their churches were part of a larger fellowship and that their churches should not become ethnic and cultural enclaves. "We Chinese should pray about the larger world beyond that of our kinsmen," contended Eddie Lo. "What of those non-Christians that further crowd our world?" he asked.

MCC responds to flooding in India and Laos

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—Mennonite Central Commitee has given emergency aid to flood-stricken villagers in India and Laos.

Although flooding in India is usually an annual event, floods in late July and early August were of an unprecedented seriousness, killing hundreds, and causing vast damage to crops and property. The most severely affected states are Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. Lutheran World Service is the church agency taking the lead in aid to the flood victims, but MCC is providing assistance to LWS with food, clothing, and material for tubewells.

In Laos the request has come for corn and rice seed to replant crops destroyed by the swollen Mekong River. "The flooding comes at a particularly difficult time for Laos," report MCC workers John and Beulah Hess Yoder. The Laos infrastructure was strained to the limit in distributing rice received from other countries after last year's drought. Now much of the rice in storage has been spoiled by flood waters. To avoid famine flooded areas will have to be replanted immediately with fast growing varieties of rice. These varieties, however, require large amounts of insecticides and fertilizers.

Who will put an end to militarism?

Plainfield, Indiana (NCP)—People intent on doing something for peace will meet October 5-8 at a national conference in Green Lake, Wisconsin. Invited to the meeting are 300 persons—Brethren, Friends, and Mennonites.

Named the New Call to Peacemaking, this coalition of historic peace churches believes that "the time has come for all Christians and people of all faiths to renounce war on religious and moral grounds."

During the last year twenty-six regional New Call to Peacemaking meetings, involving more than 1500 persons, took a new look at the teachings of their churches. They gave special attention to war and violence which they continue to see as denials of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Not surprisingly the groups agreed to urge upon all governments "effective steps toward international disarmament." However, none of the regional meetings expressed the hope that politicians, soldiers, and diplomats would put an end to war. Rather, the thought was that people at the grass-roots level must demand a change in the system. Further, the idea was often expressed that tax resistance and civil disobedience are necessary tactics in convincing governments that a new order can bring security in place of the present insecurity.

A New Call to Peacemaking conference which convened at Old Chatham, New York, last April, asked itself rhetorically, "Are we going to pray for peace, and pay for war?" A similar conference in Wichita, Kansas, gave its encouragement to "individuals who feel called to resist the payment of the military portion of their federal taxes."

When the national conference convenes in Green Lake it will be receiving requests from the regional meetings for a strong position on tax resistance proposals. It will also be asked to give guidance to individuals and church organizations on approaches to tax resistance. Theological, economic, and social justice issues are also on the agenda.

"Citizens should organize themselves and act without waiting for government, especially the major powers, to take positive action," says Robert Johansen in a paper being studied by the Green Lake delegates.

In another document prepared for the Green Lake meeting, Lois Barrett, a Mennonite journalist from Wichita, Kansas, notes that the peace churches have long "recognized refusal to pay war taxes as one of many valid witnesses against war."

In 1973 the Church of the Brethren recommended "that all who feel the concern be encouraged to express their protest and testimonies through letters accompanying their tax returns, whether accompanied by payment or not." In 1971 the General Conference Mennonite Church said, "We stand by those who feel called to resist the payment of that portion of taxes being used for military purposes."

The number of persons within the peace churches actually withholding a portion of their taxes is still thought to be small, but it is growing. The Internal Revenue Service will not release figures on the number of tax resisters in the United States.

Will the New Call to Peacemaking action move even religious people to take the necessary steps to build a "world based on peaceful order rather than the 'balance of terror' fueled by nuclear arsenals and spreading arms sales"?

The Green Lake meeting, according to Dale Brown, Brethren theologian who will open the conference, will issue a call to the peace churches and those who sympathize with their aims to take new risks. "Biblical imperatives call us to die to our idolatrous sense of security in the arms race," says Brown, "and to become alive to the good news of peace, the ministry of reconciliation, the way of suffering love, and resurrection faith in the Kingdom coming."

Members of the Green Lake planning group include John K. Stoner, Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pennsylvania; Lorton Heusel, Friends United Meeting, Richmond, Indiana; and Chuck Boyer, Church of the Brethren, Elgin, Illinois. Coordinator for the New Call to Peacemaking is Robert J. Rumsey, Plainfield, Indiana.

"Offering of letters" in churches to seek reform of US aid

New York (BW)—"Aid for self-reliance" will be the theme of a major nationwide campaign of letters to Congress from people in American churches.

The "offering of letters" will begin after the November election and continue into 1979, according to Bishop Thomas J. Gumbleton, president of Bread for the World, the Christian citizens' movement on hunger which is sponsoring the drive.

The letters campaign will attempt to bring about changes in next year's foreign aid legislation so that it is oriented more toward self-reliant development of poor countries and their peoples.

"Our aid programs are still riddled with conflicting aims, the result of which in many instances is increased dependency rather than self-reliance. But the long, hard way out of hunger and poverty is self-reliant development," says Arthur Simon, executive director.

"Take our food aid, for example. It has saved millions of lives over the years. But it has often put cheap food on the market in poor countries and discouraged peasant farmers from becoming more food productive. Our aid should always be tied to firm agreements with recipient countries to upgrade their own food producing capability. And this should be done in ways that benefit the very poor, through greater access to land, improved technologies, and jobs," Simon adds.

Previous "offering of letters" campaigns have been credited with primary responsibility for passage of major legislation—the Right-to-Food resolutions in 1976, and in 1977, a farmer-held grain reserve program.

In churches throughout the country people will be invited to write personal letters to their members of Congress on the aid reform issue, and place the letters—addressed and stamped—in a special collection basket on any Sunday selected by a congregation. The letters will then be mailed to Washington, DC.

Once banned voice can be heard again

Johannesburg, South Africa (EPS)—Removal of the government ban on the black ecumenical newspaper *The Voice* has been greeted enthusiastically by the South African Council of Churches (SACC). The paper had won widespread respect for its coverage of racial issues.

In a message to the World Council of Churches SACC communications director David Wanless said, "We have known the editor of *The Voice*, Revelation Ntoula, as a committed and concerned Christian who, together with his staff, has sought to highlight the many injustices prevalent in South Africa and to propose the radical, peaceful changes that would help to make South African society conform more closely to Christian norms. We welcome the action of the authorities in allowing *The Voice* to resume publication unhindered. . . ."

Trees change land and weather

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—A vision and hard work have changed many barren Algerian hills into young pine forests since 1962. Thick forests which once marked the Algerian landscape disappeared through a combination of centuries of imprudent wood cutting and the effects of a war of independence. In 1962 renewing those forests was the vision of Vern Preheim, MCC worker, and Jean Carbonare of the French Protestant relief agency CIMADE. The two dreamed of a massive food-for-work project to plant trees. At that time it was already clear that if reforestation did not occur the Sahara Desert would cross the mountains and ruin Algerian agriculture irreversibly. A pilot project was so successful that a large-scale program was begun, largely carried out by the Christian Committee for Service in Algeria to which MCC belonged. From 1962 to 1965 about twenty-one million trees were planted, reforesting roughly ninety square miles. In mid-1965 the program was turned over to the Algerian government in line with the target date for training local leadership. Planting continues. It is estimated that 80 percent of the 100 million trees planted to date have survived. This has changed the weather cycle, producing regularity in rainfall where reforestation has been done. Although more than 100 MCC personnel have served in Algeria since the early 1960s this year may mark the end of MCC's present involvement because there are no replacements for four terminating teachers.

Paraguayans want personnel for handicapped

Fresno, Califonia (MMHS)—The three Chaco Mennonite colonies in Paraguay are planning to expand their services to the mentally handicapped and are requesting personnel from North America to help.

Current plans call for two *Sonderschule* or special schools at Filadelfia and Loma Plata and a *Heimschule* or residence school for children at Filadelfia. The colonies are seeking three new staff persons: a special education teacher, a school psychologist, and a mental health educator for the projects.

Hans Duerksen of Filadelfia, a speech therapist and leader of the planning group, states that the *Heimschule* will be begun as soon as possible. The colonies also are planning a group home for adult mentally retarded persons. Together with this home they want a vocational training program.

Besides a special education teacher for Loma Plata the colonies are requesting Mennonite Mental Health Services for a short-term school psychologist to help them study their situation. Another need is for a person who can work with different groups in the colonies on education, prevention, and early detection of mental handicaps.

Persons interested in work of this nature should write Vernon Neufeld, Mennonite Mental Health Services, 4905 North West Avenue, Suite 118, Fresno, California 93705. Personnel need to speak High German and preferably Low German also.

Christian Peace Conference keeps selective conscience

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—"God's Call for Solidarity" was the theme of the fifth All-Christian Peace Assembly of the Christian Peace Conference (CPC) held in Prague, Czechoslovakia in June. About 600 persons attended from eighty-four countries.

Since the most recent assembly in 1971 the CPC has greatly extended its membership and scope of activity. Continental conferences have been formed in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Twenty-five Americans attended, participating by way of Christians Associated with Eastern Europe (CAREE). Among the Americans was Paul Peachey, professor at Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, who is Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section liaison with CPC and CAREE.

Critics of CPC in the United States have long been unhappy with the "selective conscience" of the organization. Arms buildup and human rights violations were condemned by the CPC, critics observed, as practiced by nonsocialist or Western powers. "But criticism of socialist powers, at least those allied to the Soviet Union, could not be heard among CPC pronouncements," notes Peachey.

Peachey continues, "The 'Message to Churches and Christians of the World,' issued by the assembly, observed that the military-industrial complex is seeking to reinforce its exploitation of the world, is intensifying the arms race, and is engaging in subtle forms of anticommunist propaganda. The assessment contains much truth, alas, but is a selective assessment nonetheless."

The situation in the late 1950s out of which CPC was born is described by Peachey as "churchmen and theologians reflecting on the moral failure of Christendom, seeking to come to terms with the new socialist order as judgment and as possibility, but distrusted ecumenically in the West as they made the effort."

Since then the CPC focus has shifted from East-West confrontation in central Europe to the developing world. "Little doubt remains in the CPC advocacy," reflects Peachey, "that socialism is the way, indeed the only way for the developing world to go if there is to be liberation and peace."

Peachey concludes: "The CPC must be comprehended and accepted in terms of its context and mission, but it must also be held accountable to Christ's people throughout the world, if in fact its conscience speaks selectively. Obviously the world and its future is far richer and more complex than the dichotomy between socialism and the nonsocialist West."

Words & deeds

Columnist Malachi B. Martin writes in *National Review* (June 9) that evangelist Billy Graham's assertion last year that the church is alive and well in Hungary is far from the truth. "Every church group in Hungary suffers from what we in this country call persecution: constant surveillance by state security, especially on church leaders. . . ; a crippling system of permits and legal hassles that hamstring all religious movements; required state approval for all religious activity; strangling limits on religious education and worship, and ludicrously mean limits on clerical recruitment . . . ; active discrimination against all who support the church; censorship of all church publications and sermons; imprisonment, and sometimes torture, for recalcitrant religious activists."

The American Friends Service Committee has said that it is selling over 45,000 shares of stock worth $1.3 million in US firms operating in South Africa because the companies continue to do business in that country where white race supremacy is the law of the land. "While we respect their views, the action by the companies does little to end exploitation for 81 percent of the population," said AFSC Executive Secretary Louis W. Schneider. "Over 400 US firms operate in South Africa. Their global profits are certainly boosted by cheap black labor which has helped the companies gain up to 18 percent profit rate on activities there." Peter H. 'Molotsi, a black South African exile on the AFSC staff, declared that "To the entire African community, apartheid has meant brazen political domination, genocidal economic strangulation, and social denigration of the deepest variety. There can be no compromise. The struggle against apartheid, to restore human dignity and justice, must continue unabated."

A CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEA

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Two Bulgarian Orthodox priests defected to Great Britain on May 20, 1978, after almost twenty years of planning this step. While on a seven-day tourist trip to London, Archimandrite Grigori and Hieromonk Yakov slipped away from their group on the last day of the tour and went directly to Scotland Yard, and from there to the Home Office, which eventually granted them political asylum. Commenting on the general religious situation in Bulgaria, the monks said that true believers are mocked, lose their jobs, and are sent into exile, and that every aspect of church life is subjected to the strictest censorship and control.

Akron, Pennsylvania—Over eighty Japanese citizens did not pay all or part of this year's income taxes or asked for refunds, says Michio Ohno, Japanese minister who spoke on war resistance in Japan at the peace interest group of the Mennonite World Conference. Ohno is chairman of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Evangelical Cooperative Conference. The eighty people who have not paid their taxes for this year have received notices demanding payment, but none have been arrested and no property has been seized.

Experienced carpenters, masons, plumbers, electricians, and social workers are urgently needed in September to supervise Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) generalists and semiskilled workers in training teams of volunteers in the MDS Traveling Youth Squads. Leaders and other workers are asked to sign up for six-months or one-year terms. They work on a volunteer basis, receiving an allowance, medical coverage, transportation costs, and room and board. For information on this service opportunity contact MDS at Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South Twelfth Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

Seventy-fifth anniversary and Thanksgiving homecoming of the Hague Mennonite Church, Hague, Saskatchewan
October 7 and 8

Saturday—7:00 p.m.—banquet in the gymnasium of the Hague school. Order tickets from Robert Riekman,
Box 447, Hague, Saskatchewan S0K 1X0.
Sunday— 9:45 a.m.—Sunday school program in the church
10:45 a.m.—Thanksgiving service
12:00 noon—Dinner in the school gymnasium
2:30 p.m.—Communion service

Former pastors will speak at the various functions. ALL FORMER MEMBERS AND FRIENDS ARE CORDIALLY INVITED. Please bring photographs or other articles of interest and indicate needs for overnight accommodations when ordering banquet tickets.

FULL CIRCLE

FULL CIRCLE, Stories of Mennonite Women
edited by Mary Lou Cummings

The book contains stories of 19 Mennonite women. "I never thought much about what a 'woman' should do. My main concern was to know what God wanted me to do, and I knew He would help me do it," says Dr. Ella Garber Bauman. Through the simplicity of these words, a great power is unleashed. This power, this focus, is an unspoken theme in many of these biographies. Each biography is a story, of a woman on a journey with God through this imperfect, real world.

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Record

Calendar

October 20—Inauguration of president, Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana

October 26-28 — Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship Assembly, Washington, D.C., theme, "Unmasking the Powers"

Central

October 21—MCC relief sale, Versailles, Missouri

Western

October 13-15—Fall Festival, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas; theme, "People of the Land"

October 21—MCC relief sale, Rocky Ford, Colorado

Workers

Les and Evelyn Bartel, Bethel Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, are beginning a two-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Toronto, Ontario. They will be case aid workers at Warden Woods, a community services organization. Evelyn received a B Ed from the University of Manitoba in 1976. Les attended Canadian Mennonite Bible College in 1973-74.

Jake and Martha Bergman, Winkler Bergthaler Church, Winkler, Manitoba, are beginning a two-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in North Battleford, Saskatchewan. They will be managing an MCC thrift shop (Mennonite Community Closet).

Calvin L. Britsch, Akron Church, Akron, Pennsylvania, has resigned as Mennonite Central Committee business manager/controller, effective early 1979. MCC is seeking applicants to fill the position of controller. Candidates should be certified public accountants or hold college degrees in business or commerce, with a specialty in accounting. Applicants should contact Lowell Detweiler, Personnel, Mennonite Central Commiteee, 21 South Twelfth Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

Mark Cerbone, New Monmouth Baptist Church, Monmouth, New Jersey, is beginning a two-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as assistant coordinator and consultant on simple life-style. He received a BS in Bible from Houghton College, Houghton, New York, in 1978.

E. Bartel

L. Bartel

J. Bergman

M. Bergman

Maureen Ditmars, Kingman Church, Kingman, Kansas, is beginning a two-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Hoopa, California, as director of the Hoopa Valley Preschool. Maureen received a BS in child development from Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, in 1975.

Patricia Dusseau, Mitchell, South Dakota, is the new librarian at Freeman Junior College and Academy. She received her BA from the University of South Dakota, Vermillion.

George and Louise Friesen, Crystal City Church, Crystal City, Manitoba, are beginning a two-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Winnipeg, Manitoba as provincial supervisors of a bookrack evangelism organization.

Margie Garner, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, has been appointed as instructor of English, drama, and debate at Freeman Junior College and Academy. She received her BA from South Dakota State University, Brookings.

Murray Guenther, Crystal City Church, Crystal City, Manitoba, is beginning a two-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pennsylvania, as operator of the portable meat canner. Murray graduated from Elim Bible Institute, Altona, Manitoba, in 1978.

Robert Haarsager, Dalesburg Baptist Church, Beresford, South Dakota, is beginning a two-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Washington, D.C., working as an assistant to the coordinator of the Food and Hunger Program of the Interreligious Association of Washington, D.C. Robert received a BA in political science from Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, in 1978.

Lorraine Kotula, First Presbyterian Church, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, is beginning a two-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee at Goose Bay, Labrador, working as a child welfare case worker. She will investigate abuse and neglected child cases, and counsel families. Lorraine received a BS in individual and family studies from the Pennsylvania State University in 1978.

Linda G. Langstraat, First Christian Church, Selma, California, is beginning a two-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Atlanta, Georgia, working with senior citizens. Linda received an MA in urban school teaching from Pepperdine University, Malibu, California, in 1976.

Ditmars

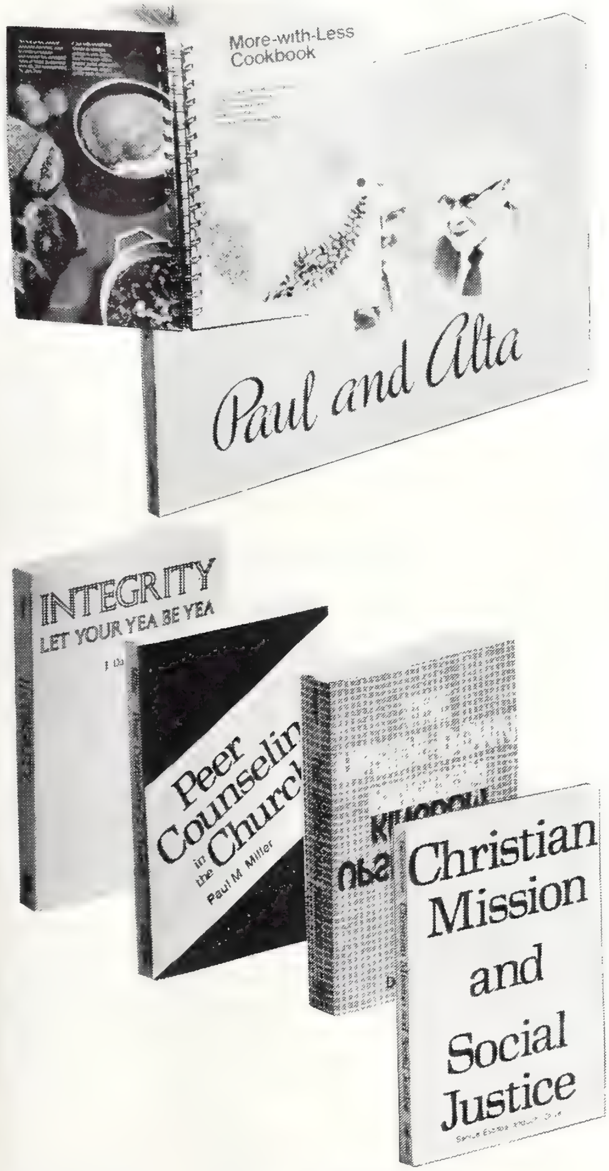
Guenther

G. Friesen

L. Friesen

Marleen Tellinghuisen Meester, Willow Lake, South Dakota, has been appointed parttime instructor of early childhood education and director of nursery school. She received a BS in child development and elementary education from South Dakota State University, Brookings.

Herald Press: For persons who believe being a Christian should change your lifestyle



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The Upside-Down Kingdom by Donald B. Kraybill

In a very readable style, the author incorporates recent scholarly insights into the kingdom of God with practical applications and serious Bible study. He emphasizes that the unique character and shape of the church should be inverted in contrast to the prevailing social order. Paper, $5.95

Integrity: Let Your Yea Be Yea by J. Daniel Hess

Christian folk like to be remembered as honest people, and yet in recent times, our vocations and "situations" are putting us into awkward dilemmas in which Madison Avenue and other hucksters of compromise tell us how to behave. Here is a careful study of what it means to live life with integrity.
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For too long Christians have stolen away to secular therapists to buy listening love for $25 to $40 an hour. In this book Paul Miller carefully describes the attitudes and skills laymen in the church will need to assist one another in growth-type counseling, especially as it relates to vocations, preparation for marriage, and problems within marriage. Paper, $4.95

Christian Mission and Social Justice by Samuel Escobar and John Driver

Through a creative reading of the New Testament in light of the world's situation in which it was spoken and the situation in which it is heard today and through a thorough knowledge of the history of missions the authors call on North American churches to combine the Word with deed. This book treats Christian mission *and* social justice, not Christian mission *or* social justice.
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Paul and Alta by Phyllis Pellman Good

Living wisdom spoken memorably by two eighty-year-olds. Much is being written that speaks of growing older as decline, depression, and hopelessness. Here is a Christian couple who have grown older with grace, love, and hope. Much is spoken today of the "simple life." Here is a couple who have lived the the simple life together for over sixty years.
Illustrated with more than 80 photographs by Paul M. Schrock.
Paper, $7.95

Letters

All needed in God's world

Dear Editor: I read with considerable interest the articles on persons with handicaps (July 25 issue). I work for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in Colorado and this year we have begun an assessment of education of the handicapped. The goal of this assessment is to determine how well the educational system is responding to the needs of handicapped children. I have been greatly influenced to think more about the needs of the handicapped through this ongoing assessment process, and additionally through a growing concern expressed in my home church in Arvada, Colorado.

I am sometimes humiliated and embarrassed about the way I feel, but I believe that a lot of my feelings are matched by many other people as well and result from a lack of understanding and knowledge. Recently I have attended special classes to teach me to understand sign language and other ways of communicating with the handicapped. I have also learned through experience that those who have physical handicaps are often very intelligent and talented people. Those who have mental handicaps are talented people who need love and reassurance to find meaning in life. We who do not know those problems need to reach out and share love and life with them.

Please keep reminding us that we are all needed in God's world. *Sharon Jackson, Arvada, Colorado*

July 27

Commends Raymond story

Dear Editor: I commend you for printing the life story of Priscilla Wilder Raymond (July 25 issue).

She has been a regular patient in my office of pastoral care at Colorado General Hospital for the past three years. She and Bud attend chapel services regularly. *Glenn B. Martin, chaplain, University of Colorado Medical Center, 4200 East Ninth, Denver, Colorado 80262*

August 1

Does God classify sin?

Dear Editor: In the July 25 issue Clarence Rempel asks for some thorough exegetical studies regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

I am not responding as a biblical scholar or a theologian, but as one who has shared the hurt of friends and relatives who have been involved in this trauma. I have no problems with Matthew 5:32 identifying divorce and remarriage as the sin of adultery. Adultery is listed in the Ten Commandments along with covetousness, the speaking of falsehoods, and others. God forgives all these sins. I do not believe that God classifies sins. However, in many of our churches, divorce and remarriage are treated as unpardonable sins. Those involved are treated like lepers—untouchables.

It seems to me that anyone involved in the deep hurt of a marriage breakdown would need the church more, not less. At a recent retreat for divorcees, the participants were asked to rate the church on a scale of one-to-ten in helping them to rehabilitate their lives. The church rated a one or two in most cases. When people need us most, we turn our backs on them. It is not for us to be judgmental, unforgiving, or unloving. First Corinthians 13 clearly outlines what our response should be. *Elsie Neufeld, Box 478, Boissevain, Manitoba*

August 4

Let's speak for life

Dear Editor: I would like to make some comments about the several articles on abortion (February 28 issue).

Generally I was disappointed. The two main articles by Duane Friesen and Ted Koontz seemed to say, first, that in the months before birth one is not a person, so an abortion is not like taking the life of a person; and secondly, yes, one is a person in the months before birth, but killing a person is not always wrong.

These positions were arrived at too simply. One was said to be based on intuition. And the other, in my assessment, was little more than an assertion. I was surprised and sorry that an issue of such importance was treated in this way. To me the positions appear very loose. I do not see how our church can accept them.

In spite of this criticism I believe there is a large area of agreement. Even Friesen and Koontz seemed to accept abortions only in exceptional situations. If this is true, then why have we so little to say in view of the 60,000 abortions in Canada per year? That is an enormous number. And reports indicate that the majority are obtained for reasons of convenience.

We speak for life when we call on the government to abolish capital punishment and thus restrain people's natural craving for vengeance. We speak for life when we call on the government to halt the international arms trade and thus restrain the capitalist's natural craving for profit. Can we not speak for life and call on the government to restrict abortion even though it means restraining the natural craving for convenience? I find our silence very difficult to understand. *William Janzen, 803-63 Sparks Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5A6*

August 8

Confess sin daily

Dear Editor: God has used Peter J. P. Schrag (August 8 issue) to rebuke his children who have fallen to Satan through giving in to homosexual tendencies. I pray that the sisters will repent.

It is a grave mistake for any believer to wilfully sin and submit to the devil's way of thinking. Christians are called to walk in the Spirit, to live disciplined lives, and to follow the Word.

Praise God, Jesus is ready to cleanse us of our sins when we are broken and confess them daily, if needs be (and for me, it's necessary!). *Linda Goertzen, Henderson, Nebraska 68371*

August 17

Need to discern

Dear Editor: Billy Graham has said that if God does not send judgment upon our nation because of homosexuality, he will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah.

If you agree with the above statement, why do you, the editor of a church paper, print the letters from gays and lesbians? Do their letters edify the readers?

The Bible teaches that Christians should edify each other. To edify means, according to Webster's dictionary, "to instruct and improve, especially by good example; to profit *morally* or *spiritually*."

The gays and lesbians make it plain that they want to be accepted. Do you print their letters because you accept them?

As I see it, any man or woman who knows right from wrong, will not accept them unless they confess their sin and seek deliverance.

The editor of a church paper should be able to discern right from wrong.

I would have liked to see "No Dialogue with Gays" (Letters—August 8 issue) in large print on the cover. *Minnie Schmidt, 516 Highland, Newton, Kansas 67114*

August 17

Christmas and world events—
a comment

Are we called for such a time?

The Conference of Mennonites in Canada, meeting in the first week of July in Gretna, Manitoba, chose as their conference theme Esther 4:14, "Ye are called for such a time as this." It is Mordecai's word to Esther, the Queen of the Persian empire, and wife to Xerxes, the emperor. She is being asked to plead on behalf of the people of Israel before Xerxes because a royal decree has been issued, ordering the slaughtering of all Jewish persons of birth. Under a possible sentence of death Esther dares to approach the emperor and successfully pleads for her Jewish people.

As the conference in Gretna deliberated future expansion of its institutions and programs, two other meetings of a vastly different nature were about to begin in the Soviet Union. The USSR was about to prosecute two more dissidents, Scharansky and Ginzberg. They were being charged with treason. Were they, like Esther, called for such a time as this?

In 1975, the members of the Soviet Bloc, the members of North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and Yugoslavia signed what has been commonly known as the Helsinki Agreement. This agreement was to regulate certain affairs between nations. As far as the Soviets were concerned, the major concession by the West was that it recognized, on paper, the boundaries of the various East Bloc countries as legitimate. It also guaranteed an increase in the free flow of information between countries, be it scientific, historical, or political.

The part that the West was most excited about has been referred to as the "third basket" of the agreement, the recognition by the signators of certain fundamental human rights such as speech, press, and freedom of movement.

Unlike the West, the Soviet Union did publish the full text of the Helsinki document in all of their daily papers. Therefore, most people in the Eastern Bloc who could read, read the text. The Helsinki accord acted as a catalyst for a movement that had been developing for a number of years in these countries, especially the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. Intellectuals in these countries set up committees to monitor their nations' compliance of the agreement.

Many of the dissidents, like Esther, are Jews. Also, like Esther, they had obtained positions of prestige and influence. Many were highly respected members of their scientific communities. Their standard of living was likely far above that of the average citizen. Like Esther, in the material sense or in the sense of prestige, they were lacking in nothing. They were not, however, satisfied. They saw among their own people a longing to be free to express one's views, and a desire not to be molded by a coercive state. Therefore, on behalf of the millions who had no voice to speak, this handful of intellectuals took up the call to end their silence—at great personal risk.

Esther used all the cunning and wit at her disposal—and so did the dissidents. From the outset they saw the Western press as their allies, in the sense that pressure could be brought on the totalitarian states by world opinion. During Scharansky's trial, we saw Sakarov, the "dean" of Soviet dissidents, arriving at the courthouse and shaking hands with supporters standing outside—a mastery of public relations—because all of the West saw this event on television.

The Soviet Union is systematically removing these dissidents from the public eye with five-to-thirteen-year sentences of hard labor. They are losing their lives. We hope and pray that the day will come when all their efforts will not have been in vain.

The Western press has done an adequate job of treating these men as heroes. That is not the point of this column. My question is whether there are not issues in our countries which require us as a Mennonite people to lay down our prestige and risk being hurt? Have we been called for "such a time as this"? Is it a mistake that Mennonites are largely in the middle-to-upper-middle class in Canada and the United States? Maybe such issues as war taxes and Native rights are areas where we have been called—like Esther, Scharansky, and Ginzburg—to risk our prestige, our charitable donations status as a conference, our positions in government, education, and industry, on behalf of a God who calls us to always side with the have-nots, and to turn the other cheek.

". . . Is it that ye have been called for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14).

Harold Fransen, Smithville, Ontario, is a university student.

Review

The church's story

Eerdman's Handbook to the History of Christianity, *Tim Dowley, organizing editor (Eerdman's Publishing, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1977, 656 pages), is reviewed by Larry Kehler, pastor, Charleswood Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.*

If you haven't been able to get excited about church history, or if you haven't been able to get your children, students, or spouse interested, here's a handbook that might help. It's superb. I'll say immediately what most reviewers leave for the final paragraph: This is a *must* book for every church library, and, if you can afford it, for your personal or family library as well.

The book divides the church's story into seven blocks. The first period goes to 325 A.D., and the final one starts with the First World War. Each section has two or more major essays interpreting the broad sweep of Christianity's movement during that time period. Interspersed throughout the essays are one- and two-page articles about special people and events of that period. Each of these special features is printed on a colored background to set it off from the main copy. Each section also has an attractive time chart and maps to help the reader to see at a glance what was happening politically and religiously around the world at that time.

The handbook has short biographical sketches of such early saints as Polycarp, Origen, and Justin Martyr; such Middle Age leaders as Francis of Assisi, Thomas Aquinas, and John Wycliffe; such Reformers as Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin; and such contemporary saints as Bonhoeffer, Helder Camara, Solzhenitsyn, and Graham.

Brief articles about movements within Christianity include "The Anabaptists," by John Yoder and Alan Kreider, and "Puritans and Separatists," by Keith L. Sprunger. The introductory section contains a five-page article by Alan Kreider and John H. Yoder entitled, "Christians and War."

In both design and content this is a good book. Buy it if you can.

Eros defiled

Eros Defiled, *by John White (Inter Varsity, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1977, 169 pages) is reviewed by Gus Konkel, pastor, Bethel Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Winkler, Manitoba R0G 2X0.*

Sex is God's gift in human beings to end isolation. God said it is not good that man should be alone (Genesis 2:18).

It is ironic that in an age where there is more education and openness about sex than ever before we have a corresponding rise in loneliness. This speaks of our failure to understand the purpose of sex and how it must be exercised to bring about its intended beauty. *Eros* (physical love) has been defiled and we are reaping the consequences. *Eros Defiled* is written with a concern for the loneliness, the misery, and the heartaches which so often accompany sexual sin.

Christians have often been judgmental about sexual sin, with a condemning and self-righteous attitude. At other times we have lost our moorings, being unsure of what constitutes sexual sin.

John White is careful to maintain a Christian perspective on what God has intended sex to be and what are subnormal and sinful expressions of sex that cannot bring us to the beauty for which sex was given. While identifying morality that leads to proper use and enjoyment of sex, there is concern and constructive help from a background of professional experience for persons with any type of sexual failure, and the misery that often accompanies it.

If Christians as individuals have often been unhelpful in dealing with sexual sin, so has the church as a whole. Church discipline is often carried out in a way in which there is concern only for the image of the church and not for the needs of the individual who failed. John White feels that the Anabaptists were the one group among the reformers who recognized that godly exercise of discipline was an essential element to a true church. He believes the best that has been written on the subject is a study by John Howard Yoder in "Concern." White uses this to remind everyone what true church discipline is and how we must exercise it, especially in regard to sexual sins, to be a church and not just a club.

No one can escape the questions of sexuality. This book can help each one to face them clearly as Christians and deal with them positively.

Beside my Bible

Mary F. Heisey

The Practice of Meditation, *by Klemens Tilmann (Paulist Press, New York, New York, 1977, 139 pages).*

"Meditation is the highway to God and the way along which we are perfected in faith and love." But sitting half-lotus does not appeal to me; neither does achieving *hara*. Nevertheless, this thorough guide to the method and spirit of meditative prayer contains materials and activities useful to my daily devotions.

Almost half the book centers on Christian meditation, an essential part of our continuing education as believers. Now, can we seek the patience to practice this discipline for becoming more human?

Coming Together, *by Ruthann Knechel Johansen (The Brethren Press, Elgin, Illinois, 1977, 151 pages).*

The cry for liberation continues. It sounds and resounds throughout this angry book. Yet I grow weary of hearing women writers whine about sexist language.

Beyond that failing, the author feels that liberation won't work without reunion. She maintains that "oppressive practices toward fellow human beings grow from personal disintegration and interpersonal separation." This is worth thinking about as we experience and analyze the human predicament of broken unity.

Suggestions for reader responses to each chapter's emphasis are sometimes better than the chapters themselves.

The Amish of Canada, *by Orland Gingerich (Herald Press, Kitchener, Ontario, and Scottdale, Pennsylvania, 1978, 244 pages).*

Originally published in 1972 by Conrad Press (Waterloo, Canada), this invaluable reference examines the Amish of Canada—strangers and sojourners, past and present.

Well-organized facts written in straightforward style provide meaningful, instructive history for anyone interested in the Amish way of life. Excellent photographs, many of snow-surrounded churches, enhance this in-depth study of individual congregations and the admirable tradition of togetherness.

I sensed the possibility of an "Amish awakening" as I read this up-to-the-minute chronicle of faith.

Meditation

To live is Christ

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21). Throughout my life I have had a search in the Lord. I have found the living Christ and through him I am saved. He has also led me to join the Mennonite church. These two events are closely woven together and are wonderful blessings that have been given to me.

My home is a farm near Graymont, close to Flanagan, in Illinois. Here I have been brought up by loving, Christian parents. Our immediate family is Lutheran and as a youth I was fairly active in the church program. However, I lacked a real spiritual commitment. I knew of Jesus Christ but I did not feel him deep in my life. I had a faith in my head but not real faith in my heart.

During my growing-up years I had experiences in the Mennonite church. My mother's family is Mennonite and as youngsters my brother and I sometimes attended worship at the Flanagan Mennonite Church with our grandparents, and Sunday school there with our cousins. I became interested in family history and studied the Mennonite religion as the faith of my ancestors. In doing this, I saw a group of believers who put their beliefs to work in love for God and their fellow human beings.

By the time I graduated from high school, many things, including the triumphant passing of my grandmother to be with her Lord, helped me to see that in my heart I did not have a real, living hope in Christ. But I could feel the love of God surrounding me. I knew Jesus was with me and that he would draw me ever nearer if I trusted in him. Over the next couple of years I felt a deepening relationship with Jesus. I often stumbled on the way, rebelling against his will and falling to temptation. Even though I stumbled, he picked me up and came closer to me. I became more and more convicted of my sinfulness and more convinced of my need to be in Jesus.

One summer evening in 1976 I took a walk in the timber that lies on our farm. As I walked I thought about God and felt his hand reach out to me and touch my heart. I knelt in the grass among the trees and I confessed my sinfulness to Jesus Christ. I asked him to be my true savior, and I committed my life to him, promising to follow him wherever he led.

During this time I had been regularly attending the Flanagan church with my grandfather. I did not know the Lord's will concerning my church membership, but I knew he would lead me in what I should do. I talked to many people about my experiences and attended membership classes when they were conducted at the church. The congregation considered me part of the "church family" and accepted me in that position while I searched in the Lord for the way I should go. All of this helped me in thinking about my personal beliefs. I came to feel that my personal beliefs coincided greatly with the teachings I had encountered in the Mennonite church, and I felt led to join that fellowship. I also felt led to request baptism upon my confession of faith, because I had a real, living faith to demonstrate. On New Year's Day of this year I was baptized in the Lord and was also accepted as a member of the Flanagan Mennonite Church.

I praise the Lord for guiding so far throughout my life. Through his grace I have a real faith and a living hope. I try to do his will, but I still stumble so often. When I fail, he forgives me and picks me up. I have a peace in life that only comes from Jesus, and a joy that only he can give. Jesus Christ is living, and I live in him.

Steve Estes

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CONTRIBUTORS

Walter Klaassen is a professor at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G6. Klaassen is author of the book *Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestant.*

Margaret Froese, 7 Milan Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3R 2V5 is a school teacher. She is a member of the Charleswood Mennonite Church.

Mary F. Heisey, 56 East Street, York, Pennsylvania 17463 keeps us informed about current book releases.

Steve Estes, Route 1, Graymont, Illinois 61743 is a history major at Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois. Steve has already made application to Mennonite Biblical Seminary for the fall of 1979, following his graduation next May.

CREDITS
Cover, RNS photo of the classic American painting, "Snap the Whip", by Winslow Homer (1836-1910); 546, Paul M. Schrock, Box 200, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 547, 549, Strix Pix, Newville, Pennsylvania 17241; 548, David Hiebert, Box 301, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 550, RNS; 552, MCC photo by Anne Friesen.

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Teachers need a special sense

One of the regrets that I have from my late high school and early college years is that I understood so little about education.

I was convinced that teachers would seek the best for me, especially in our Mennonite schools (which is where I completed my high school and did most of my college studies). It came as a great shock when I discovered that, even in our private schools, there was little deviation from the mass production mentality so common in public education.

Mass production works on the principle that you put a stamp of approval on that which meets standard specifications and you cull out the rest. For example, when I came to high school and to college, without even the slightest background or family tradition in music, I was never invited or even considered for any musical participation which might teach me some of the basic skills. A friend of mine, who had a similar background but who had discovered how crucial musical training is in our schools (if you want to be included in special productions, tours, and other events), simply went to the music faculty and requested participation in the choir so that he might learn. And he learned.

One of the reasons for returning to college after four years of teaching was that the churches were repeatedly inviting me to come and preach. My training was inadequate. One year at college, when the annual choir tour was announced, I volunteered to accompany the choir as a speaker. The professor said it had never happened before, but he personally favored the idea and would propose it. It was turned down, of course.

When Jesus questioned his disciples about their knowledge of him (Matthew 16:13-20), Simon Peter made his remarkable confession, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (verse 16). It was enough, even though Peter's confession was probably as impulsive as some of his other statements, for Jesus to pronounce a blessing upon Peter, for Jesus to call Peter a "rock", and for Jesus to announce the inauguration of the Christian church upon the basis of such startlingly new insights. In the charter constitution of the church Jesus says that we have the "keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (verse 19).

I have taught in schools for nine years and been a student for twenty-two years. I'm convinced that teachers have unparalleled opportunities for being "binding and loosing" agents in students' lives. Teachers in our Christian schools literally hold the "keys to the kingdom" for many persons.

While it may still be true that the home has the greatest single influence in a child's life, I believe that schools, who have our children for prime time five days a week during the school year, probably make a more deliberate impact upon our children than parents or churches. (I'd be glad to hear of evidence to the contrary.) And if teachers do not sense the special needs of students, who will?

Of course, it is easier to take students already gifted in music and therefrom develop a good choir. Certainly a coach's task is simpler if you just take the natural athletes and work with them.

Some time ago I told one of my former professors that I was disappointed in the lack of emphasis upon interpersonal relationships and communications during my college years. He looked at me and said, "But, Bernie, I recall you as one with whom it was difficult to relate and communicate." Precisely. That was another one of my shortcomings which sent me back to school. Somehow I expected to learn some new skills. Apparently that is not a task for which this professor felt any obligation.

The schools are open again. Teachers will again be tempted to dwell mostly with those who are already well on the way. Many of those will get a good education, regardless, because they have discovered the process.

Teachers, I want to remind you that there are many who have not yet discovered the keys to a growing life. *You* will bind or loose their potential. It takes a special sense to free those who are bound. Without that special sense, I doubt that you deserve to be a teacher. In Christ, education becomes "edu—caring" for all. *Bernie Wiebe*

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The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:35 OCTOBER 3, 1978

Inside this issue:

Daniel challenges people of God
A community of discipleship
Rule of the lamb or the sword
Pope Paul VI

Daniel challenges people of God

World history is understood as the arena where God works out his will through his people.

Dorothy Friesen

Daniel is an exciting book filled with political intrigue, military strategy, and a striking insistence that the power of God is at work in world events. The adventures of Daniel and his friends, found in the first six chapters, are familiar. The second half of the book, chapters 7-12, is filled with Daniel's visions, prophecies, and dreams—favorite passages for Christians interested in predicting the last days.

There is reason to believe that the book of Daniel was written and began circulating around the middle of the second century B.C.—a time of acute persecution of the Jews. It can be viewed as an underground document being circulated among the Jewish people during a time of fear and uncertainty. The events recorded in the first six chapters of Daniel, which supposedly took place in the sixth century B.C., correspond amazingly to events in the second century. Numerous examples illustrate that the stories of Jewish people's courage in the sixth century had a role to play in the lives of their descendants in the second century B.C.

Like Darius and Nebuchadnezzar in the sixth century, the second century Roman emperor Antiochus tried to wipe out all distinctively Jewish practices. God's message comes through. Daniel triumphed in holding to his ritual of prayer and his healthy eating habits, and his faith was rewarded. The change in royal policy concerning the youth corps being trained in the palace was a direct result of Daniel's actions.

In responding to the king's edict forbidding prayer other than to the king himself, the question for Daniel was not one of his own security or possible loss of his political position, in which he had undoubtedly been a good influence on the king. He acted out his allegiance to God by continuing his ritual of prayer. The reason for his rescue from the lion's den is clear from the statement ". . . no kind of hurt was found upon him because he had trusted in his God" (6:23).

Like Belshazzar in the sixth century, Antiochus made claims to divinity. Nebuchadnezzar paid for his hubris by losing control of his mind and his senses and, for a time, his kingdom. The message is clear. Contemporary rulers who go beyond the bounds of their authority and make claims to powers which belong to God alone will lose their legitimacy to rule.

Like Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus set up an altar and expected the populace to worship a god of his choosing. In this test of allegiance Daniel's three friends maintained their undivided loyalty to God and were rewarded for it by being rescued from the fiery furnace. Though they were part of the

ruling circle they were not compromised into taking a "reasonable" view of Nebuchadnezzar's command. They attended the dedication of the image and took issue with the king's command. "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But, if not, be it known to you O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up" (3:16-18). Again the message is clear to the author's contemporary Jewish audience. Remain faithful and singleminded in your devotion to God because he is God.

These stories are used as a challenge to faithfulness for God's people in days of testing and hammering. When the Jewish people wondered what difference it would make to seek safety rather than risk their lives, they had the example of Daniel and his friends to follow. The second century readers could easily make the connection between their own lives and what was happening to Daniel.

The second part of *Daniel* is filled with visions and dreams and prophecies, supposedly about the future. However, there is reason to believe that the author is giving an account of the period between Daniel's life and his own as though it were all prediction while, for the most part, it is actually history. *Daniel* does go on to make some predictions about the immediate two or three years following its writing.

The convoluted political and military predictions about the kings of the north and the kings of the south and the seventy weeks of years and the seven weeks made sense to the people who were in touch with their own tradition. Gathering for worship and retelling the salvation stories of the forefathers keeps the people of God aware and faithful, and it gives them a form and style in which to communicate discreetly in times of danger.

According to the author, the people who will stand firm are those who know and single mindedly obey their God. To deviate from this results in confusion and paralysis. Daniel confesses this in a prayer on behalf of the people. "To us O Lord belongs confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee" (9:8).

The book of Daniel revolves around the theme of remaining steadfast. Though all sorts of bad things are in store for the people, the central message is one of encouragement. "But the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action" (11:32b).

In *Daniel* God's will is worked out in the historical world situation. The writer is not apologetic about linking the great powers of the world to the history of the Jewish people in such a way that the world powers are seen as auxiliaries to the main action of their God. World history is understood as the arena where God works out his will through his people. This audacious conception of events gives the people the courage and confidence to "stand firm and take action." They know their action is important. Things may look grim, but God's will will be done.

Daniel is filled with bold actions. Challenges and prophetic words by Daniel are taken right to the center of world power. He does not mince words with Nebuchadnezzar. "Therefore, O king . . . break off your sins by practicing righteousness; and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed, that there may perhaps be a lengthening of your tranquility" (4:27). The book of Daniel also contains carefully convoluted language or prophecy which is meant to encourage the people in perilous times. The strategy and techniques vary with the circumstances, but their action is ever motivated by the conviction of a "people who know their God."

The two emphases—faithfulness to God and its significance in world events—formed the point of reference for the generation of second century B.C. Jewish people who first read *Daniel*. Our contemporary generation can hardly escape the profound implications of its challenge for today's people of God.

A community of discipleship

Dana Powell

For those who live miles from any urban center, whose lives are centered on their families, and supporting them, the suggestion of dropping it all for radical discipleship sounds farfetched. Radical Christian community seems meant for the young, carefree, and intellectual—clearly not for families rooted in a particular geographic location and life-style.

Three families in Evansville, Indiana, have begun to discover how wrong those assumptions are. Disregarding any prescribed blueprint for ministry, they have set out to serve their city, located across the Ohio River from western Kentucky, in a way that reflects who they are—white, family-oriented, and financially secure. They chose to return to their native locale to enflesh Christ in the backyards of their childhood.

The three couples and four children that make up the leadership of this new community, Patchwork Central, began their new life together in Evansville last summer. Phil and Elaine Amerson, with their children Drew (two) and Lydia (six) had spent three years teaching at two Christian academic institutions (Westmont College's San Francisco Urban Program and Candler School of Theology in Atlanta). Gradually they became convinced of their need to put flesh on their words and decided to return to Phil's native state to begin that process.

Another couple at Candler, Nelia and Calvin Kimbrough, heard the Amerisons' plans for community in Evansville. At the time they too were struggling with the meaning of their faith, and they decided to leave Candler for Evansville with the Amersons. Nelia gave up her position as assistant dean of student and academic services and Calvin his job as director of the media center.

The Amersons planned to join two college friends, John and Ruth Doyle, already living in Evansville. Since moving to the Evansville area in 1968 John had been pastoring a United Methodist Church while Ruth worked at a nursery school. Their two children, Jeff (eight) and Timmy (five), have lived in Evansville all their lives.

The shared commitment of the three couples was grounded in a common love for God, each other, and their roots in the Midwest and South. They attempted to bring with them few preconceptions about specific ministries and were anxious to join some other Christians already active in Evansville in discovering new avenues of discipleship.

Reactions from friends to the birth of Patchwork Central were largely skeptical. "Why Evansville?" is a demand still echoing in their memories of that transition period. Other Christians, having also responded to the gospel's radical call to discipleship, questioned this apparent abandoning of former classroom challenges to be redemptive presences in inner cities—and moving to Evansville, a well-churched, blue collar town with a population of 150,000. The Amersons and Kimbroughs met every question by sharing with others their deep affinity with the land and its people, and their conviction that God had called them to serve him there.

What evolved in Evansville was a "patchwork" of ministries. Phil investigated the political structures in Evansville almost full-

Worship and celebration are an important part of the life of the Patchwork community for both adults and children. Here Lydia, Phil and Elaine Amerson, Don Shull, and Clark Field work on a banner.

Involvement in neighborhood and city-wide issues leads us in many directions. This meeting of concerned parents and friends of Culver School was the beginning of the work to keep Evansville's only walk-in, integrated, neighborhood elementary school open. A Patchwork parent, Elaine Amerson, chaired the meeting.

time, making some local politicians uneasy in their previously unchallenged roles. It didn't take him long to discover that, as in most cities, virtually all of the federal funds Evansville received for community development had gone into improving the emerging middle-class neighborhoods, which blatantly neglected the large portions of the city inhabited by the white and black poor. In studying city maps, Phil discovered that the four poorest census tracts were encircled by areas receiving the federal money. When challenged with that fact, one city official claimed that the plan had been aimed at "cutting off the spread of blight."

Phil has preached in several churches in the area and spoken, with Elaine, for Ron Sider's discipleship workshops at college campuses around the country. He was a resource person for the Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE) May conference in Chicago.

Elaine, besides teaching part time in communications at Indiana State University, Evansville, has become involved with the administrative duties of the community. She and Calvin work with Television Awareness Training and have written a series of articles on television for a Methodist publication.

Nelia and Calvin are both employed in outside ministries. Nelia was appointed pastor of Faith United Methodist Church in Boonville and is coordinator of the newly formed Evansville Urban Nutrition Coalition. Calvin began his new job in January, working with the Evansville Council of Churches as the communications staff person. He is also working part time as news photographer at the NBC television affiliate.

Besides circulating written materials on nutrition to the neighborhood, Patchwork Central has initiated a garden patch project, which encourages suburban and rural gardeners to plant an extra row of produce. In this updated version of the biblical "gleaning," the extra produce is taken to inner-city neighborhoods and sold for twenty-five-cents-per-shopping-bag of food. By purchasing a tiller for neighborhood use, Patchwork also enables city dwellers to plant their own gardens.

Projected ministries for their community center, to be purchased this month, include a hostel (the only emergency lodging in Evansville; the YMCA recently closed despite Patchwork's efforts to prevent that decision), office space, and the personal growth center. John Doyle, who will do counseling, sees the growth center's main thrust as "stimulating change through individual and group therapy." Workshops planned for this year include "Healthy Parenting," "Discovering Your Own Creativity," and "Marriage and Relational Enrichment."

The three families live within three blocks of each other in a poor neighborhood. The focus for their corporate life is Sunday evening "house church." Their worship community has grown to include forty people, many of whom were not worshiping in any church previously. This expansion of their corporate life has led the community to a flexible definition of an individual's association with the community: *fellowship*—persons who participate in fellowship and worship activities of Patchwork and agree to find meaningful ways to support the community; *partnership*—persons who are moving toward sharing in the daily life of Patchwork but who have major commitments elsewhere which make convenantal participation impractical; *covenant*—persons who covenant to live together according to a specific set of disciplines.

Veronica and DuWayne Keenan, who recently became partner members of Patchwork, show the impact Patchwork has had on many surrounding families. They said in a recent newsletter, "We 'old-timers' of Evansville look upon the house church as a gift to us. We had not been worshiping anywhere on a regular basis, but now go to house church because we have a need for the friendship, support, and joy we have found there. Our children also have found new friends there and eagerly participate in the worship service."

"We cannot deny our middle-class white identities," Phil Amerson says. Patchwork isn't trying to be poor, in the sense of divorcing itself from its resources. The members' honesty about their education and family heritage must challenge those who try to bury their gifts in an attempt to be like the poor. Patchwork's freedom from being bound to other models of Christian community allows the members to be open to the working of the Spirit in a particular ministry to their town. "We are not so much saying to other young professional people, 'This is the way; we are forging the perfect model for discipleship.' Rather, we are saying, 'You can, in your own way, find ways to live more responsibly as disciples.' "

Patchwork Central exemplifies a corporate fulfillment of Christ's commandment to follow him. It represents a group of believers who have the courage to humbly admit who they are to their Creator and offer themselves up for his purposes.

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News

World's food problems remain says Mexico meeting

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—Despite good crop reports and increasing grain stockpiles in many parts of the globe, the long-term world food situation looks grim, concluded the World Food Council at its meeting in Mexico City in June, 1978.

While the world's undernourished people increased from about 400 million in 1970 to 455 million in 1976, governments have not shaken loose from their "business as usual" approach.

"The rate of progress toward solving fundamental food problems is too slow. The world community seems unwilling to go beyond a certain minimum point . . . and a tendency is emerging to return to traditional methods within traditional priorities," reports the Council.

Recent newspaper reports (*Christian Science Monitor,* July 26) predict an above average harvest in the Soviet Union and the fourth consecutive year of particularly good harvests in India. US Agriculture Secretary Robert Bergland foresees a promising American harvest and a possible record-breaking year for dollar return on agricultural exports. Net farm profits in the US may reach $24-$26 billion.

According to John Hannah, executive director of the World Food Council, international carry-over stocks of cereals, excluding those in the USSR and China, are forecast to be 180 million tons by the end of the 1977-78 season. This is 19 percent of estimated annual world consumption, slightly above the United Nations' estimate of the minimum safe level required for world food security.

Despite the look of improvement in the world food situation the World Food Council, which was set up following the 1974 World Food Conference in Rome to monitor the world hunger picture, is pessimistic about the continuing world food problem.

The situation appears especially critical in Africa, where per capita food production has reached its lowest point since the Sahelian drought in 1973. Emergency situations or abnormal shortages exist in the Sahel, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Laos, Lebanon, Nepal, and Vietnam.

The Mennonite Central Committee, now four and one-half years into its decade of emphasis on world hunger called for at Hillsboro, Kansas, continues to emphasize rural agricultural development and increasing food production within food deficit countries.

MCC long-range agricultural development activities are reaping benefits for small farmers in countries such as Bangladesh, Upper Volta, and Bolivia. Emergency food shipments are also reaching food-deficit areas of the world. Approximately two million pounds of wheat, meat, beans, and milk have been shipped by MCC to Haiti, Laos, Lebanon, Mozambique, Sudan, Upper Volta, Zaire, and other needy countries in the first eight months of 1978.

Ethiopia, suffering simultaneously from drought, plagues of locusts, and political upheavals, is of particular concern to MCC. MCC staff are attempting to unlock ways to ship and distribute food supplies as well as find avenues to enlarge agricultural development programs in the country.

Another continuing emphasis is the recognition that basic political and economic reforms are needed within countries and on the international scene before the situation for the world's 455 million chronically hungry will substantially improve. Developing countries have experienced the ill effects of increased trade protectionist policies from industrialized countries in the past three years.

According to a June 13, 1978 *Time* magazine article on trade restrictions the World Bank estimates that trade barriers cost the developing countries $24 billion a year in lost export of manufactured goods alone. Industrialized countries are slow to grant concessions and allow a freer flow of manufactured and processed agricultural goods into their countries. This denies developing countries the chance to establish self-sustaining economies.

Action is needed by US and Canadian citizens to urge their governments to adopt more enlightened trade policies, to establish an international network of national food reserves and to increase food and development aid to the levels recommended by the 1974 World Food Conference.

Japanese worry about creeping militarism

On August 15, on the thirty-third anniversary of the end of World War II, Prime Minister Fukuda Takeo visited the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo. The visit has prompted fears of a revival of Japanese nationalist imperialism.

His visit to pay homage to the more than 2,500,000 soldiers enshrined at Yasukuni disregarded the opposition of Christian groups and opposition parties. An August 5 rally which attracted more than 500 people protested the pending visit, which has now become a symbol of the dangers of fresh militarism in Japan.

Several days later, August 8, fearing the prime minister would succumb to the request of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and War Bereaved Families Association to visit the shrine, a group of 261 persons issued a statement in a press conference.

The statement gives reasons for the unconstitutionality of such visits by the prime minister or by the emperor. They gave the following reasons for their opposition:

1. Before the end of the war the Yasukuni Shrine was the spiritual backbone of Japanese militarism. An "official visit" to the shrine, therefore, implies the glorification of past wars, and the propagation of militaristic spirit that calls upon the Japanese to perpetrate crimes against others in the name of the emperor.
2. Since the Yasukuni Shrine is a religious symbol an official visit gives the impression that the shrine has a certain relationship to the state. This violates the Japanese constitution which establishes the separation of state and religion.
3. A visit by government officials means that the state performs a religious act which is also prohibited by the constitution. This religious act is one of consoling souls, and suggests a revival of state-Shintoism which puts Shintoism over any other religious belief.

The statement concludes by saying, "The official visit of Fukuda . . . prepares the road for the emperor to come back as the sovereign figure and 'a living god.' It also seems to be trying to give the Self Defense Forces a spiritual backbone."

Japan's present constitution was promulgated mainly at American instigation in 1947. It legally binds Japan to act only when attacked, but recently a new debate has started on the role of the Self Defense Forces, as the Japanese call their army. The debate warmed up when General Hiromi Kurisu was fired because he said Japanese forces should consider offensive action in self-defense (*Newsweek*, August 7). Article 9 of the Japanese constitution renounces the right to wage war and maintain armed forces.

In recent years conservative and right wing elements have called for the abolition of Article 9, and also for the restoration of some of the power previously held by the emperor.

The pressure to reestablish the Yasukuni Shrine and to eliminate Article 9 point to the fact that some provisions of the Japanese constitution are not fully accepted, not even in certain government circles.

Other forces nudging Japan towards increased militarism are its businesses and increased sales of American arms to Japan. Japanese businesses have been calling for increased defense spending to revive depressed shipyards, and to utilize Japan's advanced electronics technology.

According to *Gist* (June issue), a publication of the US Department of State, "Japan's own forces now have primary responsibility for the immediate, conventional defense. . . . Defense cooperation is expanding, and Japan is undertaking significant qualitative improvements . . . Over the next five years Japan expects to spend about $6.5 billion on US equipment, including F-15 fighters and P-3C antisubmarine warfare aircraft. Japan is one of the largest purchasers of advanced US military equipment."

The July 1 issue of *Japan Report* quotes Nobuhiko Ushiba, minister for external economic affairs in the Fukuda government, as saying to a Los Angeles audience May 23, "From a Japanese perspective we view the maintenance of a stable power balance in Pacific Asia as the essential precondition for our security—and for our economic well-being . . . . The cornerstone of Japan's foreign policy is therefore our alliance with the United States."

In contrast to Japan's apparent moves toward military power is the "Fukuda Doctrine," enunciated by Japan's prime minister in August 1977. He said, first, that Japan rejects the course of military power and dedicates its economic strength and human resources to building peace and prosperity in Asia and the world. Second, the relationship between Japan and its Asian neighbors is and must be based on equality and mutual trust and confidence, rather than on economic domination of the region. Third, in order to consolidate peace in Asia as a whole, and Southeast Asia in particular, Japan hopes to foster mutually beneficial relations with the nations of Indochina. *Compiled from the* Japan Christian Activity News, *August 31, and* Japan Report, *July 1.*

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
ALL SPACES NEEDED FOR CHURCH ACTIVITIES!
'Offenders will be Baptized'

Motorists who are tempted to trespass on the parking lot behind First Baptist Church in St. Petersburg, Florida, are given fair warning of what their "punishment" will be.

Churches criticize nature of Canadian budget cuts

Ottawa, Canada—Project Ploughshares has criticized the Canadian government for not cutting its defense spending as much as its spending on public needs.

Project Ploughshares is a coalition of major Canadian churches and other non-government organizations concerned with peace and disarmament.

In their September 13 news release the coalition notes that the recently announced government cutbacks do not substantially affect the growing defense budget. They express their opposition to making the poor the victims of austerity while ignoring the real area of waste in government spending.

In their analysis the group notes the defense budget is cut only 3.6 percent whereas the Canadian International Development Agency has a major cut of 13.3 percent. "Such a cut," comments Ploughshares, "moves Canada away from any commitment to a more just new international economic order while leaving untouched major military procurement programs such as the two and a half billion dollars to be spent on new fighter aircraft. The cuts in military spending amount to only 150 million dollars while the cuts in housing are 335 million dollars, and transportation 201 million dollars."

The critique also observes that government cabinet minister Monique Begin recently told the Canadian public that the cutback priorities were decided on the basis of pressure from the business community, and that as a consequence the poor and powerless will suffer the most. Project Ploughshares concludes, "We are opposed to sacrificing the well-being of many Canadians on the altar of a mythical national security dictated by North Atlantic Treaty Organization power politics."

Tragedy continues in India

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—As waters continue to rise in India's great rivers—the Ganges, Barigandhak, Gandhik, and others—there are new threats of flooding each day. Flooding which began in late July has swept much of India, creating an unprecedented loss of property and crops.

Mennonite Central Committee has been asked to contribute $45,000 immediately for flood relief. That request comes from A. C. Lobe, MCC India representative, who visited the flooded state of Bihar. About $30,000 has already been sent for clothing, for 40,000 emergency food packets, for tubewells and for volunteers. All materials are purchased locally.

Anglican bishops speak out while they wait on God

Gordon Wilson, chairperson of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, nails a challenge to bishops of the Lambeth Conference on the door of Canterbury Cathedral on August 2. The document was an invitation to debate the issues of war and violence in the light of the gospel.

Canterbury, England (EPS)—Although the Lambeth Conference of 434 Anglican bishops that ended here August 13 was primarily intended to be a time of "prayer and waiting on God," the last days of the assembly produced clear resolutions.

The issue of women's ordination to the priesthood, which drew greatest interest outside the conference, was calmly debated and finally resolved in a decision declaring "acceptance of those member churches which now ordain women. . . and those who do not." Both groups were urged to respect each other's convictions on the issue.

The bishops recognized that the decision would disappoint Roman Catholic and Orthodox communions. Hence the conference made it clear that "the holding together of diversity within a unity of faith and worship is part of the Anglican heritage," and expressed the hope for continuing dialogue between Anglicans and other churches. Despite the desire for Christian unity few specific proposals for seeking unity came about.

One of these was a strong reaffirmation of the World Council of Churches (WCC) as "the most comprehensive expression of the ecumenical movement and also the chief vehicle of worldwide ecumenical cooperation and service."

This motion coincided with the announcement of a grant of $85,000 by the WCC to the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). The grant was for food, health, social, educational, and agricultural needs of the Patriotic Front. As a result this issue preoccupied the bishops' debate and resulted in an amendment asking the WCC to accept the guidance of the conference's earlier statement on war and violence.

That statement stressed the seriousness of "the questions which the teaching of Jesus places against violence in human relationships." In another Lambeth statement on the subject, begun by African initiative, Christians were urged "not to abandon people struggling for freedom even if the struggle becomes violent."

The bishops also backed progressive world disarmament and restraints on the development of nuclear energy. Their statement also challenged assumptions that "more is better" and "having is being" and warned against international disaster if present attitudes and expectations don't change. They called for a new economic order that would secure fair prices for raw materials while maintaining fair prices for manufactured goods.

Two Christian kibbutzim thrive in Israel

Two Christian villages, Nes Ammim and Yad Hashemona, have thrown in their lot with their Jewish neighbors in the State of Israel.

Nes Ammim is by and large the brainchild of the late Johan Pilon, a Dutch physician who worked for many years at the Scottish missionary hospital in Tiberias. Working and living in the young Jewish state, he came to see the Church's traditional attitude to the Jewish people as one of rejection; an attitude that he considered untenable.

In the early 1960s Nes Ammim associations were set up in Holland, Switzerland, West Germany, and the United States. The settlers-to-be purchased 275 acres of land from a Druze Sheikh in western Galilee, and in 1964 Nes Ammim became a fact on the map of Israel.

Yad Hashemona's origins go back to 1961 when a group of Finnish tourists were shifted from a Jerusalem hotel to the kibbutz inn at Kiryat Anavim outside the city. The arrangement was the start of a steady stream of volunteers from Finland who came to the kibbutz for a year or more to work.

Then in 1974 a handful of Finnish families and singles set up their own moshav on the hill across from Kiryat Anavim. They chose the name Yad Hashemona, which in Hebrew means Memorial to the Eight, to commemorate eight Jewish refugees whom the Nazis succeeded in deporting from Finland before the Finnish government could put a stop to their schemes.

The name Nes Ammim, "Banner of Nations," is taken from Isaiah 11:10.

In both settlements each family has its own house, but the fields and any other enterprise the settlement may run are jointly owned and operated. Both villages are represented on their regional councils along with other settlements in the area, and their children attend regional schools. The economic base of Yad Hashemona consists of a guest house which is used mostly for Scandinavian tourists, and a carpentry shop making Finnish model pinewood furniture. Nes Ammim's economic mainstay is the growing of roses and other flowers. They export twenty to forty thousand flowers each day. *Israeli Government Tourist Office*

Choice VII addresses urban renewal

Harrisonburg, Virginia—A seventh series of *Choice* radio programs is nearing completion according to Larry Heatwole, studio manager and engineer for Mennonite Broadcasts.

Named *Choice VII*, the ninety-second programs deal with urban and social justice issues. Each program describes a current situation requiring a moral choice, considers possible alternatives—including a Christian response—but permits the listener to make the final decision.

The new series is a cooperative production of the Mennonite Brethren, General Conference Mennonite, Church of the Brethren, and Mennonite Churches.

Choice VII will be available for congregations, small groups, or businesses to sponsor. Persons or groups in Canada who are interested in sponsoring the series may write to: Mennonite Radio and Television, Box 2, Station F, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2L 2A5. In the United States write to: Mennonite Broadcasts, Box 1252, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801. A January 1979 release is projected.

Franz reflects on Mennonite presence in Washington

The opening of the Peace Section Washington Office in 1968 under Mennonite Central Committee was a pivotal juncture in the American Mennonite experience.

Following three years of preparatory deliberations the Washington Office opened July 8 in a somber setting. The smoke over a burning riot-torn city was just clearing. End-the-war marchers descended on Capitol Hill soon thereafter. Our quietistic tradition seemed an unlikely source from which to draw a witness to the principalities and powers.

Experiences during the two world wars generally placed constraints on our exposure and witness. But in the fifties and sixties these confines were burst. Whereas in 1900 only twelve Mennonites were in overseas assignments by 1978 over 2,000 were serving in critical areas of need. It has been this expanding corps of Mennonite service and mission workers who have led the way in breaking our long silence to the power centers.

Their experiences in the developing world and in city ghettos has caused a growing engagement in "reverse mission," that is, sensitizing the political leaders of the developed world (especially the Washington power-elite) to the consequences of international trade policy, weapons production, arms trade, and employment and welfare policies.

The church's voice to Washington must be different from the hundreds of lobbyists representing major corporations, defense industries, labor unions, all of whom exert pressure on Congress favorable to their economic interests. The function of the Washington Office has not been primarily to seek institutional benefits for our churches, but of facilitating communications of our people on behalf of the dispossessed.

Often that witness has been received with great respect by government officials. Such has been the case when our Middle East workers have been told repeatedly in Congressional offices that theirs was the first voice which reflected the plight of the Palestinians. And from Laos, where our two Mennonites have been half of the total American presence (other than three US embassy personnel), their voice was pivotal in obtaining release of 10,000 tons of grain so urgently needed in that area.

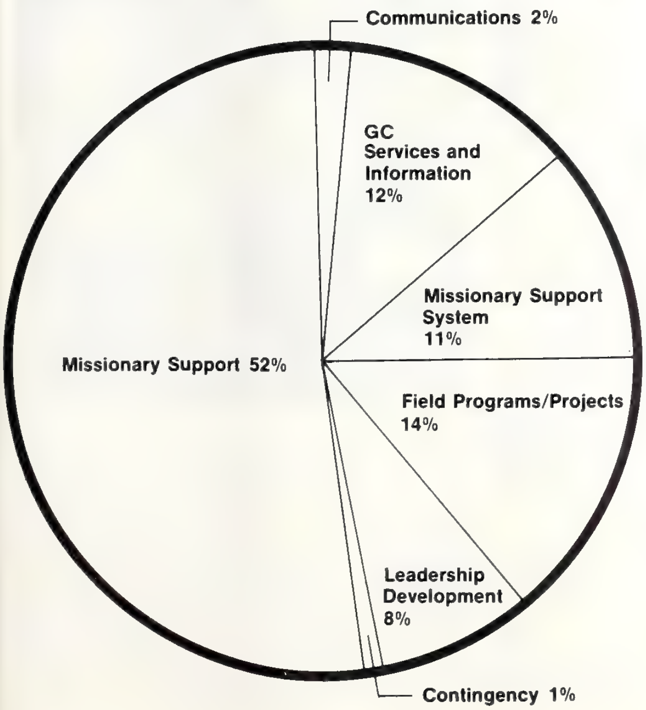
The voice of the "people in the pews" is also growing and important. About 4,000 constituents are on the Washington Office mailing list and are thereby kept informed of pending actions in government affecting the world's hungry, the escalation of the arms race, and other important issues. Letters from constituents have been a significant factor in moving leaders to act. One constituent's letter prompted a Senator to introduce the long awaited World Peace Tax Fund bill in the Senate.

The past ten years have been a transition period. Several thousand have participated in the Washington seminars, arranged for seminarians, missionaries, offender ministries people, Native American ministries personnel, and concerned church members.

These seminars provide a means to learning a new language—the language of the military, of the international economic order, of civil liberty. Without understanding the language in these and other critical areas Christians cannot effectively translate the concerns of Jesus and the prophets for the poor and oppressed to leaders who are accountable to govern with justice and equity. *Delton Franz, MCC Peace Section Washington Office*

YOUR MISSION DOLLAR AT WORK

Needed this year . . . $2,084,949



MISSIONARY SUPPORT	$1,094,129
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	156,881
FIELD PROGRAMS/PROJECTS	279,133
COMMUNICATIONS	47,200
GC SERVICES/INFORMATION	250,389
MISSIONARY SUPPORT SYSTEM	234,629
CONTINGENCY	22,588

Words & deeds

Beirut, Lebanon—A young Christian militiaman, member of the rightest forces battling Syrian troops in Beirut, waves his Soviet-made AK-47 assault rifle and flashes a victory sign during a lull in the battle September 8. Fighting resumed again the following day in the battered Beirut suburbs as Christian spokesmen claimed that the Syrians were trying to sabotage the Camp David summit.

Port-au-Prince, Haiti—Food distribution is still critically needed in Haiti, reports Dr. Ian Rawson, former director of the Community Health Department at Hospital Albert Schweitzer in Haiti. He had considered closing down the food distribution program in the Haitian valley area to encourage independence and self-sufficiency. However, after considering the present need he decided to continue the program, which has received twenty tons of MCC milk during the past year. Milk for distribution in Haiti, given by the Canadian International Development Agency, is shipped by MCC. Haiti is one of several countries receiving food distribution through MCC.

Recreational vehicles made in Winkler, Manitoba, come with something extra—a New Testament and a wish for "enlightenment on your journey of life." The vehicles are made by Mennonites (Triple E Trailers) and the Bibles are provided by the Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church. Buyers of the vehicles find the gift "different", according to a Triple E salesman quoted by the Lethbridge (Alberta) Herald.

Washington, DC—The Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section responded July 19 to an invitation by the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee to present testimony at hearings on the death penalty. Quoting from a 1910 statement by the Mennonite leader Daniel Kauffman, the testimony opened: "The taking of human life, whether upon the field of battle, on the gallows, or in the electric chair. . . belongs to uncivilized nations." Most committee members present seemed more influenced by the public's cry for vengeance than by statistical realities which show the minimum of recidivism, or repetition of a crime after prison release in regard to "willful homicide." Concluding the testimony, Peace Section director Delton Franz stated: "If indeed, counsel for the defense could adequately know, understand, and present to the jury all the factors contributing to the defendant's crime, and the jury could, in turn, truly weigh the relationship of these mitigating circumstances to the aggravating circumstances, the jury would then theoretically be sufficiently knowledgeable to sit in judgement over the life of the convicted defendant. However, we believe such wise and perfect judgement has not been given to the created human order, but continues to remain within the province of the Creator. He alone can be the perfect giver and taker of life."

Thirteen young persons from two General Conference Mennonite congregations in Chihuahua. Mexico, conducted summer Bible school sessions during June and July. Two eventful weeks were spent in centers in the nearby mountains conducting a Spanish school for children who normally have limited opportunites for learning. A total of 137 children enrolled for the Spanish sessions. Some decisions for Christ were made. A number of parents observed, "Our children wouldn't be good if it weren't for you folks." A four-week school for German speaking children aged eight to fifteen years was held in Steinriech. The children enrolled for a week and enjoyed the privilege of living in a dormitory as well as the change from routine home life. In addition to the leadership given by local Mennonites, two students from Columbia Bible Institute in British Columbia—Lisa Bock and Eleanor Neufeld—also taught.

Management-labor relations is the theme for the joint annual convention of Mennonite Industry and Business Associates (MIBA) and Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) to be held October 26-29 in Cambridge, Ontario. MIBA is an organization of business and professional people which is nurture oriented; MEDA is an association which sponsors development programs in various parts of the world. All sessions are open to the public. Canadians should send registration inquiries to Shirley Schiedel, Route 32, Cambridge, Ontario N3H 4R7; Americans should address their inquiries to J. Hostetler, 2000 South Fifteenth Street, Walnut Court, D4-2, Goshen, Indiana 46526.

"A Concrete Commitment" by Kurt Harder of Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas) was the winning oration in the 1978 C. Henry Smith Peace Oratorical Contest. The essay focuses on the proposed formation of a national peace academy which would train students in the areas of conflict analysis and resolution, and theories and methodologies of peacemaking.

For the first time a choir from the Mennonite Theological Center in Asuncion, Paraguay, has toured Mennonite congregations in the Chaco. The choir left Asuncion July 20, and after extensive delays due to a muddy, nigh impassible road was able to sing five programs in the following centers: North and South Menno, Loma Plata, Philadelphia, and Neuland. The choir's repertoire consisted of German and Spanish selections. Much of the singing was a cappella since three of the five churches visited do not have a piano. Harp accompaniment was used in some of the selections. In addition to the choir selections there were Bible readings, testimonies by students, talks by the seminary staff, and small group selections.

Rocky Flats, Colorado—Valda Carber, a participant in the Church of the Brethren national youth conference, prays during a mid-August antinuclear vigil at the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant. About 600 Church of the Brethren youth joined in the demonstration against the manufacture of weapons for nuclear war, and later released balloons symbolizing the possible spread of contaminants from the plant.

Record

Workers

Mary E. Burkholder, Kitchener, Ontario, has been appointed assistant director of personnel for Mennonite Central Committee (Canada). Her duties will include processing applications of volunteers destined for overseas placement, coordination of a recruitment program with the provincial MCC offices, and planning the annual orientation session for volunteers.

Elfrieda Ens, First Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, is serving a three-year teaching assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Zaire. She received BA and MA degrees from the University of Saskatoon and a professional teaching certificate from the University of British Columbia.

Burkholder

Ens

Walter Franz, principal of Swift Current Bible Institute for the past eight years, has tendered his resignation effective June 30, 1979. Personal and family-related reasons were given for the decision.

Paul L. Goering, Goshen, Indiana, has accepted the position of regional manager and estate planning consultant for the Mennonite Foundation, Goshen, beginning October 2. He will administer Foundation services in Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan. He will be available to assist Mennonites with stewardship of accumulated possessions, wills, effective estate planning, and charitable giving. For the past nine years Goering has been pastor of the Eighth Street Church in Goshen.

Rodney Janzen, Shantz Church, Baden, Ontario, is beginning a three-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Tougan, Upper Volta, where he will work in well development. He graduated from the University of Waterloo (Ontario) with a BA in history and has been employed at an automotive parts factory in Kitchener, Ontario.

Galen Penner, Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minnesota, has joined the admissions staff at Freeman Junior College and Freeman Academy for the coming school year. He will be working on a part-time basis in the fall semester and full time in the spring. Penner is a 1978 graduate of Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio, with a BA in religion.

Peter Rempel, Winnipeg, Manitoba, became administrative assistant for personnel and office management of the Winnipeg MCC (Canada) office August 1. He will process and approve applications for volunteer assignments in Canada and the United States.

Robert and Maureen Richardson, Bethel Church, Aldergrove, British Columbia, are beginning a term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Toronto, Ontario, working with Youth Guidance, a division of Youth for Christ, in a community based program for delinquent teenagers. Maureen received a BA in psychology from the University of British Columbia in 1978. Robert received a BPEd with a concentration in psychology from the University of British Columbia in 1978.

Goering

Janzen

M. Richardson

R. Richardson

Linda Shelly, First Church, Newton, Kansas, is beginning a term of service with Mennonite Central Committee at the MCC Akron headquarters, Akron, Pennsylvania, working in personnel services. Linda has attended Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, majoring in social sciences.

Rempel

Shelly

Voth

Williams

Dwight L. Voth, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kansas, is beginning a two-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pennsylvania, as the printing press operator at the MCC headquarters. Dwight has attended Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

Roger Williams, Brookings, South Dakota, became manager of Mennonite Press in North Newton, Kansas, on September 5. Williams received a BS in print management from West Virginia Institute of Technology, and followed this with an MS from South Dakota State University, Brookings, where he taught print management prior to moving to Kansas. He also served three years as director of Kristen Pres in Papua New Guinea.

Published

Passing on the Gift by Glee Goughnor Yoder (The Brethren Press, 1978, $3.95) is a biography of Brethren pioneer Dan West. The book details West's founding of Heifer Project International and examines his contribution to the camping and youth movements of the Church of the Brethren. It is the first in a projected series of popular biographies of notable Brethren.

722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114 316/283-5100

AN OPEN LETTER TO GENERAL CONFERENCE MENNONITE MEMBERS

Dear members:

General Conference members are people who care. They care about each other. They care about others. And they care about God and his creation.

Twenty-nine new persons have come to us during this year indicating that they care about people overseas. They are being sent as missionaries to Upper Volta, Taiwan, and Botswana. This will give us a net increase of nine missionaries—the first significant increase in overseas workers since 1969!

Twenty-six persons from non-Mennonite backgrounds have come to the Commission on Home Ministries saying that they care about the same issues and people that we do. They have been given a solid orientation and are now involved in Mennonite Voluntary Service units.

Paul and Lois Unruh care about our marriages. The Commission on Education has asked them to develop Marriage Encounter—Mennonite expression for General Conference people and for our acquaintances. The first Marriage Encounter weekend is scheduled for November 1978.

The twenty faculty members at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries care what we believe. They are showing their concern for the two hundred students gathered at Elkhart. They have just begun a new year together to plumb the depths of truth in God's Word, and to prepare for ministry in our churches.

Because they care, the commission, board, and staff members have pledged to give over $20,000 more than they gave last year for General Conference causes.

We know that you care, too. Many of you have increased your giving. We and our workers want to express a sincere word of appreciation. Generous giving needs to continue. $1,602,363 was still needed between September and December. This is $137,092 more than was given last year.

Let's continue to be people eager to care. As the Apostle Paul said to the Corinthians, so he would probably say to us: "If you are eager to give, God will accept your gift on the basis of what you have to give, not on what you don't have" (2 Corinthians 8:12).

Howard Habegger, COM

Palmer Becker, CHM

Palmer Becker

John Gaeddert, COE

John Gaeddert

Henry Poettcker, AMBS

Henry Poettcker

Ted Stuckey, DA

Ted W. Stuckey

Heinz Janzen, GB

Heinz Janzen

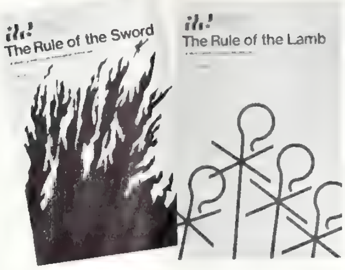
Our Foundation:
Jesus Christ

Advertisement

Review

The sword or the lamb

The Rule of the Lamb *by Larry Kehler, and* The Rule of the Sword *by Charlie Lord (Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kansas 67114, 1978) are reviewed by Robert Kreider, director of the Mennonite Historical Library, North Newton, Kansas 67117.*



I hope someone in every Mennonite family takes an hour or two to read, ponder, and tell others about these two booklets. Charlie Lord's booklet on the *Sword* assembles skillfully a wealth of recent information on the arms race and the militarization of our society. Larry Kehler's booklet on the *Lamb* is an invitation to consider from a biblical perspective the touchy issue of paying taxes which are used for killing and war.

I am pleased that our conference published these two information-packed, thought-provoking, readable, and inexpensive pamphlets. The tax question is a thorny issue. It won't go away. Perhaps God has sent us this issue at this time to test his people. It may be said, "By this you shall know a congregation—how it handles its conflicts." Mennonites may be judged on how they handle this issue—that is, whether they do it courageously, thoughtfully, earnestly, prayerfully, and lovingly.

Charlie Lord equips us with data we cannot ignore. The average family pays more in taxes to support the world arms race than to educate its children.... The nuclear bomb inventories of the two superpowers, already sufficient to destroy every city in the world seven times over, are still growing at the rate of three bombs a day.... He quotes Douglas McArthur: "War has become a Frankenstein to destroy both sides. . . . It contains the germs of double suicide."

Present in Larry Kehler's beautifully written *The Rule of the Lamb* is a prayer "that the process in decision making which is proposed will be helpful to congregations and classes in hammering out thoughtful and biblically sensitive stances on a delicate issue." The significance of Kehler's booklet can best be grasped by noting provocative statements gleaned from *The Rule of the Lamb:*

"When a dispute arose in the church at Jerusalem James proposed a solution which respected the value of as many as possible while still allowing some differences of judgment and loyalty."

"If you were a Christian believer in Uganda, under the predictable thumb of a ruler who is bent on destroying the church, how would you read Romans 13?"

"How do you respond to an issue in your community or state or province about which you have some misgivings but nobody else seems to share?"

"Is civil disobedience, when done after thoughtful study of the Word in the Christian community, not more accurately called Christian obedience?"

"An efficient and well-trained corps of managers has emerged to run our Mennonite institutions. The 'constituency' of each of these institutions insists that it be run in a businesslike, fiscally responsible, and basically conservative way. Actions which might jeopardize the welfare of an institution are not likely to be looked upon with much favor."

"A prophet is not responsible for the consequences of his actions in the same way that a manager is."

No easy road lies ahead for those who consider together these issues. I am confident, however, that the Holy Spirit will be with those who study diligently these significant materials and who seek to discern together what God's will is for them today.

Beside my Bible

Mary F. Heisey

On Chistian existence

This week's books offer careful answers to complex issues and responsibilities. Tomorrow is involved in everything we do today—how we develop as persons, how we treat God's earth, and how we raise our children.

I Believe in Man, *By George Carey (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1977, 190 pages).*

The nature and destiny of man are brilliantly analyzed under the microscope of God's love by the vicar of St. Nicholas' Parish Church, Durham, England. This book, Carey's first, works out a doctrine of man in the light of the Scriptures and contemporary experience.

Written with awesome scholarship, laced with sophisticated humor, and filled with intense faith, this agent of continuing education informs, amuses, upsets, and encourages the "new creation" in Christ. Conclusion: "I believe in man because I first believe in God."

The Earth Is the Lord's, *Edited by Mary Evelyn Jegen and Bruno V. Manno (Paulist Press, New York/Toronto, 1978, 216 pages).*

Most helpful to the reader of these statistic-laden essays on stewardship are the down-to-earth suggestions that conclude this painstaking collection. "Parenting in a Hungry World" tells how to interest children in *being* more instead of *having* more, in "giving" rather than "giving up," in seeing that they are receivers as well as givers. "Stewardship: The Feminine Perspective" is excellent.

Ceaselessly, the cry of the hungry is heard behind all the perspectives, issues, and responses in this *Bread for the World Educational Fund* book.

An Uncomplicated Guide to Becoming a Super-Parent, *by Joy Wilt (Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1977, 131 pages).*

Although written in kicky-sweet style, this guide is a very dry cookie indeed. A ten-chapter outline spiced with personal anecdotes, it lacks sufficient biblical support.

I marvel at the way the author's children supposedly verbalize their needs.

If your responsibilities, needs, and rights seem superannuated to your children, maybe you *should* nibble at this tasteless morsel to improve your appetite for parenthood.

Letters

Women's clothing

Dear Editor: How is it that preachers don't speak more about women going half-dressed? They usually have part of their breasts showing even while they sing in church. Now that skirts have come down, so have the necklines. At Christian camps it's the same way—almost next to nude.

Is there nothing wrong with that?

Boys and men have to look to the sky if they don't want to see busts and legs. Then the women talk about rape. I think they are just as much to blame as the men.

My aunt's grandson raped a girl and was put in jail. There he took his life. Whose fault was it?

Preachers preach about alcohol, tobacco, and all kinds of things; but this is never mentioned. *Susie Esau, Box 1026, Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan*

August 17

My declining years

Dear Editor: Peace be with you. I have received *The Mennonite* for many years and learned many valuable things. Among others, I learned about intentional communities, something I'd like to know more about. May the Lord reward you.

Lately, our church gave us a wonderful sixtieth anniversary celebration. Besides congratulations from the Queen, the Lieutenant-governor, and the premier of our province, there were many expressions of goodwill, including a heartwarming tribute by a former pupil.

We are now in a senior citizens' home. The care is generously adequate.

Such care (my wife needs special help) is costly. I have been thinking that it would be more Christian for us to be together in voluntary communities and look after our own; it would be better.

Another concern is the high cost of dying. A conservative estimate for a funeral is a thousand dollars. Why don't we dig the graves ourselves and prepare our own funerals? Why don't our churches organize in a way to bury our own? *Isaac H. Wiens, Box 6, Herbert, Saskatchewan S0H 2A0*

August 23

More on Bible smugglers

Dear Editor: We appreciate receiving *The Mennonite* by airmail; it keeps us informed and provides stimulating reading.

I respond to "Lutheran Leader Attacks Bible Smugglers" (July 25th issue). There is no shortage of people in North America who are committed to do all they can to share the Good News with the people of the world. The question really relates to the ethics by which, in this situation, Bibles are either dropped into the sea or smuggled into Eastern European countries. I wonder whether the smuggling exercise satisfies more the needs of the smuggler than the prospective recipient of the Bible.

Secondly, if the Christian community in Eastern Europe is to be respected for its integrity and beliefs, we do them a disservice when we condone this smuggling. Too much of what we hear concerning eastern European countries is negative. There are difficulties in socialist countries, but their churches also have much to teach us. I agree that more emphasis should be placed on the life of the Christians within congregations in these countries.

West Bengal, India, now has a Communist Party of India Marxist Government, and we have received *good* government during the past two years. During a recent address to the Christian community at St. Xavier's University in Calcutta, the chief minister, Jyoti Basu, indicated that the Christian community had nothing to fear as long as it acted with integrity and in the interests of the people. There is no malice or hostility towards the Christian community here. I feel there is an openness and that this openness will continue to grow only if we share, honestly, our own lives and persons. Where we use illegal or illicit means to accomplish what we think are good ends, we fool only ourselves.

There are too many "black and white" reports in which the political systems of Eastern Europe are described as completely bankrupt and evil. If we take Jesus seriously there is really no one political system that is that much better than another. They are all human systems. *A. C. Lobe, 22 Girish Chandra Road, Calcutta 700014, India*

August 25

Efficiency in missions

Dear Editor: The first six paragraphs of "Planting a Chinese Mennonite Church" (August 8 issue) seem particularly based on an attitude that I don't see connected with Good News sharing in the Bible.

It seems we feel cheated because every $333.33 hasn't produced a response for Christ among native Indian and Metis people. At the World Conference, in Wichita, several speakers challenged such thinking about efficiency, implied ownership and growth. "The church is always in danger of turning to the world rather than to Christ for its models of power. In our day those are the models of big business and big government. We are confronted with a theology of success in which we measure ourselves and the church in terms of efficient programs, big organizations" (Paul Hiebert, United States of America).

In his response, Charles Christano, Indonesia, emphasized Hiebert's point that even a lot of our genuine caring reflects colonial attitudes of ownership, rather than the biblical stance of a family under God. He said, "It's not your world. And we are not the third world."

Festo Kivengere, Uganda, pointed us back to the biblical concept of productivity. Wheat must go into the ground and be torn apart; we need to be involved in life in an often messy, life-threatening way. It took Jesus to the cross—God hanging in utter weakness—rather far removed from the privileges and safety we as the middle class appreciate, but, paradoxically, very much in touch with the tremendous power of God.

In Luke 10, when Jesus sent out the seventy-two, they went as the vulnerable, not as the powerful ones. They genuinely required food, lodging, and hospitality. After asking to share the room and food that was available, they were also able to share the news, "The kingdom of God has come near to you." *Madeleine Enns, 555 Pacific Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3A 0M6*

August 30

Dismayed at comparisons

Dear Editor: I am dismayed to see the way in which various groups of people are compared with each other in the article on Chinese churches (August 8 issue).

When responsive Chinese persons are compared with unresponsive native Indian persons; and quiet, hard-working, family-oriented Chinese people are compared with supposedly similar Mennonites, the implicit value judgments are blatant.

Could it be that attitudes such as these reflect what we really believe and consequently negate our explicit proclamation of the Good News? *Else Barg, 574 Alexander Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3A ON8*

September 1

Meditation

Pope Paul VI

Ten years ago I had the opportunity of visiting with Pope Paul VI. The International Eucharistic Congress was held in Bogota, Colombia. Pope Paul became the first Pope to set foot in Latin America. When he got off the Avianca jet, he bowed low and kissed the ground.

At that time I was pastor of the First Mennonite Church of Bogota. The papal nuncio (Vatican ambassador) of Colombia had invited other Christians, both Protestant and Orthodox, to participate in an interfaith meeting with the Pope at the Vatican embassy. I was invited along with Luis Correa, a deacon of the Mennonite Church in Bogota. Luis had read the Scripture at a public interfaith meeting in the Templete, the specially built chapel for the Pope at the Eucharistic Congress. (Luis was a respondent at the Mennonite World Conference, Wichita.)

Our meeting with Pope Paul was quite informal. About thirty were present. Pope Paul spoke to the group extemporaneously in Italian, then read a prepared statement about Christian unity (in Spanish), after which all joined him in praying the Lord's Prayer. Then the Pope visited informally with each one of us. When he came to me, I began to speak to him in Spanish. He smiled and asked, "Do you speak English?" That worked better for him. Among other things, I commended him for his efforts for justice, reconciliation and peace (Vietnam War) and told him about our mission as a Mennonite Church in Colombia. Then he asked, "Who are the Mennonites?" I was able to give a brief history and tell of some of our distinctives as Mennonite Christians. I was impressed with the Pope's humility and simplicity.

That same year I had the opportunity to speak in a Roman Catholic church in our neighborhood near our Mennonite church. Since then our relationships with Roman Catholics have continued and grown. In my own life and ministry in Latin America, I have come a long way in my attitudes and relationships to Roman Catholics. Among Colombian Christians, whom I cherish as brothers and sisters in Christ and with whom we had times of rich fellowship, we count many Roman Catholics, including clergy. I have learned that the kingdom of God indeed goes beyond Protestantism.

In tribute to Pope Paul VI I want to suggest three things: (1) I would encourage those interested who have not done so to study the documents of Vatican II (including the 992 footnotes!) for an enlightening experience. It will help you understand what the Roman Catholic church stands for today, and it will help you understand them as people. (2) Find a way to relate to Catholics and find out what you in common have to learn and understand (remembering that even Pope Paul wanted to know about the Mennonites). By the way, did you know that a Catholic from Argentina came to Wichita with the Mennonite delegates to attend the World Conference? Why not? I heard her testimony and was inspired. (3) And finally, let us pray that the Spirit of Christ might prevail also upon the successor to Pope Paul VI, Pope John Paul I.

Glendon Klaassen

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CONTRIBUTORS

Dorothy Friesen, MSPC/Susana Building, J.P. Laurel Street, Davao City, Philippines, is an MCC volunteer there.

Dana Powell, 1029 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20005, has recently joined the *Sojourners* staff as an editorial assistant. She has been a student under Phil and Elaine Amerson.

Mary F. Heisey, 56 East Street, York, Pennsylvania 17403, continues alerting us to good reading.

Glendon Klaassen, COM missionary to Colombia, Calle 127A, Number 49, A-32, Apdo. Aereo 9859, Bogota 2, D.E., has been on furlough during the past year.

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The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Modern poverty

One day the Mexican government published a new building code. Most families found their homemade shacks declared obsolete. Bulldozers came and devastated them.

No new house could be legally started without the submission of an approved architect's plan. Such a code could in no way reflect the fact that the traditional mud-brick houses used to take shape as they were built, to the fancy of the builders.

Any person who now dared to try and create his own house was considered a deviant, a misfit, a problem. Housing was changed from an activity to a commodity.

It has happened also in food producing, cooking, manufacturing, and transportation. And it happens just as relentlessly in our affluent world as in the "developing" nations.

Fifty years ago nine of every ten spoken words were personally addressed by one person to another. Today it is reversed. The majority of verbal messages are "packaged" for group or mass consumption. The spoken word has become a commodity to market and manage.

One of our basic human needs is to experience the satisfaction of personal accomplishment. It provides meaning when we are able to create or complete something useful. The Bible repeatedly calls us to *exercise* our God-endowed gifts.

When the use-values of human efforts are replaced by commodities, it presses the spirit into a xerox-type "follow the leader" mentality. It kills initiative and purpose. Creative minds, spirits, and hands are quashed. A malaise sets in. Human beings become more like robots.

This disease has been named, probably first by Ivan Illich, "modernized poverty."

Modern poverty was first felt by the poor. For a long time they have been the recipients of "leftovers" from our affluence. We gave them enough of the taste of all our gadgetry and other commodities that they became disenchanted with their own creations.

Today modern poverty is especially affecting the affluent world. The creativity of our hands is progressively being replaced by mass machine-produced commodities. Even the satisfaction of earning bread by the "sweat of your face" (Genesis 3:19) becomes more a pushing of buttons and pencils. Additional use-values of personal involvement are replaced each year by new kinds of engineered supplies.

It changes the whole process of living. We can no longer make what we need nor can we exercise our need to create. Our needs then become determined by what we are told we "ought to have." And each time we succumb to this lying propaganda we experience an added dimension of disutility.

Among us affluent Mennonites the amount and rate of uselessness multiplies at an alarming rate. Just check the number of us on tranquilizers, uppers, booze, the tube, and all the other artificial promises of "happiness just around the corner."

Emptiness, meaninglessness, depression, and anxiety abound among us like never before. We have become so rich and so poor.

About the only ones already going beyond this trap are the super affluent. They have all the gadgets and "done" the globe. Now many are "dropping out" to a new life of basket-weaving, community service, growing garden plots, writing books, and other self-use activities.

Modern poverty is one of the big challenges facing all of us. I believe that much of the answer lies in a deepening of relationships with one another to the point where we are enabled to become a missionary community.

Jesus never intended the Great Commission to become a burden. He gave it to us because it can give us meaning and free us from a sense of emptiness. The Mennonite tradition of VS, MDS, MEDA, MCC, TAP, PAX, plus missions and evangelism, is an excellent model for coping with modern poverty. Let's affirm each other to realize the significance of these vehicles for purpose in our lives. *Bernie Wiebe*

The Mennonite.
WM Edition

OCTOBER-
NOVEMBER 1978

Window to Mission

WM

the open window

It is good to say, "Thank you" to the Lord, to sing praises to the God who is above al gods.

Every morning tell him, "Thank you for your kindness," and every evening rejoice in all his faithfulness. Sing his praises, accompanied by music from the harp and lute and lyre. You have done so much for me, O Lord. No wonder I am glad! I sing for joy.

(Psalm 92:1-4, *The Living Bible*

Shout with joy before the Lord, O earth! Obey him gladly; come before him, singing with joy.

Try to realize what this means—the Lord is God! He made us—we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Go through his open gates with great thanksgiving; enter his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and bless his name. For the Lord is always good. He is always loving and kind, and his faithfulness goes on and on to each succeeding generation.

(Psalm 100, *The Living Bible*

COVER

Corn reminds us of our plenty here in America—something for which we should give great thanks throughout the year, not just now during this season of Thanksgiving. Corn also reminds us of the seed that is planted. What is planted and cultivated is what is produced and harvested. Is this not also true in our individual lives and in the lives of our families? Our TV viewing is like seed. What we allow to be planted and cultivated in our minds and lives is what we produce and harvest. Let us give prayerful thought to what we want this product to be.

WM

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Thanksgiving Reflections

—*Mary Lou Cummings*

FTER OUR FAMILIES are settled for
e night, Grace, Faith, and I often sit and
lk over coffee in a quiet restaurant. No,
ese women are *not* characters out of
ilgrim's Progress—they are real—
though to me they do personify Chris-
an faith and love. A remnant of a small
roup that met for several years, we know
ch other well.

I have come to appreciate these two
omen more and more; if our coffee
ights get preempted by our busyness and
hurch activities, I realize especially how
uch I miss their support. Grace thinks
nd reacts much as I do, despite our age
nd background differences. Faith is an
pposite personality type who is a good
hallenger and fermenter of ideas for me.

"How are you tonight? How has your
eek gone?" we begin. It has been
mportant to me to discuss my feelings,
ny spiritual highs and lows with my
sisters" and feel their warm affirmation,
uestions, and concern for me as a
erson. There is a commitment there, a
igh priority for each other. Unquestionably, both of them have helped me grow and "hang on" when things were rough. They've loved me. When I think of them I feel warm and thankful.

—*Doris Liechty*

It is very difficult for me to name just one person that I am thankful for, because there are so many. I love people and I have learned much from them. My husband and children are also very special to me.

As I think of my spiritual pilgrimage, however, I have to say that Gerald and Mary Hope Stucky (our former associate pastor, now missionaries to Colombia, South America) are the ones who stand out in my mind as being very special and helpful to me. I shall always be grateful for their example and for their confidence in me. At a time when I was at a real spiritual low, they introduced me to "Friendship Evangelism" or "Redemptive Friendship" as it has more recently been called.

They taught me that the business of

winning men and women for Christ and the church need not be left to the minister and a few church leaders. Every person can befriend people and show a genuine love for them.

I began to see that the reason for my spiritual low was due to the fact that I wasn't personally involved for Christ and His mission and I was expecting only to "take in" on a Sunday morning in church. Our Christian experience can be shared with others, and Gerald and Mary Hope set an example for me. I saw that people will not accept our Lord unless they are first convinced that we have something to offer them. The idea of loving people into the kingdom was exciting. Even though there aren't as many "success stories" as involvements, it is a program of love even as God planned to show Himself in Christ. I saw this in them and it brought new excitement to my spiritual life.

—Marilyn Miller

In this Thanksgiving season
I thank the Lord
for my mother.
For her hands
  that show me
  sacrificial giving.
For her heart
  that loves her family
  unconditionally.
For her ears
  ready to listen
  to hurts or humor.
For her mouth
  uncomplaining
  when times are tough.
For her eyes
  ready to see the good
  and to encourage it.
For her body
  given with gusto
  to the raising of nine children.
For her mind
  educated not in the universities,
  but in the school of real life.
For her spirit
  in tune with her Maker.
For the totality of her personhood
  which has shown me
  in earthy, practical ways
  —unconditional love
  —forgiveness
  —acceptance
  —sacrificial giving for others
  —communion with God
  —the meaning of Christ incarnat
In this Thanksgiving season
I thank the Lord
for my mother.

—Carol Linbe

At this time of year our thought being turned to thankfulness for frie family, home, church, etc. To single one particular person I am thankful not easy.

Yet, Darlene Mumbauer keeps ret ing to my mind as one person whc done much in my life. She is a member at Crossroads Commu Center in Pennsylvania, and it is t that I came to know her. Whil Crossroads she has taught me to see be more diligent in any project I atte Her enthusiasm and encouragement helped to convince me that I accomplish anything I start, and I have some knowledge I can pass o others. She has been responsible fo learning not to be troubled over may be expected of me, but to do my in those situations.

For me personally, Darlene has an instrument of the Lord to bring r confidence in my life and actions. has helped me to become a more cre individual, a better mother, and a r diligent worker. She has caused m desire to be "an example of the belie in word, in conversation, in charit spirit, in faith, in purity" because sl one.

—Sieglinda Prel

I'm thankful for the man who is husband. He is someone I can love n on. It's a help to be able to talk things er. Though we don't always agree on aller things, we see "eye to eye" on the sics. Certainly, there were times in the ty years when we hurt each other with rds, but love always conquered, and th confession to each other and rgiveness, there was healing.

I'm grateful for the memories he has en me. As a kind father, he reared our ildren with love—in place of the rod— they grew up with contentment instead resentment. He taught them hard rk, but he also played with them. ere were occasional trips in spite of the sy farm schedule.

Above all, I appreciate our daily ayers together. This has been our urce of strength through illnesses, erations, and special concerns.

—Jessie Kehler

My life has been molded not only by od but in varying degrees by His rvants around me. I am grateful to ose who have helped me to channel the urpose of my life.

My parents have had the most pro- und influence on my life. My mother in articular was a source of inspiration. er deep commitment to the Christian ay of life, demonstrated through daily evotions and prayer, left an indelible nprint on me.

Sharing generously of herself, her time, nd earthly goods such as flowers, garden roduce, canned goods, and handmade rticles, made love visible to me. This eep sense of caring for her family, riends, and neighbors affected my way of hinking.

She was also a strong advocate for ducation. Sacrifices were made so I ould pursue my nursing career.

If my mother were still in our midst oday, I would say, "Thank you, Mom, or your deep sense of caring, for your xample through sharing, for your ability o be a peacemaker, and for your nwavering faith.

—Onale Neufeld

We called her DoDo. She was an elderly lady in her late seventies. Her daughter and retarded grandson lived with her. She had a way of saying, "I care about you. Come on over anytime."

I was a minister's wife with an infant daughter in a new pastorate. My husband, Peter, was obligated to attend many evening meetings at the church, which was ten miles out of town. Being lonely, I often found my way to DoDo's house across the street.

She called our Sandra her "little girl." To listen, to share anything she had in her simple bungalow, and to understand was her way of life. The close personal friendship she offered was what I needed.

I'll never forget the day I returned home, worried to tears, because the doctor could not hear the heartbeat of my unborn child. When I shared the news with DoDo, she said, "I never borrow trouble nor wait for it to come." That stuck with me.

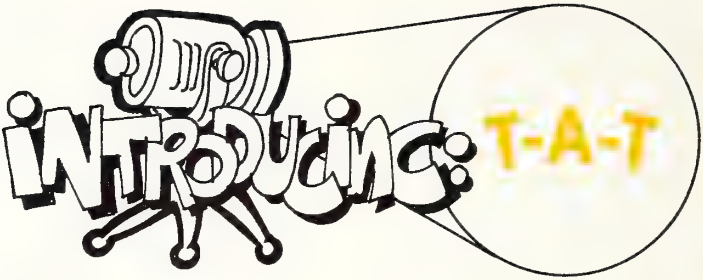
—Nina Roupp

As I look back and remember my mother and her life, it makes me realize again how much she meant to me. Even though she is no longer here, there are times when I feel I need to share with her some special happening in my life.

She was a quiet person—ever so patient—living her life as she felt called to do.

We lived on a farm, so there was always lots of work to be done, and Mother worked without complaint. For most of my school years, my grandmother lived with us. As I remember the care Mother gave to her, especially in her later life, I am sure she received a blessing. I also have been blessed by her example.

I keep trying to show the love and patience to others that she did. For this I am thankful.



Walter Epp

STUDENTS AND STAFF at Rosthern Junior College, Saskatchewan, Canada, spent three days involved in a Television Awareness Training (T-A-T) Seminar led by Gerald Loewen. Gerry's energy and enthusiasm were infectious and his rapport with the students was excellent as he unveiled the psychology of manipulation that pervades the TV advertising industry.

Gerry's invitation to go to Rosthern came from the Faith and Life Committee of the college. This student group is responsible for organizing a series of deeper life sessions each school year.

The classroom schedule became flexible during the week while Gerry met with the entire student body for an hour in the morning. He lectured, showed films, and set the stage for the small group encounters which took place throughout the day. These small groups involved intense question, answer, and discussion periods, during which time Gerry explained more fully the issues that had arisen during the day.

Students were shown how TV programming and advertising combine their efforts to develop uncritical viewers, who fall easy prey to the subtle advertising techniques employed by big business. In order to get as many viewers watching as long as possible, Loewen explained that
TV programming uses the “jolt
minute” formula. Translated, this me
that the more shocking and sensatic
the program, the more enthralled
susceptible the viewers become. Adve
ing buys people in numbers dependin
programming's ability to keep t
viewing.

One way to stop ourselves, as view
from being auctioned off in n
numbers is to avoid buying the br
name products being advertised. T
however, is difficult because many st
don't stock nonbrand name prod
because they simply don't sell. It is u
the public to change this.

The effect of Loewen's presentat
was to make us, as individuals, m
aware of the power of commerci
Hopefully, we have developed m
critical viewing habits. He urged us
analyze selling techniques to try
establish why an ad is appealing and w
emotions it exploits.

We found that a good way to be
developing good critical viewing habit
by sitting down as a family and check
the TV guide for programs we want
watch that week. We should discuss
programs and advertising while wat
ing, and when the program is over,
should turn off the TV.

PROGRAM 2 Media: An Arm for Understanding Christian Values

Diane Umble

ON AN AVERAGE EVENING, more than eighty million people will be watching TV. In the average home TV is on for six hours and four minutes per day (A. C. Nielsen). And 98 percent of the homes have TV sets (more than homes with plumbing). Just under half have more than one set.

Many of us have welcomed TV into our homes and accepted it as a normal part of our lives—so much so that we sometimes have difficulty stepping back and examining its effects.

We must keep in mind that commercial broadcasting is designed to deliver a product. Advertisers pay money to buy our attention. Program producers plan programs to attract the most viewers. The more viewers, the more money can be charged for the messages within the program that suggest you purchase a certain product. The average prime-time network thirty-second commercial costs $50,000. (Another $50-60,000 was probably spent producing the commercial.) In other words, someone is willing to spend over $100,000 for the opportunity to attract thirty seconds of a viewer's attention. Two very successful ways of doing this have been sex and violence.

Sex and Violence

Critics have recently been most vocal about portrayals of sex and violence on TV. Some of the concern has centered on whether children (and adults) will imitate the aggressive actions that are seen. Research on young children has confirmed this; yet other concerns about violence are of equal importance.

George Gerbner and Larry Gross of the University of Pennsylvania found that persons who watch a lot of TV see the real world as more dangerous and frightening than those who watch little. They are less trustful of their fellow citizens. They purchase more guns and door locks.

If we feel, as a result of TV-viewing, an exaggerated sense of risk and insecurity, Gerbner and Gross suggest that this may lead to increasing demands for protection and increasing pressure for the use of force by established authority. Larger police forces, greater military spending, more acceptance of the use of guns may be the ultimate result. Pressure may increase for a "law and order" approach to solving problems. Will we as nonresistant Mennonites also accept and demand this?

Violence is often tied to sex in TV portrayals. It is sometimes a violent expression of emotions—the conquering of a woman by a man. Or it is presented as a means by which women can manipulate men. Often sex is portrayed in a slapstick way, as something expressed through innuendo or suggestive gesture or dress.

While we see models for ways to hurt each other, seldom do we see good models for ways of loving and caring for one another. Instead, TV fosters misconceptions about sex; it suggests that sex is exploitive, a means of control, or at least that it is something to giggle and snicker about. Seldom is it a beautiful expression of human emotions blooming in the context of a caring relationship.

The TV world also suggests limited roles for men and women. Marriage is shown as reducing a male's powers but enhancing a female's. Only one-third of TV males are married compared to two-thirds of TV females. Single men are portrayed as more powerful than married men. Single women are more likely to be victims of violence than are married women.

Joyce Sprafkin, a clinical psychologist, did a study on the subject and found that TV males are portrayed as more powerful, smart, rational, and stable than females. Males are often very callous, aggressive, nonaltruistic, unable to break societal rules, and unable to express their feelings in resolving conflict.

Females on TV are less likely than males to accomplish tasks. They are generally passive, deferent, and very likely punished if they are highly active. They are impulsive and have great difficulty in delaying gratification and persisting in a task. Women are more likely to be victims than men and are more likely to be patients in hospitals. A TV woman's identity is defined by her relationship to a man, while most men are portrayed as not really needing meaningful relationships.

Research supports the idea that viewers who have limited contact with a particular group are very likely to accept TV portrayals of that group. This has a variety of implications for minority groups, occupational groups as well as male/female roles.

Research was done in Canada and the U.S. to determine whether the "All in the Family" character Archie Bunker reduced stereotypes or perpetuated them. Researchers found that prejudiced persons identified with Archie and thought he made better sense than Mike, his liberal son-in-law. Archie gave bigoted people acknowledgment and acceptance!

While some of TV's attitudes toward sex, minorities, men, and women are typical of some persons, the danger lies in accepting these roles and values as appropriate and acceptable.

Wouldn't it be great to see more portrayals of sensitive, affectionate men, who attempt to express their feelings, and more portrayals of competent, thinking women and creative housewives, or black and nonblack minority members in responsible positions?

Mennonite theology purposes that each person is loved of God, and therefore worthy of love and respect. We value persons not because of their social position, skin color, occupation, or sex. Our caring for persons is to be extended regardless of these categories. Can we allow the portrayals of persons on TV to influence the way we respond to new people in our communities or to persons in minority groups?

Consumerism

As Mennonites, we have also valued a simple life-style and have been historical-

Daniel Stonebraker, codefendant of mass murderer Roger Drollinger, testified in the 1977 St. Valentine's Day murders trial in Hartford City, Indiana: "About two or three months before February 14 . . . the TV show (Helter Skelter) came on and me and Roger watched it. . . . It was the movie of how Charles Manson . . . killed people for no reason. We talked about it." Later the youths were urged to participate in a murder rampage "just for enjoyment."

ly tied to the earth in our occupations. We emphasize service and encourage sharing. How different the values of TV commercials are!

While commercials can serve the positive function of introducing new goods and services, or creating a concern for physical hygiene, they can also breed materialism, and encourage purchasing nonnutritious foods or potentially dangerous toys.

Subtle pressure is applied to buy, through appeals of celebrities, misleading statistics, peer pressure, sex appeal, or through attempts to create a feeling of guilt or neglect for not using the product.

All human dilemmas are solved in seconds through the purchase of a product: boy gets girl after using right mouth wash; boy gets girl after buying right car; girl gets boy after using the right toothpaste; wife gets satisfied husband and children after buying the right prepackaged, overpreserved food. If you can just find the right product to buy, all your problems will be solved and your life will be happy. And, of course, happiness is the chief end in life.

Another assumption that commercials make is that technology will solve all major human problems. The energy crisis will be solved if we support the oil companies in their search for oil. If we run out of natural resources, the corporations will have developed new forms of energy by that time. We don't have to take responsibility . . . the corporations will solve the problems. We have power over nature.

Of all the TV values, this consumer mentality has probably made the greatest inroads into the Mennonite mentality. We are a diligent and hard-working people and the system has been profitable for us. We've been influenced that happiness is the chief end, and that happiness is obtaining material goods. As with the other values TV proposes, the danger is the temptation to accept that view of the world.

Religious Broadcasting

Religious broadcasters have been caught in the trap also. Jim Stentzel in a *Sojourners* magazine article (March 1978) describes how evangelicals have learned to exploit the media, and how the media have learned to exploit them. Religious celebrities are used to sell religion. They also sell themselves, their book, movies, and records. Stentzel suggests that mass evangelists also rely on success, riches, wealth, power, fame, beauty, etc., and so have celebrities testify to their overnight conversions from sinner to — no, not disciple, but star. Pastoral concern and nurture are overlooked.

Another trap religious broadcasters have been caught in, along with the rest of commercial broadcasting, is the affirmation of the present political system. Stentzel suggests that well-intentioned religious broadcasters in one breath uplift Christian values, while in another they strive to protect and uphold the country. Our Mennonite history clearly calls this attitude into question.

Christian Response

What is our response to this value system? Clearly our theology stands opposed to the values the media uphold.

Jesus tells us to give our coat to the one who needs it, and reminds us that instead of immediate gratification and comfort, we must leave self behind and take up the cross. While TV values the powerful, the Bible clearly states that God values the poor and the powerless.

What are the alternatives? Some persons have responded by getting rid of their TV. That is acceptable for some; for others it is not. TV as a medium is not inherently evil. Research has shown that certain programming can have immensely positive effects. Some programs now on TV do have positive effects, do model warm, caring relationships, do suggest other standards for valuing people. Persons just need to be selective.

Establish your values independent of those of the media. Develop life-styles which can achieve those goals instead of the media's goals.

This may mean examining your present values: What is important to you? How do you determine what makes you happy? What do you want for your children? Do these values match biblical values?

After examining your values, you can then examine your TV consumption. Some persons have decided to watch less and be with people more. Others have decided to give up their favorite programs for more worthwhile programs that could be watched as a family. Some have set time limits on viewing.

TV can provide opportunity for adults to share values. Family discussions on TV topics often help children develop their own standards and provide opportunity for children to develop and test their values and criteria for making choices. Helping children develop their own critical abilities is vital.

The media reflect our own weakness and greed far more than we want to admit. It is far too easy to condemn a TV episode for containing sex or violence and miss the larger values and life-style questions. While TV presents a distorted view of the world, we must not succumb to blaming TV for our own failures. We must change and take command of our relationship with TV. We have the opportunity to put into action our vision and our faith. In changing our lives, we may change TV in the process.

Program "How-To" Ideas

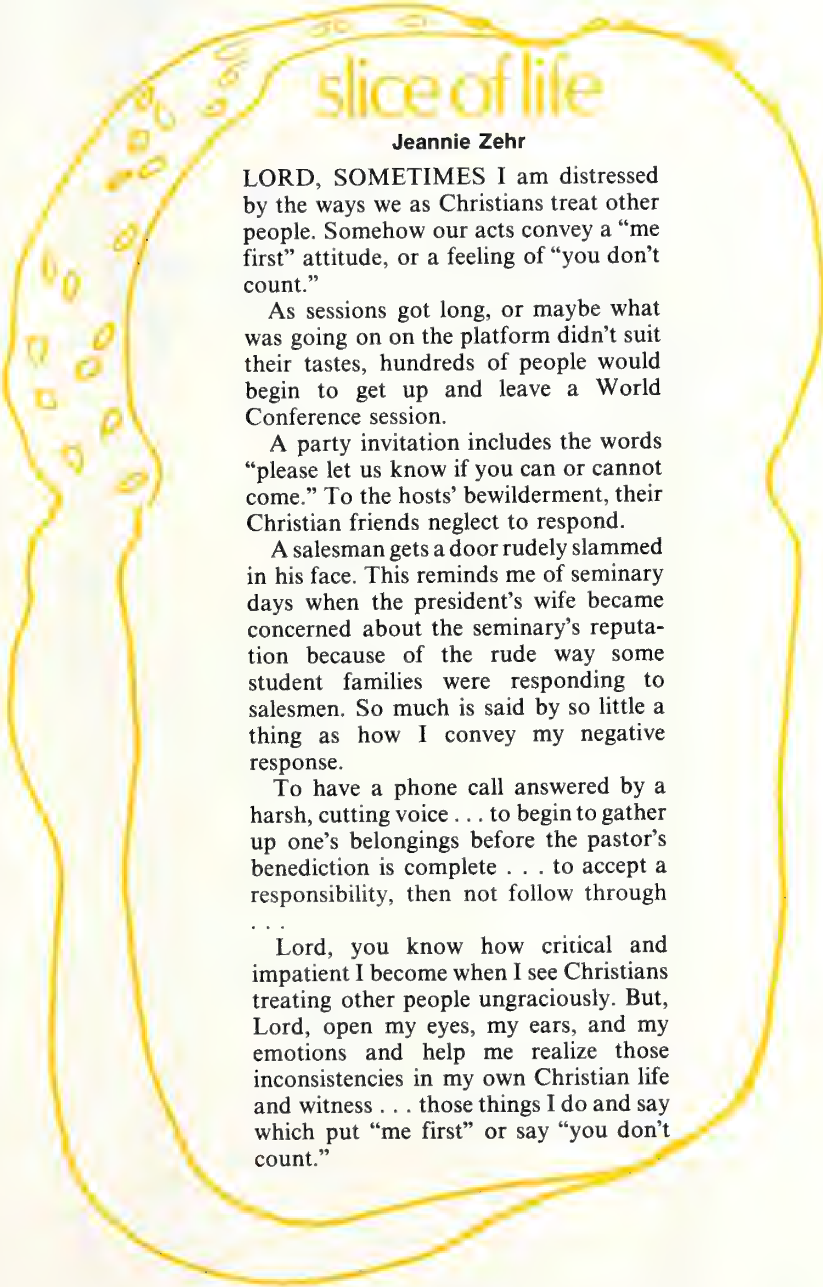
1. Prior to the meeting, suggest that persons keep a log of how much time the television is on in their homes. What is watched?

2. Present this lesson. Discuss what values television communicates to the persons in the group. This may best be done in small groups.

3. What personal and religious values are important? How do they compare to media's values? (You may want to look at some of the parables or the Sermon on the Mount as part of this discussion.)

4. What changes can be made in response to television? Have each person develop a set of guidelines for her consumption of television.

5. Inform the group that WM is supporting through its budget the media work of the General Conference. One aspect of that work is *Television Awareness Training,* a workshop experience designed to help persons become aware of the values TV teaches and to develop guidelines for coping with those values. Diane, and staff person Gerry Loewen are available to conduct T-A-T experiences in congregational settings. The General Conference is also involved in coproducing a new set of "Choice" radio spots on urban and social justice concerns.



slice of life

Jeannie Zehr

LORD, SOMETIMES I am distressed by the ways we as Christians treat other people. Somehow our acts convey a "me first" attitude, or a feeling of "you don't count."

As sessions got long, or maybe what was going on on the platform didn't suit their tastes, hundreds of people would begin to get up and leave a World Conference session.

A party invitation includes the words "please let us know if you can or cannot come." To the hosts' bewilderment, their Christian friends neglect to respond.

A salesman gets a door rudely slammed in his face. This reminds me of seminary days when the president's wife became concerned about the seminary's reputation because of the rude way some student families were responding to salesmen. So much is said by so little a thing as how I convey my negative response.

To have a phone call answered by a harsh, cutting voice . . . to begin to gather up one's belongings before the pastor's benediction is complete . . . to accept a responsibility, then not follow through . . .

Lord, you know how critical and impatient I become when I see Christians treating other people ungraciously. But, Lord, open my eyes, my ears, and my emotions and help me realize those inconsistencies in my own Christian life and witness . . . those things I do and say which put "me first" or say "you don't count."

Television Awareness in Action

Marlene Kropf

I'LL NEVER LOOK at TV the same way again," was a common response after our congregation's three-day TV workshop last winter. We were fortunate to have media consultant Gerald Loewen of Winnipeg, Manitoba, come to Portland, Oregon, to conduct a number of informative sessions. While in Oregon he also spoke at our district-wide women's meeting.

Armed with facts and hours of TV viewing and evaluation, Loewen set out to make more discriminating viewers of us. We divided up his time so that he could meet with smaller groups in our congregation and respond to their special needs. For example, the parents of preschoolers met with him one afternoon to discuss the effects of TV on young children. Parents of school-age children had a similar workshop one evening. On Saturday morning the youth group, along with their parents and sponsors, met with Loewen to discuss their TV-watching habits and learn some ways to critically evaluate TV programming. Another popular evening session was the one in which Loewen discussed news programs and advertising on TV.

Probably more than anything else, Loewen punctured the myths which make us comfortable with our viewing habits. For example, one person remarked, "Well, I don't watch anything on TV except the news." Loewen proceeded to illustrate the biased, unreliable nature of news shows and recommended that they be viewed primarily as entertainment. Another person said, "We don't let our children watch many programs, but we all watch 'The Waltons' together." Even here, Loewen pointed out a caution. A program in which all family squabbles are speedily resolved and in which parents have a limitless supply of patience and insight can be disillusioning to those who must live with other realities. Still another person commented, "I don't actually watch TV programs, but I often have the set turned on as I'm washing dishes or sewing." This kind of inattentive viewing, according to Loewen, is the most dangerous of all. While the viewer may be only half-tuned in, she still gets the subtle messages of commercials but does not consciously reject them. And so the insidious influence of advertising—TV's real reason for existence—penetrates one's mind in an unchallenged way.

One might think that with all this ammunition, Loewen would advocate getting rid of TV. Not so. His basic point was that the electronic medium is here to stay. We will be significantly influenced whether we watch TV or not. Consequently, we need to be well informed of the purpose and effects of TV and then determine our response.

For many families in our congregation, our exposure means we now watch TV shows far more carefully and critically than ever before. One parent has made an effort to teach her children the purpose of commercials and then point out the fallacies of advertising. Another family turns off the sound during commercials in order to reduce their subliminal effectiveness. Others watch fewer programs in order to lessen the blatant invitation to an affluent, selfish life-style portrayed on TV. One mother was inspired to plan a trip for her children to a local TV station to educate them to the realities of show production.

Our family's response grew not only out of the awareness Loewen brought to us, but out of our experience abroad in an MCC assignment. We liked being without a TV set so well that we determined not to let it control our lives anymore. We believe no good can come to our children from several hours of daily exposure to toy or junk food commercials or violence or affluence. Instead we can fill their lives with positive values through the books we choose to read together, the friendships we form, the concerts and plays we go to see—and the carefully selected TV shows we occasionally watch, usually on educational TV. Because TV can be a wonderful source of education and entertainment, we have chosen not to eliminate it altogether. But we have severely restricted its use in our home. For our children it means not more than one hour of commercial TV watching on school days and none at all on weekends. For my husband and me it generally means watching one program a week on educational TV. Our limits may seem severe to some, but when we consciously choose experiences to build Christian values for our family, there is little time left for TV.

Gerald Loewen's colorful but reasonable and informative presentations were a stimulus to action for people in our congregation. Because of his insight and willingness to be available to the church, we'll have no excuse ever to be passive TV watchers again.

General Conference staff persons Gerald Loewen and Diane Umble, who work with media under the Commission on Home Ministries, have taken Television Awareness Training (T-A-T) and are available to your congregation for workshops or retreats. Write to CHM, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, for more information.

Housework is
Something you do that Nobody notices, unless you Don't do it

WM office jottings from Joan

神愛世人
JULY 10 AUGUST 20, 1978

For Women in Mission, the 1978 Mennonite World Conference and the Taiwan Ladies Choir will always go hand in hand. Through the women's visit, God has done a new and beautiful thing among us in that we have been able to see Taiwan and some of its people through new lenses. What a great gift they gave us by sharing their lives with us through their songs of faith, their radiant smiles and gracious manner. The story of their dependence on prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit to make their coming possible helped us all grow in faith. The tour took the twenty-four ladies through five provinces and eight states, where they made more than thirty appearances. Their witness to the Christian faith will be long remembered by all of us who heard them.

The banner pictured here is a memento which Ruth Chen Lin, director of the choir, presented to Women in Mission. The top Chinese characters say, "God Loves World Man." The ones below mean, "The Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan."

The Taiwanese ladies would like to thank all those who had a part in making their visit possible and meaningful. Tapes of their program given at the First Mennonite Church in Newton are available upon request from the WM office, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

to help you serve

TELEVISION AWARENESS TRAINING T.M.

You ask, "What can I do about media?" Become aware, concerned, and informed about what impact media have on our lives. The Commission on Home Ministries has consultants trained in preparing radio and television materials. These people are available for helping congregations use the media for Christian witness and for Television Awareness Training workshops.

Financially you can help in the following ways:

* $1.50 will make one copy of a radio spot on the message of Proverbs. Seven thousand copies are needed.

* $100 will make it possible for Gerald Loewen, our media consultant, to conduct a workshop in Television Awareness Training. T-A-T helps participants to become aware of TV's power to influence for either good or evil.

* $5,000 will help develop and market a new daily Mennonite radio program.

contributors

Mary Lou Cummings (Thanksgiving Reflections) is the mother of a four-year-old son, and a free-lance writer. She serves on the General Conference Department of Literature Development and the Editorial Council for the new Youth-Adult Foundation Series curriculum. She lives at Route 5, Quakertown, Pennsylvania 18951.

Doris Liechty (Thanksgiving Reflections) is a homemaker and mother of four from Berne, Indiana. She and her husband, Lynn, have been active in Lay Witness Missions. Doris is a member of the Bluffton College Women's Council and a part-time clerk in a local store.

Marilyn Miller (Thanksgiving Reflections) is copastor of Arvada Mennonite Church in Colorado. She is a graduate of Bethel College and Iliff School of Theology. Her husband, Maurice, is a city planner. They have three children ages fourteen through ten years. Her mother, whom she writes about, is Clara Kauffman, wife of Mennonite minister Milo Kauffman of Hesston, Kansas.

Carol Linberger (Thanksgiving Reflections) and husband, Ray, last summer moved to Camp Men-O-Lan in Pennsylvania to serve as administrators. Their family consists of five children ages fifteen to six years. Carol just completed five years as treasurer of the Second Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She also served as Eastern District Young Mission Worker advisor.

Sieglinda Preheim (Thanksgiving Reflections) and her husband, Otto, live on a farm near Freeman, South Dakota. They have three married children. She edits the Northern District's monthly newspaper, *Northern Light*. She teaches an eighth grade Sunday school class at the Salem Church, and also enjoys gardening, reading, and collecting clippings.

Jessie Kehler (Thanksgiving Reflections) was born and raised in Alberta. She and her husband, Larry, have two children. For the last few years she has worked as an R.N. in a personal care home with the elderly and handicapped. She also enjoys crafts, cooking, and indoor gardening. The Kehlers live in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Onale Neufeld (Thanksgiving Reflections), her minister husband, Peter, and their two daughters and son live in Mountain Lake, Minnesota. Onale is active in activities at the Bethel Church and works part-time as a nurse aide at a local hospital. She also enjoys reading and gardening.

Nina Roupp (Thanksgiving Reflections) and her husband, Weldon, live at Route 1, Hubbard, Oregon. They are the parents of four children, three of them married. She works as janitor of her church, Calvary Church, Aurora, Oregon. She presently is serving as WM Advisor for the Pacific District.

Walter Epp (Introducing T-A-T) teaches German and English at Rosthern Junior College. He and his wife live on a farm and attend the Tiefengrund Church.

Diane Umble (Program 2: Media) is the director of Faith and Life Radio and Television for the General Conference Mennonite Church. She is communications instructor at Bethel College and an accredited Television Awareness Training leader. She is married and her husband, Ron, is a math professor at Hesston College, Kansas.

Jeannie Zehr (Slice of Life) and her husband, Marv, and two children live at 4226 Maplecrest Rd., Fort Wayne, Indiana. She edits *Window to Mission*, teaches Sunday school, and serves on the Central District Program Committee, and the Bluffton College Board of Trustees.

Marlene Kropf (Television Awareness in Action) and her accountant husband, Stan, live at 826 SE 53rd Ave., Portland, Oregon. They have two children. She serves on her district WMSC executive committee and teaches an adult Sunday school class at the Portland Mennonite Church. She has been employed by her congregation the past year and a half to do research and write a philosophy of education and develop an adult curriculum for their church.

Erica Esau (art work, p. 13) was born in Brazil and has worked in missions there. She is a minister's wife and a substitute teacher. The Esau family lives at 42413 S. Sumas Road, Sardis, British Columbia, Canada.

Joan Wiebe (WM Office Jottings) has just completed her first year as coordinator for the General Conference Women in Mission. She and her minister husband, Len, have three children and make their home in Newton, Kansas.

credits

PHOTO: Cover, Paul M. Schrock, Scottdale, Pa.
ARTWORK: P. 6, Nido R. Qubein Assoc., High Point, N.C.; p. 13, Erica Esau.

Walter
Epp

Diane
Umble

Jeannie
Zehr

Marlene
Kropf

Erica
Esau

forecast

"What's New in Overseas Mission Work?" by Sandy Liechty, missionary to Japan, will be the program-feature in the December-January issue of *Window to Mission*. We also think you'll enjoy a special feature story about Kim Friesen, a native Vietnamese woman, who with her American husband, is now serving in Taiwan.

Printed in U.S.A.

WOMEN IN MISSION: A PAGE OF NEWS AND IDEAS

FALL IS WOMEN'S RETREAT time in many areas. Northern District women gathered at Swan Lake in September for special music, inspiration, sharing, and fellowship. Anette Eisenbeis was their featured speaker.

Central District women gathered the same month at Camp Friedenswald to think together upon the theme "Family in Focus" led by resource persons Naomi Lehman, Jeannie Thiessen, and Doris Liechty.

"Retreat, Relate, Renew" was the theme for the Western District women's fall retreat. Carol Dalke shared about work being done with the Mennonite Indian churches in Oklahoma. Diane Umble discussed Television Awareness Training, and Dottie Janzen led the Sunday biblical input.

Central District WM president Olga Martens graciously filled in for the featured speaker for the Northern District WM summer meeting. She spoke on "Women in Service." At these district meetings Albena Deckert was elected as the new WM president for the Northern District.

Susan Gerbrandt has taken over the presidential leadership of the Canadian WM. The women met in July at Gretna, Manitoba. Martha Smith of Kitchener, Ontario, was the guest speaker for the conference.

Romaine Sprunger has started her term as Eastern District adviser on the WM Council. Ruth Weisenbach is the new president of Eastern District WM.

Lena Unger was elected president of British Columbia Women in Mission at their annual meeting.

Each woman who attended the international women's fellowship meals at World Conference received a beautiful art print, "Wheatscape," designed by Ethel Abrahams, an artist from Hillsboro, Kansas.

Full Circle: Stories of Mennonite Women is a collection of biographies of nineteen women written for the most part by women. Some of the women are North American, some international; some lived long ago, others are still living. Women from Mennonite Brethren, Mennonite Church, and General Conference Mennonite churches are represented. Edited by Mary Lou Cummings, and published by Faith and Life Press, the book sells for $5.25. Sounds like interesting reading, plus a possible program resource for our WM groups and Sunday schools.

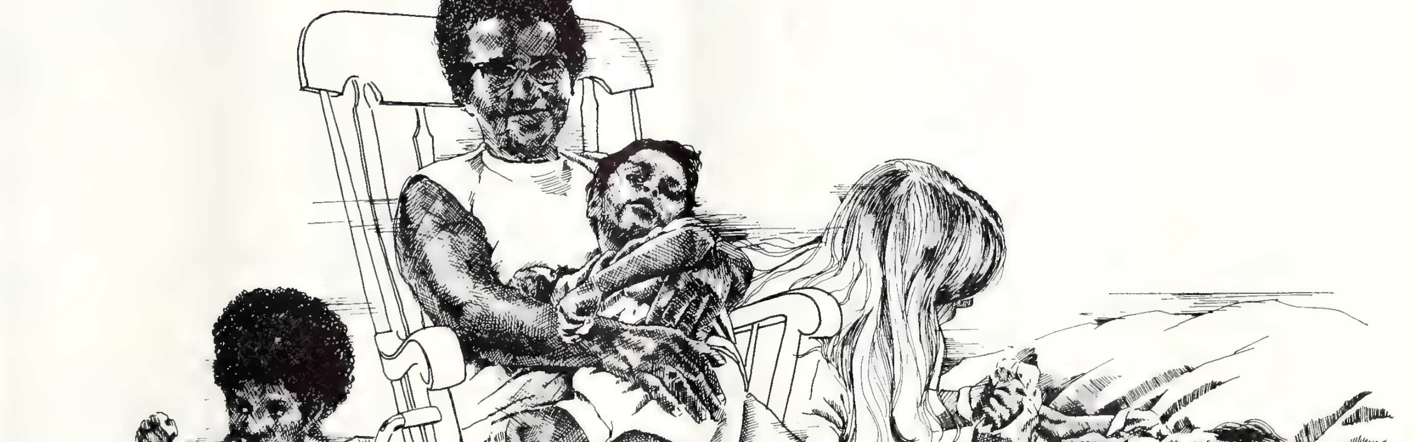
Pacific District women had an extra special treat on Saturday afternoon at their annual conference. The WM went to visit Arizona Hopiland! They saw firsthand the Moencopi and New Oraibi churches, Hopi Mission School, and the Cultural Center.

ELKHART LIBRARY

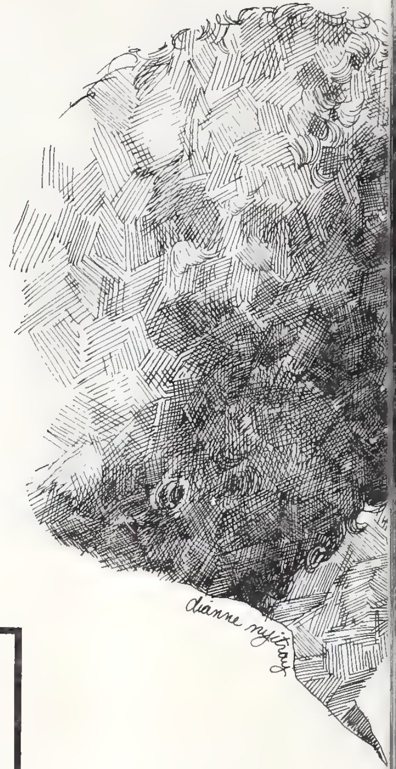
The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:36 OCTOBER 10, 1978



> “If it means anything to accept God’s love and to love, it means to love those people who are rejected; to really care. . . . It’s a theology, an understanding of personhood” *Clayton Bender*



Sheila S. Otto

Lighting up young lives

One retarded child—a difficult family adjustment. Two retarded children—a dilemma demanding great courage. All five of your children retarded—enough of a disaster to demolish most any family.

For Roy and Georgette Engler the care of their five retarded children brought them face to face with the inadequacy of care facilities for the severely retarded and inspired them in 1949 to open their own home to other handicapped children. That was the beginning of Sunshine Children's Home outside of Toledo in rural Maumee, Ohio. Over the years local Mennonite groups in Archbold, Wauseon, and Toledo joined with civic and union groups of the area to donate time and material to the home, so it was natural for the Englers to turn to the Mennonites for permanent support.

In 1969 the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities assumed operation of the Sunshine Children's Home. It has now grown into a community of 104 residents, infants to young adults, a staff of 100, and twice as many regular volunteers. Clayton Bender, present administrator of Sunshine, explains the philosophy of the church's involvement in the home where 40 percent of the children must be diapered, where most are multi-handicapped, and many will never be able to form even simple sentences.

"We Mennonites have a strong antiwar emphasis, and you can't be against something without having a better answer. If it means anything at all to accept God's love and to love, it means to love those people who are rejected, to really care, not out of pity, but because they are important. It's a theology, an understanding of personhood. It's a basic gut-level thing."

You may well get a gut-level twinge as you walk past the business office of Sunshine and come into the children's living area where you will encounter children with handicaps so severe that you may want to turn your head, close your eyes, or simply cry. Those first steps are difficult because you see only handicaps, deformities, grotesque malformations, incredible limitations. Be reassured by the bright hall paintings: a vivid rainbow, a jungle of vines that twist up and over doorways, and a large smiling sun beaming down the hall. Come along and discover that there is much sunshine in this home.

The first several rooms are spacious bedrooms for groups of four children. The colorful tone of each room is set by the handmade quilts on the beds. (Similar quilts donated by Mennonite women for the annual bazaar raised $14,000 at the Sunshine quilt auction in August 1977.) The children who sleep here are able to leave the home each day to attend county special education classes because they are the least handicapped of the children at the home. The children of this developmental ability level live as a group to reduce the impact of institutionalization. They live, play, travel, and learn together in their own groups which approximate a family.

Down the hall the complexity of the children's developmental problems increases considerably. It is this part of the home that is most difficult for the first-time visitor. The room is alive with Uncle Remus songs on the record player and the chatter of the staff talking to the children who understand the feeling of love, if not the words.

These children, whose age may be from a year to twelve years, function at the level of a

The philosophy at Sunshine is that there is no such thing as a child who can't learn

child of a few months or a year. They'd be considered bedfast in less enlightened institutions, but at Sunshine no one is allowed to be in pajamas or bed all day. The children have their own wardrobes and are dressed in fresh clean clothes right down to their own sporty tennis shoes.

Each child is gotten out of bed, placed in a bean bag chair, or perhaps a specially designed support chair, or laid on the mat just to experience the presence of others. They may be rocked, fondled, or exercised by a "foster grandparent," a senior citizen who comes four hours a day, five days a week, under a special program funded by the federal government which matches seniors with needy children.

The philosophy at Sunshine is that there is no such thing as a child who can't learn; it's just that the pace of growth appears often to be infinitesimal. This belief has given rise to a unique program of developmental education that has drawn national attention in the last three years. Until recently very little thought has been given to the education of the profoundly retarded; it was thought to be a useless effort. The staff at Sunshine is totally convinced that each child can grow and develop along a predictable scale just as normal children do. The difference is the time involved for each step. To progress from holding the body in one position to lifting the head, to reaching for a desired toy, to taking a step, may take years of developmental education.

Mental retardation is not something that is cured—you can't take a pill or a shot for it—but Sunshine has proven that heavy doses of love and the prescription of a highly individualized program of stimulation is salubrious. Introducing the idea of training children who were once thought unteachable and who could only be given a clean warm place to exist wasn't easy. Two innovative young teachers at Sunshine explain, "We even found resistance from the nursing staff when we began the developmental education program. 'You're nuts; those things can't happen,' they'd say. But we were supported by a flexible administrator who allowed us to pilot our own program. What happened was that as the kids experienced success in these little steps the nurses saw the kids learning, the workers saw it, and pretty soon they grabbed on to those things and wanted to work with the kids."

Now the staff and volunteers contribute to the writing of individual goals for each child in regular three-month reviews. Each child is carefully evaluated on a scale that was developed at Sunshine for the profoundly retarded because there weren't any existing scales for those with IQs below 50. The term IQ is never used at Sunshine; instead the children are measured in terms of a scale on months of developmental growth.

By not putting a ceiling on the youngster's potential, as IQ rankings tend to do, the staff assumes that slow and gradual growth is normal for these children and they have been rewarded by enormous progress in all of the children. The progress is premised on consistent exposure to stimulation and constant expansion of expectations for each child.

The basic program of stimulation is just one hour a day and may include placing the child in a sandbox, running hands across varied surface textures, looking at a mirror, or being held and talked to softly. As the children's tolerance increases through this kind of stimulation, each is moved into two hours a day of programming which is more active and might include crawling, scooting after a ball or toy on a mat, learning to hold a utensil, making efforts with finger paints or crayons.

The final stage of developmental education, *programming,* is three hours a day to prepare the child for the next step which will be public school special education classes outside the home. The preparation includes toilet training, self-feeding, and as much mobility as possible. The progress through the three stages of the program is slow. Staff and families are encouraged by each little sign of improvement. As parents of one boy said of their son when he walked alone across a room for the first time, "We couldn't have been prouder if he had graduated from Harvard." Before the boy went to Sunshine, doctors had said he would never walk and be self-feeding.

The kind of faith in kids that made that growth possible works miracles at Sunshine. Bender's office has a poster on the wall: "Label jars, not people."

"What hurts our kids the most is to pity them," explains Bender. "The most exciting thing that can happen in our own growth is when we realize that any devalued persons to whom we give labels, be they here at Sunshine or aged persons down the street, mentally retarded or whatever, have as much to give us as we have to give them." □

Diadem for today

Pollyanna Sedziol

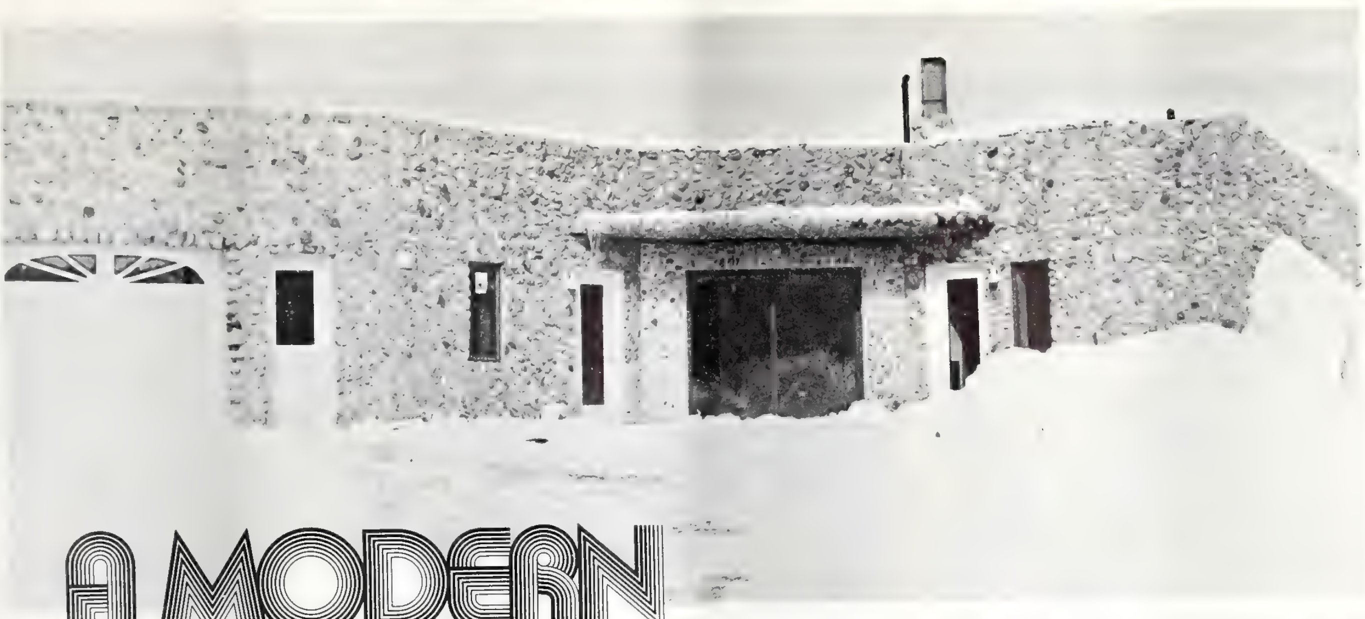
Thank-you, God, for all beautiful things -
for flowering plants and butterfly wings,
for friends who prove themselves steadfast and true,
and most of all, for knowing you.

Thank-you, God, for awakenings
which give my soul the songs it sings
in complexities and simplicities -
for your constancy through all of these.

Thank-you, God - again - for today
and for the ability to pray
in intercessive thankfulness
through which you enable my faithfulness.

Bad deal at the trading post

More than 50 percent
of America's farm
products today
consists of plants
used by the Indians
before Columbus planted
his flag. They include
beans, chocolate, corn,
cotton, peanuts,
potatoes, pumpkins,
tobacco, and tomatoes.
To combat illness,
the Indian has given us
arnica, cascara, cocaine,
ipecac, oil of wintergreen,
petroleum jelly, quinine,
and witch hazel.
Botanists have yet to
discover, in 400 years,
any medicinal herb that
was not used by the Indian.
That's what *they* gave *us.*
Here's what *we* have
given *them:*
High infant mortality rate.
Short life expectancy.
Dependency on handouts.
Loss of pride.
Much illness.
Unemployment as high
as 80 percent in some tribes.
The 600,000 remaining
American Indians are
struggling to hang on to
the lowest health, education,
and economic rungs
in American life.
Somebody better do
something before those
rungs collapse.
Remember,
you're up there
somewhere
on that ladder
yourself.



A MODERN CAVE-HOUSE

Bernie Wiebe

This type of home may not be for all people, but for the Kauffmans it was a response to God's call for Christians to be wise stewards.

When God saw the wickedness of early humanity he called forth Noah to build an ark. It's not hard to imagine that this building project provoked much curiosity, jeers, and skepticism. But Noah heeded God's call.

Environmentalists and ecologists are warning us about modern humanity's wicked over-consumption and abuse of God's beautiful earth. Concerned Christians are calling for contemporary Noahs to go against the tide and demonstrate alternatives. The masses seem to ignore such urging. But there are faithful ones who see these warnings as today's call from God.

When you try to demonstrate Christian alternatives to over-consumption and high prices of energy, you may find out that "talking about theories on paper" is quite different from the "real thing." Some ideas are impractical; others should have been implemented long ago.

Gordon Kauffman, Middlebury, Indiana, started to build a cave-house in June 1977. The building has 1,500 square feet, with an extra 624 square feet of garage space. Today the entire house and garage are covered with three feet of earth, except for the south side.

When Gordon began bulldozing away the side of a hill, the cynics commented: "You will live with the groundhogs." "What will you do when you run into a ground-mole?" "It will be time enough for me to go underground when I die."

The concrete structure is basically octagon-shaped with a rectangular garage. Eight-inch exterior walls were built with the "tilt-slab" method—walls poured on a slab and then set into place with a crane. A ten-inch roof was poured into permanent position and supported by substantial shoring. Weight of the roof and reinforcing steel is close to 140 tons.

Kauffman says, "The entire task was not easy, even though we followed architectural blueprints. We had difficulty getting a building permit; lifting cables were too weak; and our plans conflicted with building codes. My faith was severely tested at times, even though we felt led by God from the beginning."

Public interest has been very high. Visitors find that, contrary to expectations, the house is not dark, damp, and cold. One fireplace keeps it comfortably warm and the south windows provide ample light. The curious are usually impressed at the minimal exterior maintenance, no floor drafts, and that the dwelling is virtually fire and storm proof.

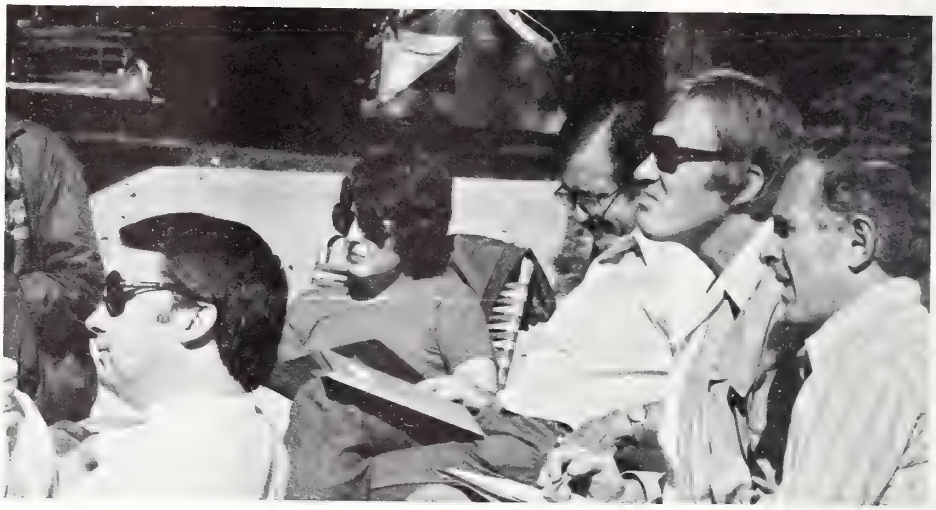
The earth itself helps to keep the home comfortable. Gordon reports, "The earth here remains at a fairly constant temperature of 55°-58° Fahrenheit (approximately 13° Celsius) at ten feet below the surface. Even in the coldest weather (-12° F. or -24° C), the inside temperature of our home remains around 45° F (6° C) without any heat. This provides us with some natural coolness in summer and auxiliary heat in winter."

Total cost of the cave-house is similar to that of a conventional home, perhaps slightly higher.

When asked to summarize his feelings about it now, Kauffman said, "This type of home is not meant for all people, but for us it seemed to be wise stewardship. God has taught us patience and reliance on him and has granted us expectations that he will provide even greater things in the future."

THE MENNONITE (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate, and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published weekly except biweekly during July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton, Kansas 67114, by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Second class postage paid at Newton, Kansas 67114, and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions in United States and Canada: $9.00 one year; $17.00 two years; $24 00 three years; foreign: $9.50 per year. Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Canada R3P 0M4. Business office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114

Socrates said the unexamined life is not worth living



This is total concentration.

Members of the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GCMC) believe Socrates also has a point for institutions.

They, the executive secretaries, and various other staff persons met for reflection at Camp Friedenswald near Cassopolis, Michigan, to do a checkup on the General Conference. Coupled with this reexamination of purposes, resources, and structures was a business session of the General Board.

The September 22-24 deliberations showed a surprising correlation between the predictable crises of adult life popularized by Gail Sheehy in her book *Passages,* and the institutional life of the General Conference.

Low self-image

Sheehy says that each passage (crisis) in adult life is accompanied by a new sense of self in relation to others. C. J. Dyck, professor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, used the term self-image. Other participants at the retreat talked about ethnicity, peoplehood, gifts, interdependence, affluence, and mission.

Dyck addressed the group of 30 twice on the question "What and where is the General Conference?" He lamented, "The General Conference suffers from a collective conscience of low self-esteem. We lack purpose." No one challenged his judgment.

"People join organizations," Dyck concluded, "because of the high level of demand. Remember the Anabaptists. There is a correlation between rigorous demand and intense loyalty." He declared that the General Conference needs to set clear goals acceptable to its membership, and he underscored the need for unapologetic leaders who also practiced servanthood.

Retreat participants sensed that leadership and self-image are intimately connected. The consensus was that the present model of collegial leadership produces less vision, and consequently less identity.

GCMC vice-president Donovan Smucker reflected, "I wish that Luthers and Grebels could arise, although I wouldn't like to go back to leadership by a few authoritarian figures."

Safety to danger

Passages in adult life, says author Sheehy, are also marked by a new sense of the proportion of safety to danger felt in one's life. Some of the verbal amber and red signals during the retreat suggested that the General Conference has moved into a risky interchange.

A review of the vision which created the General Conference 100 years ago emphasized the theme of unity in diversity, and congregational independence; a joint work in missions and service has kept a diverse group of congregations together for one century.

"But," reflected Jake Tilitzky of British Columbia, "what was good has now become weakness."

Heinz Janzen, general secretary, agreed. "Our diversity is almost unmanageable," he noted.

In one of his addresses C. J. Dyck observed, "Unity in diversity is not a dynamic which produces energy and growth. It actually tends to fragmentation."

Others at the retreat gave examples of problems which have led to fragmentation—Canadian-US relations, war taxes, abortion, and issues related to marriage and human sexuality.

Uneasiness was also expressed about Mennonite wealth, particularly how to use it as a resource for creative ministries. District and regional programs and institutions are becoming stronger while the General Conference share of the donated dollar is steadily slipping.

"The entrepreneurial skills of our people are needed for our amazing institutional life," commented Donovan Smucker. "We assume prosperity to keep things going. But affluence has a problem in that it separates one from the poor."

Ben Sprunger, board member from Ohio, reacted vigorously to this. "We should not lay a guilt-trip on the wealthy. Making money is a gift. Do we make the person feel guilty who has a good voice?"

Discussion on this issue indicated a wide concern for creative stewardship of all gifts which church members have.

Aliveness or stagnation

Sociologist Sheehy says too that as persons get older there is a shift at the gut level in their sense of aliveness or stagnation. Basic to the analysis which the Camp Friedenswald group made of the General Conference was the need for the denomination to get its act together, recapture its momentum, and thereby generate excitement. However, Jake Tilitzky cautioned

While Vern Preheim plays . . .

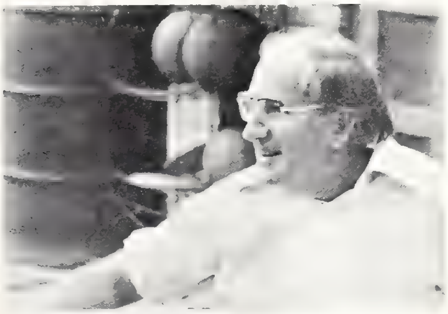
against devoting large amounts of energy to inner-directed development of the church. Vern Preheim, chairperson of the Commission on Overseas Mission, counseled, "The more we focus on needs outside the church the more we will pull together."

The Camp Friedenswald group agreed on a statement of directions for the GCMC. The six chief points are (1) to update our understanding of the General Conference as a people of God; (2) to develop interdependence among congregations; (3) to call each other to faithful stewardship; (4) to define leadership in the church; (5) to promote moral integrity; and (6) to test structures.

To facilitate purpose and peoplehood, and to address moral issues a board of elders was suggested. A comparison was made to the Mennonite Brethren Board of Reference and Council. This idea generated considerable interest. Palmer Becker remarked that the agenda of the General Board has generally not included these elements. La Vernae Dick, secretary of the General Conference, expressed concern that such a council not be an ivory tower for scholars.

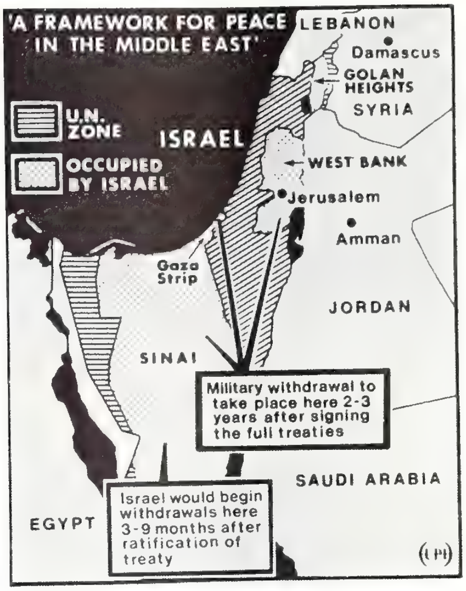
It was evident that the Camp Friedenswald participants had faith that the current disruption in the GCMC is an opportunity for constructive change. The group realized the GCMC has to authenticate its existence by reexamining its purposes and reevaluating how to use its resources. What will be the unifying motif for the next generation? they asked themselves.

During a Saturday afternoon business meeting the board heard Commission on Home Ministries chairperson Don Steelberg describe the difficulties in setting up a job description for a new executive secretary to replace Palmer Becker. Canadian and US home ministries overlap to such an extent that any future changes in US-Canadian structures would affect the job description. No firm advice was given to Steelberg on what to do with this problem, although the General Board did agree that there needs to be a basic revision of structures. They wondered what the implications are of CHM becoming a US body only. *Vic Reimer*



Jake Tilitzky watches.

Camp David accords buy time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Military withdrawal to take place here 2-3 years after signing the full treaties
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Israel would begin withdrawals here 3-9 months after ratification of treaty
(UPI)

This United Press International map projects a framework for peace in the Middle East. Israel has accepted the principle of withdrawal from Arab-occupied territories.

The two agreements between President Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Begin of Israel momentarily rekindled hopes for a negotiated peace in the Middle East. The beaming smiles and warm embraces of Begin and Sadat seemed to justify renewed optimism.

However, the ink was barely dry on the Camp David documents before this renewed optimism was challenged by Syria, the Palestinian Liberation Organization, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. The spirit of Arab cooperation anticipated in the framework for peace in the Middle East negotiated between Sadat and Begin has not materialized. Why?

When Begin and Sadat met at Camp David they were faced with two basic problems: first, how to accommodate Palestinian demands for statehood on land which Israel now occupies and claims for herself. Second, Egypt and Israel were anxious to conclude a bilateral or separate agreement. Such a separate agreement would presumably enable President Sadat to show results from his initiative by returning the occupied Sinai to Egypt, and would give Israel a peace agreement with her largest and most powerful Arab neighbor.

Prior to President Carter's summit it had not been possible to find a formula which would solve these two problems simultaneously. The Camp David agreements are in trouble because they have also failed to achieve both these objectives.

The Camp David meeting did produce a solution to the Egyptian half of the problem. Under the terms of the second document, Israel and Egypt are now committed to work toward normalizing relations and conclusion of a formal peace treaty independently of what appeared in the other agreement dealing with the future of the West Bank. Both Begin and Sadat admitted this the day following the dramatic announcement at the White House. Sadat's Arab colleagues feared this arrangement amounted to a sellout because it left the Palestinians powerless to negotiate their future status on the West Bank.

Begin's and Sadat's framework for peace in the Middle East calls on Israel to dismantle the formal military government in the West Bank and negotiate the final status of the occupied territory with Jordan and local Palestinians. No mention is made of what will happen if Jordan refuses, as she apparently has, to negotiate, nor is there any mention of the role to be played by the two-thirds of the Palestinian people living outside the West Bank and Gaza in exile from their home.

This agreement closely parallels Prime Minister Begin's autonomy plan proposed earlier this year. That plan was rejected by the Arabs in general and specifically denounced by the Palestinians. The Palestinians find such a plan unsatisfactory because it leaves them in control of only part of the affairs of the country and allows the Israelis an effective veto power over any local decisions since the Israelis would have control over what Israel terms "internal and external security" of the territory.

News of the Begin-Sadat agreement was received with little enthusiasm from those it proposed to benefit most. West Bankers see the agreement as holding no promise of delivering to them the right to govern themselves freely on their own land.

The Israeli-Egyptian agreements do not solve the basic problems involved in the Middle East conflict, but they buy additional time. Even if Egypt does negotiate formal diplomatic relations with Israel, it is difficult to see how Egypt can pursue such a policy if it means total isolation within the Arab world, and particularly from her chief financier, Saudi Arabia. And on the West Bank there can be no satisfactory agreement until either Israel or the Palestinians relinquish their claim to territorial sovereignty. *Paul Quiring, former MCC program director, West Bank*

"Test-tube-baby" doctors Patrick Steptoe (right) and Robert Edwards meet the press in Manchester, England, following the birth of the world's first "test-tube" baby on July 26 to Mrs. John Brown. The doctors spent 12 years developing a technique for fertilization outside the womb. After fertilization in the laboratory by sperm from her husband the baby's embryo was placed in Mrs. Brown's womb. Theologians and medical ethicists have given varying reactions to the implications of the birth. Bishop Thomas Kelly, general secretary of the US Catholic Conference, pointed to two moral issues—conception outside the womb, and the possible practice of disposing of "test-tube" embryos judged defective or unsatisfactory. Princeton University medical ethicist Paul Ramsey said in 1972 that such procedures are morally wrong because it "constitutes unethical medical experimentation on possible future human beings." Rabbi Seymour Siegel, a Jewish professor of ethics in New York, commented, "When nature does not permit conception it is desirable to try to outwit nature. The Talmud teaches that God desires man's cooperation."

Soviet Baptist leaders oppose emigration

Keston, England (KCNS)—The latest issue of the journal of the Baptist Union in the USSR, *Bratsky vestnik* (*Fraternal Herald*), to reach Keston College confirms *samizdat* reports that leaders of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists are actively campaigning against the emigration movement among Pentecostals.

This is the first time that the journal has mentioned the issue of emigration, though the *samizdat* human rights journal, *Chronicle of Current Events,* has already reported that P. K. Shatrov, the Pentecostal representative on the Presidium of the Council, and other leaders have attempted to dissuade Pentecostals from applying to emigrate.

According to the *Bratsky vestnik* report, Shatrov told a Kazakhstan ministers' conference that the All-Union Council was concerned by the emigration movement among unregistered churches. He called on the ministers to speak to believers to try to prevent them from acting unwisely. At a conference of ministers from Western Siberia, attended by the Union's general secretary, Alexei Bychkov, and Presidium member, Yakov Fast, Pentecostal emigration was also raised. The opinion of the conference was that the time and place of one's earthly life is predetermined by God, and that by God's will Soviet Baptists live in the Soviet Union.

These reports could indicate that the emigration movement is more widespread than available documents demonstrate. No churches in Kazakhstan and only three in central Siberia have publicized their desire to emigrate.

Old plantation system lives in Louisiana

Jeanerette, Louisiana (MCC)—Violations of human rights and the inadequate working and living conditions on the sugarcane plantations of southern Louisiana will be the focus of a CBS "60 Minutes" feature expected to be broadcast in October.

"60 Minutes" became aware of the excesses of plantation owners in Louisiana and the corrupt, brutalizing nature of the system itself through the efforts of the Southern Mutual Help Association (SMHA) of Jeanerette. Mennonite Central Committee is involved with the SMHA in a job placement program which helps cane workers to break the poverty cycle.

CBS cooperated extensively with SMHA during the course of filming depending especially on SMHA for interview contacts among the local field-working population.

SMHA has worked closely with cane-workers over the last 10 years in an ongoing attempt to effectively destroy the remains of the old plantation system, and considers "60 Minutes" ' expose of the Louisiana sugar industry to be a significant contribution to the workers' struggle for liberation from systematic political and economic oppression.

Sister Anne Catherine Bizalion, executive secretary of SMHA, observes, "People were very reticent to talk about plantation conditions during the filming by CBS for fear of reprisals against themselves and their families."

Other sources in the SMHA administration report that one powerful sugar producer in the Jeanerette area refused to leave his house for a filmed interview with "60 Minutes" newsman Morley Safer. They say the same grower permanently closed the plantation store the following day, then proceeded to visit workers' houses, hinting broadly that he thought they were to blame for CBS's presence on his farm and threatening them with summary eviction from their houses.

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Lucknow, India—Norah Shipstone, communications' secretary for the Asian Women's Institute at Lucknow displays hand puppets she uses in her work assisting Indian women in their search for self-fulfillment. The institute is made up of nine Christian colleges for women in Asia and the Middle East.

Grain reserve balances market against emergency

Washington, DC—Individuals following world hunger issues should take special note of legislation awaiting action in the US Congress to create an international emergency grain reserve.

Establishing an emergency reserve now would benefit farmers because purchase of grain on the domestic market would induce price increases. However, farmers are skeptical about government-held reserves.

The bill that most nearly embodies safeguards for the market-security interests of farmers and security from famine for the world's poor is the International Emergency Wheat Reserve Act (HR 13835) passed by the House Agriculture Committee and now awaiting full House action. Among the key provisions of the bill are the following:

1. The criteria for release of food from the reserve would be human need.
2. The reserve would consist of about six million tons of grain, primarily wheat.
3. Acquisition of grain would not be dependent on domestic surpluses.
4. The emergency grain reserve would comply with the human rights provision of PL 480 (Food for Peace), prohibiting the shipment of grain to repressive governments.
5. Reserve stocks would be released only when grain is in very tight supply so as not to depress market prices, and stocks would be replenished when surpluses exist.

The National Association of Wheat Growers has voiced its support of this grain reserve proposal.

However, a countermeasure has been introduced by Senator Robert Dole (Kansas). His bill, "The International Emergency Food Fund," would authorize the President to spend up to $500 million during periods of international food emergencies. In the judgment of Bread for the World and MCC staff consulted, this would have a negative impact on both farmers and the world's hungry people.

Unlike a grain reserve, a fund ensures only that money, not food, is available. Furthermore, a food fund would have a price impact at exactly the wrong time. Purchases would be made in the market only during times of hunger crisis when grain is in short supply and prices are high. *Delton Franz*

Evangelical summit to plan mission strategy

Rexdale, Ontario (LCWE)—The 1980 Consultation on World Evangelization is shaping up to be an evangelical summit meeting, according to Leighton Ford, chairman of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE), sponsor of the gathering.

Six-hundred-fifty evangelical leaders from all parts of the world will be invited for ten days of intensive analysis and development of evangelization strategy for the coming decade. The consultation will be held in Pattaya, Thailand, from June 16 to 27, 1980.

The Thailand consultation will be the first major international evangelization strategy meeting to be held since the 1974 International Congress on World Evangelization which met in Lausanne, Switzerland. The 1980 gathering is to be preceded by many regional study groups.

These preliminary study groups will consider Christian approaches to specific segments of the world's population—Muslims, Marxists, Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, and traditional Chinese and African religions.

The consultation will be a working conference with an emphasis on participation, interaction, and development of specific evangelization strategy.

FULL CIRCLE

FULL CIRCLE, Stories of Mennonite Women
edited by Mary Lou Cummings

The book contains stories of 19 Mennonite women. "I never thought much about what a 'woman' should do. My main concern was to know what God wanted me to do, and I knew He would help me do it," says Dr. Ella Garber Bauman. Through the simplicity of these words, a great power is unleashed. This power, this focus, is an unspoken theme in many of these biographies. Each biography is a story, of a woman on a journey with God through this imperfect, real world.

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Eighty volunteers from Mennonite Central Committee service units in the United States participated in a Labor Day weekend retreat in Knoxville, Tennessee. "Human and Whole in Christ" was the theme for the event. Bernie Wiebe, editor of *The Mennonite,* led the group in four sessions, stressing the importance of getting in touch with oneself and learning to listen to others. He also emphasized the importance of uniqueness, quoting Virginia Satir in *Peoplemaking:* "Two people are first interested in each other because of their sameness, but they remain interested over the years because of their differences."

School for Ministers is a learning experience for pastors sponsored by Conrad Grebel College, and is scheduled for January 15-19, 1979. There will be two components—Bible study and an exploration of worship in the church. Perry Yoder of North Newton, Kansas, will lead the morning Bible study sessions. Afternoons will focus various elements of worship, and the evenings will be a vital part of the program too. Preregistration is necessary. For further information write to: School of Adult Studies, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G6, or telephone 519-885-0220.

Record

Workers

Laurie Bodenhoff, Westlake, Ohio, is beginning two years as a day-care worker with the Mennonite Voluntary Service unit in Liberal, Kansas. Laurie is a 1978 high school graduate.

Cheryl Demke, Bergthaler Church, Winkler, Manitoba, has begun one year of voluntary service with the General Conference Mennonite Church as a home-health-care worker in Wichita, Kansas. Since her high school graduation in 1977 she has worked in a home for the aged.

Bodenhoff

Demke

Debra Doerksen, Home Street Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, has begun a one-year term as a day-care worker with the Mennonite Voluntary Service unit in Hutchinson, Kansas. Since her high school graduation in 1976 she has attended Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg. Debra has worked with children in several Metis communities under the Native Ministries program of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Bonnie Emerick, First Church of God, Brookville, Pennsylvania, has begun two years of voluntary service working in day-care services in Markham, Illinois, in a program staffed by Mennonite Voluntary Service. Bonnie has a BA in psychology and sociology from Clarion State College.

Doerksen

Emerick

Leonard Friesen, Altona Bergthaler Church, Altona, Manitoba, began two years of voluntary service with the General Conference Mennonite Church in July. He is working in home repair services in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Leonard is a 1977 high school graduate and has attended Elim Bible School in Altona.

Friesen

Gingerich

Hardin

Hollyday

Verne Gingerich, Zion Church, Hubbard, Oregon, began one year of work as a truck driver with the Markham, Illinois, unit in October 1977. The unit is involved in ministries with the developmentally disabled.

Nominate an executive secretary

The Commission on Home Ministries extends an invitation to persons to help in the search for a new CHM executive secretary. This calls for discernment of unique gifts.

Please address nominations or assessments by December 1 to Donald Steelberg, Chairperson, Commission on Home Ministries, 405 Trease Road, Wadsworth, Ohio 44281.

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After a year of research, the history of the Houma Indians is being completed by Jan Curry, Mennonite Central Committee volunteer in Dulac, Louisiana. The writing of this history has resulted in discussions of possible merger between two conflicting groups within the Houma nation as well as enabling the now "unrecognized" tribe to begin the petition process for official recognition by the United States government.

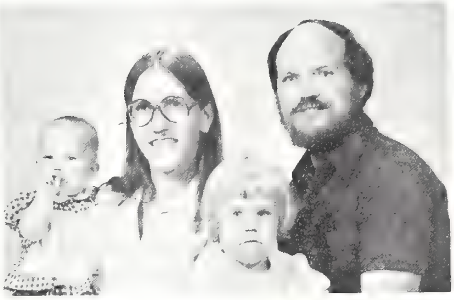
New York—The Anabaptists are coming. Actually Mennonites are already in New York, but a group of them are forming an association which will bring together those individuals and organizations interested in Anabaptist and Mennonite studies. The association will seek to promote the exchange of views and information between the Mennonite community and interested persons and groups in the New York area, initiate projects, and cooperate with institutions of higher learning and historical agencies. Inquiries may be directed to Ardis Grosjean, Menno House, 314 East Nineteenth Street, New York, New York 10003.

A call for prayer has been issued by the Council of Churches, the leading body of the unregistered Baptists in the Soviet Union, reports Keston News Service. The Baptists have appealed to believers to fast on Fridays and to pray for the persecuted church. *Samizdat* documents dated June and July 1978 reveal that Soviet authorities are once more clamping down on unregistered Baptists. During three days in May 2,000 Christians were interrogated in Rostov. The Bryanks-Bezhista unregistered church has not held a single service without interference by the militia this year. Crippling fines have been levied.

Douglas Hardin, Valley Christian Center, Fresno, California, has begun two years of volunteer work as a social worker and teacher's assistant with the Mennonite Voluntary Service unit in St. Louis, Missouri. Douglas has a BA in psychology from Fresno (California) Pacific College, and has worked as an insulator.

Debra Hollyday, First United Methodist Church, Hershey, Pennsylvania, has begun two years of voluntary service with the General Conference Mennonite Church working as a legal aide in Arvada, Colorado. Debra graduated with a BA in home economics and sociology from Bridgewater (Virginia) College this year. She has worked as a teacher's aide.

Don and Naomi Unger, Mount Royal Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, are serving a three-year term with Mennonite Central Committee in Kabwir, Nigeria, where he will be principal of a secondary school and she will be an assistant in school affairs. He received BA and PhD degrees in chemistry from the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, and she received a BEd from the same school.



The Ungers

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Review

Will our children have faith?

Will our Children Have Faith? *by John H. Westerhoff, (The Seabury Press, New York, 1976, 125 pages), is reviewed by Thayne Balzer, 38505 Sandy Heights, Sandy, Oregon 97055.*

With the question "Will our children have faith?" John Westerhoff begins a discussion that challenges many concepts upon which we base much of our present Christian education.

The model we use most often is what Westerhoff calls the "schooling instructional." Its concept is the transmission of knowledge. The question then follows: Can we *teach* our children faith? We are not saved by our knowledge, our worship, or our beliefs. We are saved by God's love. To live our lives according to that truth is to have faith. By focusing on *teaching* our religion we tend to neglect the transmission of our faith. Faith is inspired, experienced, lived, or modeled. But it is not taught.

Westerhoff then proposes a community of faith-enculturation model. Though instruction has a place in this model, the emphasis is on the faith community. It is the community through which "tradition is faithfully transmitted, . . . where persons . . . are nurtured and converted to radical faith, and . . . prepared and motivated to action in society. . . ." The author then discusses important theological background, characteristics of community, and the importance of rituals, experiences, and action in the life of the community.

The faith-enculturation model is not just presented as a theoretical model. One of the very important chapters in the book is filled with examples of how this model is being used in Christian communities. The answers to the challenges and questions Westerhoff poses are brought into focus through the examples.

A statement made by Jim Wallis, taken from his book *Agenda for Biblical People,* puts into perspective the importance of Westerhoff's contribution to Christian education: "When the theology of faith is torn apart from the life of faith, what results is an evangelism that has more to do with doctrine than with transformation."

Westerhoff is calling us to take the message of God's love seriously. He is challenging us to rethink education in the church; to focus on the transforming of people's lives. The book is only a beginning. We are to continue the discussion through our own and, hopefully, through our children's lives.

Will our children have faith?

Grandparents

Grandparents, *by Charlie W. Shedd (Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, 1976) is reviewed by Janice Pauls, 532 North Eby, McPherson, Kansas 67460.*

"Then God created grandparents and it was very good." Charlie W. Shedd, in his book *Grandparents,* presents a lighthearted but thought-provoking approach to the serious business of grandparenting. The book is somewhat unique in that many words of advice have been written for parents but little has been published for grandparents.

In the words of Shedd, "Somebody these days better be caring, loving, guiding. And in a world where foundations are being shaken, this is great to know—some solid builders are still at work. Who are the solid builders? I think some of the best are grandpas and grandmas."

Shedd is a minister, lecturer, family counselor, and author of weekly newspaper columns. He also conducts "Fun Family Forum" retreats for the discussion of parental and grandparental problems.

After experiencing the role of being a grandfather himself and observing his wife function as a grandmother, Shedd compiled a composite of words and photographs designed especially for grandparents. His completed work deals with three topics: what are grandparents for?; what my grandparents taught me; and what grandparents tell me to tell other grandparents.

Typical of his wit and humor is one sentence which appears in the first section of the book. According to the author, "Grandparents are for telling you what it used to be like, but not too much."

"Grandparents are for wondering," says Shedd. "For wondering with, wondering about, just wondering. A grandparent is for awe. For speculating on things nobody ever thought before. Mothers and dads don't have time to think about things like this.

Beside my Bible BIBLE

Mary F. Heisey

Healing, helping, and hoping

Kids and the Kingdom, *by John Inchley (Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois, 1977, 175 pages).*

Read this challenging, reassuring treatise if you care about how children come to God. Its author, a child evangelism minister in England, tells how to raise boys and girls, particularly those aged seven to eleven, in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Covenant relationship, the age of accountability, sin, repentance and faith of children, infant death, the underprivileged child, and other complex matters are examined with love.

These Tears Are for Diane, A Mother's Story, *by Goldie Bristol (Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1978, 116 pages).*

Life becomes almost unbearable when a child dies in a brutal way. Nevertheless, this mother discovered after the death of her twenty-one-year-old daughter that God walks with us through darkness; no matter what, his love and strength abide. Through Diane's poems, photos, letters, and journal entries, she recalls her girl's early life as a happy Christian and seeks to unravel her later troubled search for faith. Outstanding chapters: "Coping," "Reflections," "Forgive the Murderer?" and "Thy Light Has Come."

The Helper, *by Catherine Marshall (Chosen Books, Lincoln, Virginia, 1978, 239 pages).*

Although I had met the Helper (the Holy Spirit) before the author introduced him, her forty devotionals helped me get better acquainted with him.

Learnings: John the Baptist was the last of the Old Testament prophets. We are given the Holy Spirit to witness to the world in loving service.

Catherine's prayers are action-minded. They wake up latent faith. Try "doing" them. The Helper, like this helpmeet book, will give you the courage to act.

GRACE MISSION MENNONITE

The Meadow Lake church

Al Harder, artist and teacher, portrays the broken body of Christ.

Peter Friesen, pioneer pastor in the Meadow Lake area

Grace Mission Mennonite Church is situated in the northern town of Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, approximately 100 miles north of North Battleford and 75 miles east of the Alberta border.

In 1925 the Mennonites looked to the well-wooded areas of Meadow Lake to settle in, and the first families homesteaded at Barnes Crossing near the Beaver River. Little groups of Mennonites also settled nearby in areas known as Compass and Daisy Meadow near Dorintosh. As a result three small congregations began, known as Beaverdale, Compass Mennonite, and Daisy Meadow. Peter B. Friesen was a pioneer in church planting and still is much appreciated at Grace Mission.

By the mid-1950s some Mennonites were already moving into the town of Meadow Lake, and they saw the need to begin a sister church. On August 4, 1957, the Immanuel Church of Meadow Lake was dedicated. Because so many people in town were unchurched, it was called a "mission" church. David P. Friesen, who had formerly been the pastor of the Daisy Meadow congregtion, became the first pastor in January 1958.

When Friesen resigned his position in spring of 1963, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada continued with subsidy as well as suggestions for pastoral help. In 1974 the church finally became self-supporting.

Since then several moves have been made. The sister church in Meadow Lake grew as more and more people moved in. Due to the lack of pastoral help in the country the sister church in town invited the mother church at Beaverdale to come to join them.

In the fall of 1975 the Beaverdale congregation decided to accept the invitation to join the Meadow Lake fellowship. This move boosted the Meadow Lake membership by eighteen. Peter B. Friesen, who had served the church so well from its beginning, felt that his health was too poor to continue being their pastor.

After being without leadership for a year pastor Ed Giesbrecht came to lead the fellowship in the summer of 1975. There were more new things to happen in the near future, and soon the congregation was faced with another building program.

A new site was selected, the church manse was sold, and with a $20,000 loan from the conference, building was begun in summer and completed in the fall of 1976, with dedication services in the spring of 1977.

Many new and exciting things have opened up these past few years. The door opened for us to work with alcoholics, many of whom were "dry"—that is, they had stopped drinking—but were miserable. They were asking for something more fulfilling than simply not drinking. We began to meet with a few couples on a weekly basis and worked on the spiritual part of their lives, relating to the Scriptures and the abundant life offered there in Jesus Christ. This program, called "Alcoholics Victorious," has been going on now for over two years. We meet in one of our member's homes, which becomes rather cramped at times. The program is catching on in many other communities. Lives have been and are being changed, and families have been reunited.

We are grateful, especially to Native Ministries (Conference of Mennonites in Canada) for helping us in a good outreach program with the native people here. There are an estimated 15,000 native people north of us, and we have been able to establish some good relationships through various people having Bible studies, small group meetings, and Alcoholics Victorious meetings.

We are thankful for two couples who are focusing on this program. Roger and Char Bueckert have been with us for one year now, and Clint and Jan Heigh began their work with us just recently. Both couples are enthusiastic about the work and are well experienced in native work. Even in this short time their impact in the community has left everlasting impressions and results.

It is beautiful to see the integration in the church where neither race nor color really counts. We have had several baptisms this past year. It is exciting to transfer memberships from people who have moved in, as well as to see our own young people join our fellowship, but it is most rewarding to see brand new Christians, alcoholics and others, join our fellowship. God is blessing and we praise him for it. *Ed Giesbrecht.*

CONGREGATIONAL
PROFILE

Letters

The church's vision

Dear Editor: I respond to "The West Is Losing Ground" (August 8 issue).

As an Anabaptist, Mennonite, and Christian, I was disappointed that *The Mennonite* would become a dumping ground for red-baiting and ideological warfare disguised as the Christian duty. To equate the Christian duty as a war against ideologies and then to further equate communism with totalitarianism to me is indicative of shallowness of thought and lack of perception of the nature of the total Christian experience.

The recent Mennonite World Conference made this doubly clear for me. It was our pleasure to have the presence of Carl McIntyre, famous US Christian red-baiter, to tell us that the Soviet Mennonites were actually KGB agents and to suggest that we as a group of people were antinationalistic and possibly subversive for our open-armed reception of these Soviet citizens and Christians.

After reading the article about liberation theology in South America ("Liberation Theology: a Solution?" July 11 issue), it appears to me that it is wrong to take sides either ideologically or nationally. The community of God is worldwide; we all are his children. The depth of the vision taking place among the poor and suffering in these South American countries (capitalistic sphere of influence) appears to indicate that there may be a fusion between Christian ethics and Marxist social organization. To me, Jesus' New Testament witness pointed toward a life of simple community sharing. If this falls under the social scientific descriptions formulated by Karl Marx, then I as a Christian am not going to be stopped from espousing them merely because they have cross-ties with communist theory.

My feelings suggest to me that in the scope of past histories, political ideologies are in a constant state of evolution but that there is no way any state can legislate away human desire and apparent inherent need to search for and find peace with God. Ideologies which attempt to quench this human desire will be washed away or changed internally by a force which cannot be resisted. Thus I feel that when Christians take up the cross against ideologies, they move away from their own personal search for a clearer understanding of Christian life.

I was moved by the Third World Mennonites who at Wichita stated that North Americans were materially rich but spiritually poor, in that they lacked depth of conviction and commitment.

I am deeply moved consequently by the witness of Peter Ediger at Rocky Flats, Colorado, and by many others who through war tax resistance and protest are trying to focus their own understanding of the modern Christian experience at the risk of losing middle-class luxuries and future security.

Jesus made a serious call to discipleship; not to a media count of "born again" Christian babies, but mature Christian disciples. For me, Mennonite traditions have focused on that theme and that is why I feel it is important that the church not lose its vision. *James Newcomer, 4919 Northeast 32nd Place, Portland, Oregon 97211*

September 5

Facing hard questions

Dear Editor: There are trends afoot which gnaw like termites at the foundations of society. Their acceleration is being facilitated by popular acquiescence and too often by legal decree. Four of these are of particular import in relation to the life and witness of the church—divorce, divorce and remarriage, homosexuality, and abortion. What attitude should the church take and what should it do?

There are two bases upon which the quest for such answers may be projected. One is the *rational*—what is reasonable or proper? This proceeds on the premise that these matters are wholly physiological, psychological, and/or sociological, and can accordingly be weighed as such, with those who are schooled in these disciplines to determine the course. This quest need not be trammeled by such considerations as adultery, sin, or forgiveness. Indeed it emboldens us to summarily dismiss such terms as "pseudo-biblical jargon" (*Letters,* March 21 issue).

The church, as divinely instituted and commissioned, and with Christ as its head, cannot accept such a God-dismissing basis for its quest. Rather, it must accept the other basis—the scriptural. With this some God-set principles or standards at once become pertinent: (1) Marriage is to be a lifetime relationship. (2) Sexual relationship is to obtain between husband and wife only. (3) All human life is sacred. (4) Whatever is other than these becomes a departure, a variance from his design for the ongoing well-being of the race.

The church is God's instrument for the propagation, inculcation, and championing of these basic principles. At the same time it is also his instrument for the reclamation and spiritual restoration of those who for any reason find themselves in need of such ministration. This then pits the church squarely against the neat question: "When any social group, family, school, church, or state has a standard, and someone falls below that standard, how do we save the standard and the person at the same time?" It is quite possible to save one at the expense of the other, but to save both. . . ? How? (Certainly one can hope to do little more than perhaps offer some help in that quest.)

As to saving the standard, the church needs to recover or redouble its emphasis and insistence on the diligent keeping of God's guidelines for both individual and corporate good. There has been too much silence and mere shrugging of shoulders as popular disregard has moved ahead in a tidal wave. The church must feel itself not only challenged but even threatened thereby, and so gird itself for joining the issue. To reverse the above figure: when the tide is going out is no time for the church to loosen the moorings.

As to saving the person, forgiveness has been emphasized, and well so. But the role of the church in this must be clear, for basically the departure or defection was from God's standard, will, and purpose (Genesis 39:9; Luke 15:18). His forgiveness is the first essential and when rightly sought will be received in proportion to whatever measure of responsibility anyone may carry for his or her condition. When this state has been attained, then the church may respond with its offer of participation in its fellowship and program, thus doing its part in spiritual helpfulness (Acts 10:15). Clarity at this point is imperative, lest this acceptance on the part of the church be construed by the person as forgiveness and the church be accountable for nursing such an invalid assumption.

Now, when this is done, members of the church must understand that this is a concession on the part of the church, in order to be supportive in spiritual relationship and Christian growth, while the church still upholds God's standards as his prescribed way for mankind. Without this understanding, as time goes on and such instances continue, the impression will grow that "yes, they used to talk about and make an issue of such things, but times have changed and they now don't care any more."

Let us strive for a studied answer to the question, not drift into it. *R. L. Hartzler, 809 North Evans, Bloomington, Illinois 61701*

September 6

Meditation

All that is mine is yours

All that I have is yours—
Green mountains with magnificent views,
Acres of pine forest,
Miles of beach where clean sand can slide
up between your toes,
Cattle on a thousand hills,
Birds, fruits, flowers.
They are all yours, all yours.
(*It is too much, too much. I can't comprehend it.*)
My people are yours also—
The ones in *barrios* of South American cities,
Teenagers in the drug-ridden streets of New York City,
The crowds at six p.m. in Shinjuku station in Tokyo,
Refugees streaming out of Vietnam and Cambodia,
Prisoners in USSR, Korea, Indonesia, Chile.
They are yours, all yours.
(*It is too much, too much. I can't comprehend it. I can't
stand it. I can't take it.*)
All that I have is yours.
All the power in heaven and in earth.
Power, power, all the power,
electricity, of course,
atomic, of course,
spiritual,
Kingdom, power, glory.
It is all yours, all yours.
(*It is too much, Lord. I can't comprehend it.*)

Elaine Sommers Rich

Once a year

Once a year
I sit by the ocean—
greater than the greatest prairie.
I sit timelessly,
Excited by salty fog on my lips
Surprised by spray from the incoming tide
Soothed by the hypnotic roar and crash
of voluminous waves against massive rocks.
Searching for my point on life's compass
Assurance rolls in with the tide.
My mind's fog clears.
Mankind is created, not creator!
Ever changing, never ceasing
Here's the source
The unfathomable mystery.
Landlocked again
Events come crashing in.
I cry—will those moments hold?
The distant dream hovers.
The cycle is ceaseless
I close my eyes
imagining the ocean
the salty fog
the spray
the roar and crash
the vastness.
I rest.

Lois Franz Bartel

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CONTRIBUTORS

Sheila S. Otto, 2128 Richmond Road, Toledo, Ohio 43607, did a major article on Sunshine Children's Home for the *Toledo Blade Magazine*. We asked her to do a shorter feature for us.

Polyanna Sedziol, 2498 Lourdes Lane, Cincinnati, Ohio 45238, a frequent contributor of poetry to *The Mennonite*, presents a poem for Canadian Thanksgiving, which is October 9.

"Bad deal at the trading post" is reprinted from the Responsibility Series of *Newsweek* magazine.

Gordon Kauffman lives in his cave-house at 1471 CR12, Middlebury, Indiana 46540.

Ed Giesbrecht, Box 1268, Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan S0M 1V0, is the pastor of Grace Mission Mennonite.

Mary F. Heisey, our regular book-reviewer, resides at 56 East Street, York, Pennsylvania 17403.

Meditation poets are Elaine Sommers Rich, House 348, International Christian University, 10-3 Osawa, 3-chome, Mitaka, Tokyo 181, Japan; and Lois Franz Bartel, 910 Belleview, LaJunta, Colorado 81050.

CREDITS

Cover, 578, Dianne Nyitray, 2923 Drummond, Toledo, Ohio 43606; 581, Gordon Kauffman; 582, 583, Vic Reimer; 583-85, RNS; 589, Malcolm Wenger, 5-730 Manitoba Ave., Selkirk, Manitoba R1A 0Z5.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman.

Meanings are in persons

Recently I received the longest letter I have ever seen—a 60-page single-spaced typewritten letter to the editor (not for publication). I haven't yet consulted the *Guinness Book of World Records* (who knows, it might be a first).

It is a letter that cites many examples about ways in which people have interpreted the same Scripture verses differently. (Sorry to disappoint any critics; this person affirms our policy of encouraging *The Mennonite* readers to share their viewpoints, even when they differ from popular interpretations of the Bible.) He says that he was moved to write after reading the July 11 editorial, "Could I Be Wrong?"

The writer makes many significant points, but the overall issue boils down to one. Are "meanings" in words *or* in people?

"Foolish question," many would argue, "you need both." True, in a sense, just like we need both "law" and the "Spirit." But which takes precedence?

The Pharisees were woodenly obsessed to comply with the letter of the law. They challenged Jesus repeatedly on his "violations." Jesus replied, "Something greater than the temple is here . . . the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath" (Matthew 12:6-8). This was not a denial of the law, but putting it into proper perspective.

Words (texts, punctuation, grammar, context, roots, comparisons) are important when studying the Bible. But most important is the personal meeting of God's Spirit with our spirit. At their very best, word meanings will lead us to such a Spirit/spirit meeting. God's Word then becomes a "living Word"—enfleshed in persons. That is the ultimate goal of Scripture—to be translated into transformed persons.

Whenever we get "hung up" on the words of Scripture by themselves, we are in serious danger. Here are seven illustrations:

If meanings are in words.	**If meanings are in people.**
1. Since we study the same Bible, every word has to mean the same to you and to me.	1. Since God has created us as unique beings, we will frequently understand uniquely.
2. Since I communicate to you as a Christian, the major responsibility is yours for your getting the right spiritual message. You need to simply decode my words properly.	2. Because we are both human, both of us share responsibility for making messages into meaning. Communication in Christ consists of relationships built on mutual caring.
3. If errors occur, the fault is usually yours, since you simply misunderstood my words.	3. If errors occur, the problem is in the depth of our relationships to Christ and to each other.
4. I don't have to worry about how you understand the Bible.	4. I regularly need to seek and hear your response.
5. My major energy needs to go into construction of proper word messages. After all, what I write stands there for you to understand in its best sense.	5. My energy needs to be divided among creation of initial word messages, acknowledging your responses, and cultivating personal and spiritual relationships.
6. When there is poor communication in words, you *or* I are to blame; and it's usually you.	6. When communication is inadequate, we realize that we still need to face each other with more loving openness to God and to each other.
7. If there are differences of interpretation, one person is right and the other is wrong. Usually the person with more church-visibility is likely to judge the other party wrong. Misunderstanding then becomes a cause for anger and division. Suspicion is a common element in the lives of such Christians.	7. We anticipate that there will be differences of interpretation when diverse unique creations of God first come together. Their unity and consensus will grow insofar as both are willing to persevere together in service and search for the Holy Spirit's guidance.

It seems clear to me, in the Bible, and in my pilgrimage with Jesus Christ, that God gives us his Word to help us let out our own potential and that of others, toward all its fulness. The propositions of truth want to lead us into redeemed and redemptive relationships. The meanings are in persons. (Now I await your response.) *Bernie Wiebe*

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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Inside this issue:

Single, but not alone • The gift of hospitality

I believe in the resurrection • Reflections on a miracle

Single, but not alone

Rodney Eck

The family is made up of close relationships that generate fellowship and a sense of togetherness. Families do things together and share emotions of joy and sorrow. In times of hurt and sorrow, they support and comfort each other.

The family provides a feeling of love and acceptance. There is the feeling of unity, of oneness.

There is one physical characteristic that expresses and brings about the feeling of family—touch. Without touch none of the other characteristics are possible.

Webster's dictionary refers to family as a "group of persons of common ancestry: clan," by this referring to the biological family. A family consisting of parents, children, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins is generally referred to as the extended family. This family structure was popular during the settlement of this country, especially among religious groups such as the Quakers, Mennonites, and others that lived in and around farming communities. It is still popular today among the Amish and more conservative Mennonites. I am well aware of this, since I come from a Mennonite background and am a member of a Mennonite church. Mennonites frequently have large family reunions. Some families have at least one large reunion each year, where more than first and second generations are included.

Besides providing a sense of identity the extended family also provides an opportunity for different age groups or generations to relate to each other.

The Industrial Revolution has broken down the extended family. In our urban, mobile culture, a different type of biological family structure has emerged. It's called the nuclear family and consists of husband, wife, and children. It is easier for this type of family to move from job to job in different parts of the country. In this family structure, activities are shared only by parents and children. Grandparents, uncles, and aunts sometimes live too far away for any close contacts. This deprives the children of natural relationships to other close relatives.

The nuclear family is one of the reasons why we are not free to be single in today's society.

If we put God first in our lives, we don't have to worry about all the other little things, including whether to get married or to stay single.

When children reach the age where they move out on their own, due to college or a job, they feel pressured into getting married to form their own nuclear family. They feel that this is the only way they can deal with loneliness, because they have never experienced close, caring relationships outside the nuclear family. Even when they stay at home, they sometimes feel pressured to marry and form their own nuclear family so that they can be thought of as persons rather than children of their parents. Often a single person who stays at home is referred to as Otto and Edna's boy Russell or Albert and Helen's girl Mary.

God has given us the freedom to be single and still be a part of a family. The Bible does not make a lot of doctrinal statements about being single, but it does provide a context from which we can gain some insights.

In the Old Testament there was no freedom to be single because the people lived under the Law. The Law urged all persons to continue their family lineage. And the family structure was patriarchal. Sons were very important to this type of family. Only sons were able to receive the father's inheritance and carry on the family name or lineage. Therefore, sons must marry and have more sons.

Women took a back seat in those days. They weren't allowed any part of the inheritance because when they married they were no longer considered a part of their fathers' families. They became a part of their husbands' families.

Jesus brought a new covenant and a new way of life. Jesus was born of the Spirit—creating a change in the lineage from physical to spiritual—thereby opening up a new and greater perspective. He increased our narrow vision of physical families to become that of one large spiritual family with God as the father. Marriage is not required to continue the family of God; for there are no marriages in heaven. In Matthew 22:30, Mark 12:25, and Luke 20:34-36, Jesus tells us we will not marry after the resurrection but will be as the angels.

Jesus didn't condemn marriage, but neither did he condemn singleness. Jesus was single by choice. He was dedicated to God, thereby showing us that we too have a choice to be single or to marry. In reference to living the life of singleness, Jesus says in Matthew 19:12b (NEB), ". . . there are others who have themselves renounced marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let those accept it who can."

Paul was also dedicated to God and we know he suggested that singleness is better than marriage (1 Corinthians 7).

The example that Jesus, Paul, and the other apostles leave us is that our focus needs to be on God. If we put God first in our lives we don't have to worry about all the other little things, including whether to get married or to stay single.

God does give us the responsibility of treating all other Christians as family and to increase the family of God. Marriage is not needed for this. We increase the family of God by bringing persons to accept Christ as their Savior.

The early church functioned as a family and gives us an example of how we should be today (see Acts 2:44-47). We see that they held *everything in common*—they shared their possessions; were of *one mind* in Christ—found togetherness in his Spirit. They did live in private houses but they shared meals joyfully as they praised God and enjoyed each other's company and fellowship. This was done in the spirit of love.

This is a pattern that we Christians need to follow today. We need to treat each other as brothers and sisters. Edith Shaeffer writes in *What Is a Family?,* "Fierce family loyalty is something the Bible points out as a mark of the family of the Lord." Lois Barrett, former associate editor of *The Mennonite,* wrote in an article, "Who Is My Family?", "The church is a family in which no one need feel left out—those who have never married, those whose families have died or left them, those who do not share the same beliefs as their biological families."

As a single person, I make the following suggestions on how to make some improvements on the relationships in the family of God. **First,** I suggest that we come more in touch with each other—intellectually, psychologically, spiritually, and physically.

By physically I mean that everyone needs and likes a hug once in a while. It could happen in greeting a close friend or maybe in saying good-bye. Sometimes all it requires is to put your arm on or around someone's shoulder as you're talking to show that you care for that person. You may not feel comfortable doing it with everyone, and not every single person feels comfortable about it either. As in other behavior, use some judgment. Some people aren't ready for it, while others consider it natural.

I enjoy receiving a hug every so often from friends. I also would like to hug other friends, but I don't because I sense it would probably make them feel uncomfortable.

Secondly, I suggest that we divide our Sunday school classes by topics rather than marital status or age, at least for those above high school age or maybe including high school people. It could create intergenerational groups. This would also help college-age young people feel more welcome when they come home to visit during the school year and for the summer. It would create settings for married persons and single persons to relate to each other.

Finally, we need some attitude changes in the church family. I think these were well expressed by J. Winfield Fretz, in his addresses at the 1977 General Conference sessions in Bluffton, Ohio. He said, "We have been insensitive, and even cruel, too long, to those who would like to have married, but for whom the opportunity to marry an acceptable person did not occur. We have been equally insensitive and sometimes even harsh in our relations with those who preferred not to marry for their own personal reasons.

"It is both erroneous and insidious to infer that there is something unnatural, indecent, or even immoral for a person to remain single by choice. There are some mighty impressive examples, from the Bible and from history, of people who made outstanding contributions as single people. Yet our culture brings tremendous pressure to bear on men and women who are not married by the time they are 30. It is as if singleness were an annoyance or a nuisance and should not be tolerated. General Conference Mennonites might set an example by honoring singleness for what it is, namely *honorable."*

The gift of hospitality

Marlace Berg Zacharias

There may be no visible resul

Jesus mentions three types of people we should be hospitable to. **The first is one another.** He is talking to Christians in 1 Peter 4:9, "Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling."

When Jesus visited his close friends, Mary and Martha, they did everything they could to make him feel at home.

Offering hospitality to one another is not a seasonal thing. Many of us have all our friends and relatives over, family by family, during Christmas holidays. Later, we may invite those who've had us over for a barbecue in the summer, and that's it.

What about the times when the woman of a family is in the hospital or away on other duties and her husband and children need a meal or her children need to be cared for during the day?

There's the time when a friend drops in for a chat or to share a problem with us while we're in the middle of housecleaning or fixing the car. Do we make it so uncomfortable for them, by keeping right on working or lamenting about how busy we are, that they take the hint and leave, or do we make them feel comfortable as if they matter to us?

Is there some person or some family in our church whom we have never invited into our home? There's an excellent place to begin practicing hospitality. So many lonely persons are seldom invited out, and they're too timid to go visiting on their own. What about the widows and widowers? The single people wonder if they are welcome to "families."

If you live beside a busy highway, as I do, you'll get people dropping in unexpectedly. Most are anxious to get to their destination and won't stop for long, but they'd like a drink or a place to rest, and occasionally a place to spend the night. Can we make them feel at home? Often they don't expect us to stop what we're doing. Just be there, chat with them and make them feel like they're part of God's larger family. Perhaps we'll be "Mennoniting" our way next time.

Jesus said, "Offer hospitality to one another *without grumbling."* Guests don't mind if our floors aren't scrubbed, the sinks and windows don't sparkle, or if we have fresh baking on hand. They're more interested in fellowship. Many opportunities for Christian hospitality are spoiled by our exhaustion from feverish preparation.

The second group Christ wants us to be

m entertaining strangers; on the other hand, you may be hosting the Lord himself.

hospitable to is strangers. Hebrews 13:2 says about entertaining strangers, "for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing." If you live in a city or town, it is tempting to stay "with our own" and to ignore strangers.

Along our busy highway we get a lot of practice at entertaining strangers. Some stop and ask for enough gas to get to the next service station or if they can use our phone to call a garage or a tow truck. Another person needs tools to fix his car. Do we let the wife and children wait in the car or do we invite them in? Do we resent the time it takes? Do we mind when someone knocks on our door and asks for directions? Or, if someone gets stuck down the road, can we cheerfully go and assist them?

From time to time, all of us have tradespeople doing work for us—carpenters, electricians, painters, plumbers. How do we treat them? Do we open our homes to them in Jesus' name?

Hospitality to strangers is a gift from the Lord and a challenge for each of us.

The third group Jesus asks us to be hospitable to present us with the greatest challenge—persons who are unpleasant and disliked by other people.

The example of Zacchaeus comes readily to mind. Zacchaeus was a man who became rich by cheating people on their tax money. One day, Jesus pointed a finger at him and said, "Zacchaeus, you come down (from his vantage point in the sycamore tree), for I'm coming to your house today." The very thought of Jesus visiting this man's house!

Zacchaeus scurried home and summoned his servants to put on the best food and wash Jesus' feet. Jesus' visit resulted in a change of life for this greedy man. His inner brokenness was healed. An unpleasant person became a victorious person.

Do we know someone who's very undesirable company because he or she has a drinking problem? Do we shun this person or do we try listening, in an attempt to love the person through this problem? What about the drinker's family? Do they deserve to sit at home, night after night, alone?

Do we know people who are undesirable company because they are repeatedly in trouble with the law? They have prison records and can't find employment easily. Can we open our homes to them and try to understand them toward a solution?

When we see someone, coming up our walk or driving up our lane, that we don't like because they gossip too much or talk nonstop about their aches and pains, do we quickly draw the drapes and pretend we're not home? I can recall doing that as a child, if mother was working in the store or garden, when someone would come that I didn't want to play with.

It is easy to become too selective at an early age. We should choose good friends, but the Lord also wants us to be hospitable to those who especially need care and understanding. Keeping in mind that God loves us, in spite of our own weaknesses, can help us be more open to others.

Let's get down from our sycamore trees and open our homes to one another, to strangers, and to the undesirable and unloved. There may not be visible results, especially when we're entertaining strangers that we'll never see again. On the other hand, by entertaining strangers, you may be hosting the Lord himself.

Done comin'

Done comin'
Knock, knock—got to ask you something.
  Nobody home.
Knock, knock—something to tell you!
  Nobody home.
Knock, knock—need to talk over a problem.
  Nobody home.
Knock, knock—good news!
  Nobody home.

Havin' fun?
  Workin'?
    On vacation?
      Got an appointment?

But then that's Monday through Saturday
Sunday mornin' sun shines
Shake my hand an' tell me,
"Come on over sometime."

Sure. Thanks.
(But I won't come knockin' no more.)
—Anonymous

News

Elections to be key to peace in Namibia

In 1971 the World Court confirmed the 1966 United Nations resolution which terminated South Africa's mandate to rule Namibia, formerly known as South-West Africa. Both South Africa and the South-West Africa Peoples' Organization (SWAPO), one of Namibia's liberation movements, have accepted Western proposals for independence. This involves a transitional period under UN supervision to determine a constituent assembly.

Politically the situation is volatile. SWAPO is continuing its guerrilla warfare near the Angolan border. The South African government and its ethnically based political party, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), are pushing for elections prior to the end of this year, while SWAPO and the churches are all urging that elections be held in April 1979 at the earliest.

Although SWAPO clearly carries the most popular support, the DTA would win an early election because their political machinery is established. SWAPO is demanding more time in order to bring back to Namibia its many exiles and political prisoners, establish its platform, and campaign throughout the country.

What are the churches doing?

Although the Dutch Reformed Chruch (DRC) has always been a numerical minority in Namibia and is virtually all white, it has wielded great power because of its total identification with the government's policy. "But the DRC is losing power very rapidly; every day its influence is less," says a minister of the church.

The Lutheran church has the largest membership, with well over 50 percent of the total population belonging to it. The church has over the years continually witnessed against the South African government's harsh and brutal treatment of the black population. The church has urged the implementation of fair and free elections.

The Catholic and Anglican churches have also been outspoken in their criticism of the treatment of the local population. One after another of their leaders have been deported for exposing the terrorizing activities of the government.

Except for the Dutch Reformed Church, the churches in Namibia have been some of the few voices crying against injustice.

The future of the country is uncertain. The greatest danger to independence is South Africa's attitude to elections. If it unilaterally holds elections before December 31 then violence will continue to plague the land. If South Africa allows for free and fair elections then most people are confident the worst will be over. *Orlando Redekopp, MCC Botswana*

"We want Marriage Encounter to begin among Mennonites"

The family life committee of the Commission on Education has appointed Paul and Lois Unruh to initiate Marriage Encounter (ME) weekends in General Conference churches.

A Mennonite expression of Marriage Encounter was mandated by delegates attending the triennial conference in Bluffton, Ohio, last year.

The Unruhs returned to Kansas one year ago after living in Fairbanks, Alaska, for eight years. Both Paul and Lois are 1962 graduates of Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas.

They became acquainted with the Catholic expression of Marriage Encounter in Alaska. Their experience there provided the motivation to provide leadership now. "We want to help it get started among Mennonites," Lois said, "because we have observed how ME has helped so many couples." Another motivation for Paul is that it is "the first chance I've had to work professionally with Lois." Both noted that their own ME weekend had enhanced their lives and had been an aid to growth, particularly in communication.

Currently the Unruhs are being trained as ME leaders through the family life center of Friends University in Wichita, Kansas. This training includes assisting trained couples in leading ME weekends and preparing 13 talks (30-60 minutes each) which are an integral part of Marriage Encounter. They expect to give leadership themselves by January 1979.

Marriage Encounter was developed in the mid-1950s in Spain by Gabriel Calvo, a Catholic priest, and couples with whom he worked. It came to the United States in 1966. The primary purpose of ME is to teach communication of feelings between husband and wife. This communication is modeled by the leading couples during the weekend. Prepared talks are presented related to various aspects of marriage. Then each person reflects on questions accompanying the talks and writes responses. Thereafter spouses exchange notebooks and dialogue in an effort to understand each other. The dialogue occurs privately between husband and wife, which is in contrast to the group interaction model common to other marriage enrichment programs.

"Marriage Encounter," observed Lois and Paul, "is not designed for couples with serious marriage problems, and it is not to take the place of professional therapy. Even though stressful marriages are sometimes helped, the program is designed for growth in marriage relationships which already have a good foundation. It helps to free the God-given potential in relationships."

The Unruhs also note that another of the strengths in the program is its lay leadership, although one of the four presenting couples normally includes a pastoral couple. Furthermore, they say the learning which occurs has application beyond the couple and encompasses relationships in the church and community as well. *Vic Reimer*

Paul and Lois Unruh

People eating leaves in Shaba province

Kalwezi, Zaire—A woman prepares a meal of leaves for her family near Kalwezi. According to Stanley Mooneyham of World Vision, massive starvation faces many thousands of people in Shaba province. Mooneyham reports that African church leaders estimate 500,000 people along the Angola and Zaire borders require "almost total assistance."

MCC needs money

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee needs to receive $1.96 million in cash contributions by the end of November to meet its current budget.

Approximately $350,000 to $400,000 of this will come from relief sales and thrift shops, but the remainder, about $1.5 million must come from donations.

Appreciation for the generosity of contributors during the first part of fiscal year 1978 was expressed at the September quarterly executive committee meeting. Special gratitude was directed to Canadian constituents whose overall giving was significantly higher than in 1977. The MCC (Canada) office received an unusually generous response to a fund appeal during the first nine months of 1978 resulting in a 50 percent increase in contributions to MCC (Canada).

Giving by United States' constituents will also need to increase if the 1978 budget is to be met.

CMBC installs new president

In conjunction with its official opening exercises on September 24, Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC), Winnipeg, Manitoba, installed George K. Epp as its new president.

Epp, a graduate of various schools in Europe and of the German and history departments of the University of Manitoba, is the college's fourth president since the school was founded in 1947. Epp previously taught at the two universities in Winnipeg, and also at Mennonite Brethren Bible College (MBBC).

Paul F. Peters, chairperson of the board of directors, conducted the installation service, which took place in First Mennonite Church. Guest speaker John Regehr, professor of practicial theology at MBBC, said that the Christian college is the arena where the church meets the world. "Therefore," he counseled, "the college must *be* the church in the New Testament sense."

Regehr also asserted that the Christian college community must "rid itself of the destructive patterns of the world, of hostilities and jealousy." It must always keep in mind that the church is "a body, not a hierarchy," and that its members are "servants of each other, not vassals and lords. Fundamental to the church is the linkage of each member to Christ and to each other. . . . Only if the Christian college lives up to this ideal will it be in a position to judge the world and its systems."

Words of greeting to the new president were given by Henry Krahn, president of MBBC, Henry Poettcker, president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Edgar Schmidt, vice-president of the CMBC Alumni Association, David Lawless, academic vice-president of the University of Manitoba, and Jake Fransen, vice-chairperson of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

The college choir under the direction of George Wiebe sang selections by Mendelssohn and Handel.

CMBC has enrolled 130 full-time and 22 part-time students for the current year. Registrar Rudy Regehr also announced the awarding of 68 bursaries, scholarships, and prizes to various students.

CMBC is a three-year theological school on the post-secondary level. It is an approved teaching center with the University of Manitoba, and all but a few of its courses can be cross-registered with the university for degree credit at the university. *Gerhard Ens*

Dietary changes affect health

How do you change eating habits?

This is a question frequently asked at workshops on world hunger. Most people believe changing the way you eat is a tough undertaking likely to end in failure.

A new book, *The Changing American Diet,* by Letitia Brewster and Michael Jacobson, backs up with statistics and assertion that our eating habits change all the time. For example in 1910 the average person ate 18.3 pounds of butter and only 1.6 pounds of margarine yearly. By 1976 the statistics were almost reversed, showing 4.4 pounds of butter and 12.5 pounds of margarine consumed per person.

Most of the book's graphs and statistics are based on the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) detailed reports on the food supply.

The book attributes our "radical, almost unprecedented dietary changes" to the following factors: new technologies, affluence, government programs, working parents, the end of the baby boom, health concerns, and the role played by the nation's mammoth food industry.

Concerning the marketplace, the book says that the biggest growth industry in food is restaurants. We now spend one out of three food dollars away from home. "Fast food restaurants gobble much of that money. . . and the limited choices available in a typical fast food restaurant have encouraged a trend toward a diet composed of relatively few different foods."

From a nutritional point of view, the book cites these changes in the last 65 years as most significant: a strong increase in fat consumption, a decrease in complex carbohydrates (basically starchy foods such as breads, potatoes, cornmeal) and an increase in sweetner consumption.

The authors add that "these changes would be of only academic interest if they were not linked to important changes in the public's health. But our 'new' diet, in combination with our sedentary life-style, has contributed to what must be considered a national epidemic of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and tooth decay."

The Changing American Diet clearly shows that being unable to change eating habits is *not* the problem. The problem, not only with food but with all aspects of living in an affluent setting, is to be aware and to take control of the changes one makes. *Doris Longacre, MCC Food and Hunger Concerns*

◀ **This is a guerilla-fighter** of the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe (PFZ) (Rhodesia). A storm of protest as well as support among Christian groups has resulted from the World Council of Churches' (WCC) decision to grant $85,000 for food, health, social, educational, and agricultural needs to the PFZ. The Salvation Army has announced its withdrawl from membership in the ecumenical organization. Abel Hendricks, the black president of the Methodist Church in South Africa also added his dissent. In defending the grant, Anette Hutchins-Felder of the WCC Program to Combat Racism said the decision followed careful analysis.

Lectureship honoring J. J. Thiessen inaugurated. A series of lectures, October 17-18, by Marlin Miller, president of Goshen Biblical Seminary, will launch what is expected to become an annual lectureship at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg. Miller will speak four times on the topic, "Mennonites and Contemporary Theology." Thiessen, a longtime Canadian Mennonite leader instrumental in founding CMBC, died in August 1977.

Is this our modern pilgrims' progress?

Editor's note—*The constitution of the General Conference requires* The Mennonite *to publish the program for delegate meetings of the denomination at least three months prior to any official meeting. This program is printed in the screened space at the right. Persons to serve on the findings committee of the midtriennium conference have been contacted, but confirmations have not yet been received so their names are not listed.*

The overview of the "war tax issue" which is printed below is intended to provide a historical perspective for General Conference members.

THE CHRISTIAN
AND CIVIL
RESPONSIBILITY

As an official meeting of the General Conference delegates will discuss the nature of a Christian's civil responsibility, particularly the question of a Christian peace position in a militaristic society. For some participants the question is whether the withholding of payment of the military portion of their income taxes is justified. If so then several employees of the General Conference would like the denomination to stop remitting the military portion of their taxes to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

For two days, February 9-10, 1979, the issue will be debated in the Leamington Hotel in Minneapolis, Minnesota. If the conference delegates decide that nonpayment of military taxes is justified the decision is binding on the administrators of the General Conference.

Impetus for such an assembly began in December 1974 when employee Cornelia Lehn requested the General Conference business office not to remit the military tax portion of her paycheck to the IRS. Prior to 1974 the issue of "war taxes" had been discussed, and as early as 1971, delegates at the triennial sessions in Fresno, California, passed a statement protesting the use of tax monies for war purposes. The delegates also said, "We stand by those who feel called to resist the payment of that portion of taxes being used for military purposes." However, the General Board did not think that directive from the delegates authorized them to stop remitting Lehn's military taxes. Her request was refused.

Three years later St. Catharines, Ontario, was the location for the next conference. There delegates called for education regarding militarism, reaffirmed the 1971 statement, and agreed that serious work be done on the possibility of allowing General Conference employees to follow their consciences on payment or nonpayment of military taxes.

Educational materials have included the periodical *God and Caesar* and two study guides, *The Rule of the Sword* and *The Rule of the Lamb.* In addition to these efforts two major consultations were convened in November 1975 and in June 1978. At these consultations scholarly papers were presented on militarism, biblical considerations for payment or nonpayment of military taxes, and Anabaptist history and theology related to war tax concerns.

Despite the protracted input the General Board could not reach a consensus on the issue. Consequently the problem was brought to delegates at the July 1977 triennial conference in Bluffton, Ohio. At this juncture the delegate body committed itself to serious congregational study of civil disobedience and war tax resistance during the following 18 months. The delegates also decided to discuss the issue in detail at a midtriennium conference in 1979.

In an effort to implement the 1977 Bluffton resolution an eight-member civil responsibility committee was formed. Several actions were taken by it to encourage serious study. Early in 1978 an attitude survey on church and government was conducted. Approximately 2,500 responses were received, including 463 from a select sampling in 31 churches. A scholarly consultation was held in June 1978. One of the key ideas which came out of this consultation was whether those who feel strongly about not paying military taxes should be encouraged to form a separate corporation within the General Conference. To assist churches in their study of the issue two study guides were published. *The Rule of the Sword* deals primarily with facts and concerns related to militarism. *The Rule of the Lamb* centers about the sovereignty of God and biblical texts on taxes and civil authority.

Each of the more than 300 congregations in the General Conference is being encouraged to prepare a statement to bring to the 1979 conference. It is evident from the sale of the study guides that a minority of congregations are actually making an effort to study the issue, although all congregations have received sample copies of the guides. Many Canadian churches feel the issue is strictly an American problem, and there is a considerable diversity of conviction and thought among American congregations. Some congregations do not intend to send delegates.

What this means for the Minneapolis conference is difficult to assess, except for one feature. There will be a lot of stirring debate. After eight years of searching will there be some resolution of the withholding question? No one is predicting the outcome. *Vic Reimer*

Fort Jacques, Haiti—At a nutrition center ▶ sponsored by Church World Service poor children receive daily meals, and parents receive instruction in self-improvement. The entrenched poverty of Haiti and political oppression of the Duvalier government has forced thousands of Haitians to seek refuge in the USA. They have been threatened with deportation because they are regarded as economic rather than political refugees. Some US Christians have begun to protest US immigration policies and what they regard as the inhumane treatment of Haitians—people who they claim are victims of both political and economic oppression.

Program

Midtriennium Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church, February 9-10, 1979

Leamington Hotel, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Theme: In Search of Christian Civil Responsibility

Thursday, February 8

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.—Registration

Friday, February 9

8:30 a.m.	Worship and Bible study Reception of new congregations
9:30 a.m.	Historical perspective: Why is this issue being raised now?
10:00 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m.	Symposium: Three to five possible approaches to the question of a Christian peace position in a militaristic society Discussion
Noon	Lunch
1:30 p.m.	Small groups, carefully mixed by geography, sex, clergy-laity, whose task is to discuss the typical congregational findings reported in the morning panel—strengths, weaknesses, and implications.
3:00 p.m.	Break
3:30 p.m.	Roving mike: How did your group come out? What have you learned?
4:00 p.m.	Plenary discussion of the issues raised
5:00 p.m.	Supper
7:00 p.m.	Inspirational service: singing and Bible study
8:00 p.m.	Small groups reconvene to write a statement of consensus. "Not all I want, but I can more support it than not support it." If consensus is impossible, it may be necessary to take a straw vote to record a majority and minority position.
9:00 p.m.	Adjournment of delegate body Findings Committee receives group reports to work into a consensus for the larger body.

Saturday, February 10

8:30 a.m.	Worship and Bible study
9:00 a.m.	Business session to discuss Findings Committee report
10:00 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m.	Business session to deliberate Findings Committee report
Noon	Lunch
1:30 p.m.	Business session to deliberate Findings Committee report
3:00 p.m.	Break
3:30 p.m.	Final adoption of Findings Committee
4:00 p.m.	Closing worship
4:30 p.m.	Adjournment

FULL CIRCLE

FULL CIRCLE, Stories of Mennonite Women
edited by Mary Lou Cummings

The book contains stories of 19 Mennonite women. "I never thought much about what a 'woman' should do. My main concern was to know what God wanted me to do, and I knew He would help me do it," says Dr. Ella Garber Bauman. Through the simplicity of these words, a great power is unleashed. This power, this focus, is an unspoken theme in many of these biographies. Each biography is a story, of a woman on a journey with God through this imperfect, real world.

214 pages, paper back
INTRODUCTORY OFFER (expires Oct. 31, 1978) $4.95
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Mennonite Voluntary Service has an immediate need for approximately 50 workers. There is a particularly urgent need for a staff member for Clergy and Laity Concerned in Washington, DC, and for workers in the field of developmental disabilities in Hutchinson, Kansas, and Denver, Colorado. A wide variety of openings also exist in the areas of child care, education, community organization, environmental concerns, emergency aid, health care, housing rehabilitation, legal aid, native American ministries, and prison ministries. Inquiries about the above may be directed to MVS, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

Columbia Bible Institute (Clearbrook, British Columbia) faculty, staff, and board members participated in a retreat August 21-23 at Camp Squeah. In addition to recreation and socializing, testimonies, messages, and discussions filled the agenda. J. J. Toews drew practical pointers for Christian workers from the story of Gideon and his band. Enrollment stands at 190 this year. George Groening, moderator of the Conference of Mennonites of British Columbia spoke at the opening convocation September 24. A special ministers' course will be conducted at the school November 22-24 by David Ewert and C. J. Dyck.

Record

Calendar

October 26-28—Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship Assembly, Washington, DC; theme, "Unmasking the Powers"

Canadian

October 28—Rosthern Junior College Corporation Day, Rosthern, Saskatchewan

Deaths

La Vernae J. Dick, recording secretary for the General Conference, has been receiving frequent inquiries about her husband, John. *John Dick* died of leukemia on May 11.

Ministers

Claude Boyer was installed as pastor of First Church, Reedley, California, on August 6. He comes to Reedley after a fifteen-year period of service to the First Church, Sugarcreek, Ohio.

Delmer and Elsie Epp began serving as copastors at College Park Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, on July 15. They attended Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (Elkhart, Indiana) where Delmer graduated with an MDiv degree. He had previously been the pastor at Cedar Hills Church, Surrey, British Columbia.

Vernon Lohrentz began an interim pastorate at Salem-Zion Church, Freeman, South Dakota, on July 2. He will assume the pastorate of Grace Hill Church, Newton, Kansas, beginning July 1, 1979.

Wally Regier has moved to Virgil, Ontario, where he will be pastor of Bethany Church. Previously he served as pastor of Rosthern Church, Rosthern, Saskatchewan.

Workers

Debbie Lerch, University Baptist Church, Champaign, Illinois, has begun four months of service as a community worker with the Mennonite Voluntary Service unit in Clinton, Oklahoma. Debbie has studied occupational therapy at the University of Illinois, and has worked as a receptionist, nurse's aide, and an activity director.

Christine MacDonald, St. John's Anglican Church, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, has begun a one-year stint with Mennonite Voluntary Service as a day-care worker in Beatrice, Nebraska. She has attended Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, for the last two years, and has worked in child care and assembling computers.

Lerch

McDonald

Linda McCrory, Reformed Presbyterian Church, Denison, Kansas, has begun one year of voluntary service with the General Conference Mennonite Church as a day-care worker in Liberal, Kansas. Sociology and psychology were her majors leading to a BA from Sterling (Kansas) College.

Charles and Karen Miller, Westminster Church, Springfield, Missouri, have begun two-year terms with Mennonite Voluntary Service in Denver, Colorado. Charles is teaching at Academia de la Gente, an alternative high school, and Karen is working with an urban transition program for native Americans. Charles graduated with a BA from Southwest Missouri State College in Springfield with a major in antiquities, and also worked as a tutor at the college. Karen also graduated from Southwest Missouri State College, earning a BS in social work. She has worked as a caseworker with family services in Buffalo, Missouri.

McCrory

Nickel

C. Miller

K. Miller

Valerie Nickel, Grace Church, Regina, Saskatchewan, began a one-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service at the end of July as a day-care worker in Hutchinson, Kansas. A high school graduate, Valerie has worked in various clerking positions and as a nurse's aide.

Carol Pederson, United Methodist Church, High Point, North Carolina, has begun two years of voluntary service with the

◀ **Do you create music?** *Builder* and *With* are planning to publish special issues of music in 1979, consisting largely of original music. The editors are interested in the full range of musical idioms from scripture songs, rock, folk, to four-part hymns. Persons who would like to submit music for consideration in this songbook should send it not later than February 1, 1979 to *With-Builder Songbook,* 616 Walnut Avenue, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683.

"Grandma! Grandpa!" was the call frequently heard at the grandparents-grandchildren camp during the August 12-13 weekend at Camp Mennoscah near Murdock, Kansas. Appropriate and well planned activities made the first time event enjoyable. Jim Juhnke guided the participants during two sessions where grandchildren interviewed their grandparents concerning life's experiences in home, school, church, and other facets of life.

General Conference Mennonite Church as a day-care worker in Liberal, Kansas. Carol is a 1978 high school graduate.

Sue Schierling, Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church, Dallas, Oregon, began a 1½-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service at the beginning of August. She is working in a ministry to apartment residents in Arvada, Colorado. Sue is a graduate of Seattle (Washington) Pacific College with a major in Christian education. Her occupational experience includes a wide variety of counseling ministries.

Kathryn Stoesz, Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minnesota, has begun a two-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service in Chicago, Illinois, working as a teacher. She graduated from Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas) in 1978 with a BS in mathematics.

Pederson

Schierling

Stoesz

Stuart

P. Thompson

R. Thompson

Stucky

Wiens

Katie Stuart, Durham, Ontario, has begun a two-year term of voluntary service with Mennonite Voluntary Service in Kansas City, Kansas. Katie graduated with a major in recreation from the University of Waterloo (Ontario) in 1978, and has worked extensively with outdoor education in camp settings.

Barbara Stucky, Eden Church, Moundridge, Kansas, has begun a two-year voluntary service assignment with the General Conference Mennonite Church working as an assistant director in a day-care and preschool ministry in Denver, Colorado. She graduated in 1978 with a double major in elementary and music education from Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas).

Peggy and Richard Thompson, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Missoula, Montana, began a two-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service on September 1. Although their assignment is yet to be determined, they will be working with the MVS unit in Seattle, Washington. Peggy has attended several colleges, most recently studying social work at Carroll College in Helena, Montana. She has worked as a receptionist, bookkeeper, and nurse's aide. Richard graduated with a BA in history from the University of Montana (Missoula) in 1976. He has worked as a reading clerk in the Montana House of Representatives and as an assistant to the manager of the athletic department at the University of Montana.

Sheila Webster, Findlay, Ohio, was named assistant professor of nursing at Bluffton (Ohio) College for 1978-79. Webster graduated from D'Youville College School of Nursing (Buffalo, New York). She holds a master's degree in psychiatric mental health nursing from New York University (New York City) and has had one year of post graduate advanced clinical training at the National Institute for the Psychotherapies, New York.

Tim Wiens, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kansas, has begun a two-year term of voluntary service with the General Conference Mennonite Church working in community services at the Welcome Inn Community Center in Hamilton, Ontario. He graduated with a BS from Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas) in chemistry and physics, and has also attended Mennonite Biblical Seminary. He has worked as a laboratory and research assistant, and as a physical science aide with the Environmental Protection Agency in Kansas City.

Nurse required

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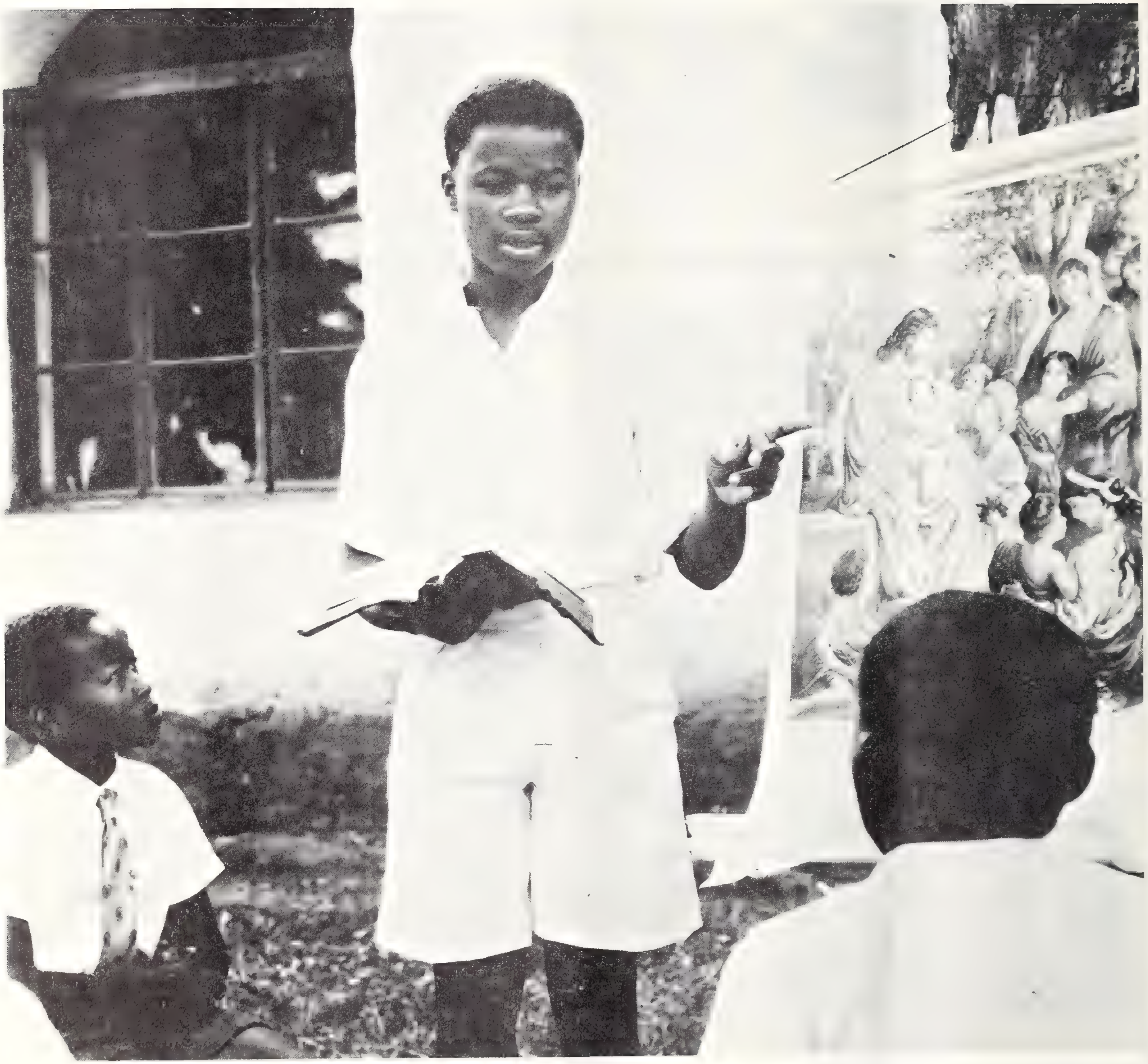


...about training ministers.

We all realize our need for pastors who will faithfully preach God's word, comfort the sick and dying, and encourage us to the highest and best in Christian life and service. Christians overseas also need trained pastors and evangelists to serve in the name of Christ. Mennonite Biblical Seminary in North America, and a series of Bible institutes and seminaries overseas train leaders for our churches. We can say "I Care" about training ministers at home and abroad with a check designated for ministerial training. Send a check today so we can continue to train ministers.

General Conference Mennonite Church
Box 347/Newton, Kansas 67114/316-283-5100
600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4

I believe in the resurrection

Several years ago in Japan a young Buddhist asked what I would consider as the basic difference between Christianity and Buddhism. My answer was that Buddha, while very influential as the founder of Buddhism, passed from the scene; and as an individual there is of him only a memory. Jesus, the founder of Christianity, also died, but he was raised again, and thus Christians worship and serve a risen Lord. He continues to be present.

The resurrection has always been a basic tenet of the Christian faith. The various confessions of faith have been specific in making that claim. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the documents which have come to us from the first century. All four Gospels tell of the experiences of the disciples and the women coming face to face with the empty tomb and the supernatural messengers who affirmed so convincingly, "He is risen!"

That announcement wasn't accepted without question. The disciples wondered; they were apprehensive; they had lost a goal perspective—they even hesitated after they had had the experience of seeing their Lord again. And the enemies denied it.

Then came Pentecost. The Spirit filled the believers and inspired them to proclaim a risen Lord. In the sermons and the incidents which the Book of Acts records there are repeated references to God's raising up this Jesus whom the Romans, at the instigation of the Jews, had put to death. The event of the resurrection becomes the capstone for the story of Jesus—the new chapter of God's dealings with his people. It is the verification that

The resurrection has been a basic tenet. With the development of science the scientific method has been used to try to prove religious phenomena. Since biological studies cannot verify a return from the dead of any organism—all evidence seems to be to the contrary—science concludes that a resurrection for Jesus is also impossible. Therefore the claim of Christians is declared false. With our predominant scientific mentality, it is understandable that even Christians begin to accept such evidence, and seek to view Jesus without holding to his resurrection. In the final analysis, they say, the historical fact of the resurrection isn't that important.

That is too simplistic. The resurrection is not only important; it is crucial. The biblical writers thought so, and Paul gave their evaluation when he stated categorically: "If Christ is not raised, then is our preaching in vain, and your faith is also vain" (1 Corinthians 15:14). Paul and his contemporaries knew that if there were no resurrection, then Jesus could not claim any unique loyalty. He would then have been another good teacher. In fact, he would have been an imposter and rightly condemned for claiming God's authority for what he was doing.

It is to the credit of the biblical writers that they faced this issue squarely. If the cross ended it all, then evil won out. But for these early believers the cross was always considered with its sequel, the resurrection. They knew how dangerous this would be, how absurd such a claim would appear to the average person. But the conviction was there, and it could not be shaken: *Jesus Christ is risen!*

From the *empirical* standpoint, one cannot make a conclusive case for the resurrection. We can say that the Gospel records state that Jesus was raised. When Jesus died on the cross, the disciples thought that everything was over. They were disillusioned and at the end of their tether. "We had hoped. . ." they said.

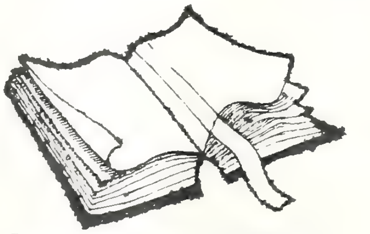
And then the risen Christ appeared to two or three, to the ten, to the eleven. All experienced a similar event, something *objective,* which they compared and came to a common conclusion about. They were so moved that they took courage; they were led to found the Church, organized it as necessary, and took up a missionary task which continues to our time.

If that experience and interpretation were based on an illusion, then we should have expected a gradual decline, a growing pessimism (perhaps even neurosis) and ultimately despair and death. But, in fact, their lives were wholesomely integrated and filled with power. There was significant growth in maturity; those believers lived creatively. Add to this that later Christians also joined in testifying to the experience of the risen Christ. They too shared an experience which similarly affected their lives.

While we grant that empirical evidence alone cannot make the conclusive claim for the resurrection, there is enough such data, when taken as a whole, that adds validity to the experiential resurrection claim. And the opposite is also true. Empirical evidence is not sufficient to deny the claim.

What makes the resurrection claim tenable—capable of being held—is its integral role in the Christian faith. It is central to the Christian proclamation. The early disciples held it as an object of faith; they did not try to prove it. But they made it clearly known that the one who was their teacher, who suffered for all—that one is the one who has been raised. More than that, the resurrection is seen by the New Testament as the judgment of God. Paul says in Romans 4:25 that Jesus was put to death for our transgressions, and he was raised for our justification. God through Christ destroys the old and simultaneously summons us to live a new life.

A final point. The resurrection of Jesus becomes the pledge of our own resurrection. The stories in the Gospels of individuals raised from the dead are advance signs of the final resurrection. They underscore the fact that the time is fulfilled, that the kingdom is being established and that the victory belongs to this risen Lord. Life triumphs over death, for Jesus is risen. *Henry Poettcker, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana 46514, is the president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary.*



Open your Bible

Letters

All sins have victims

Dear Editor: From many letters to the editor this past summer, one becomes aware of the fact that people differ in their thinking. Some give the impression that we have finally reached the age of victimless sins. It is not really sin that is our problem, but rather our attitude towards people. To correct this we need to understand people, and this would put sin in a different perspective and could eliminate its problems.

According to some reports, legalization of drugs and pornography is being reevaluated by government authorities. Because the laws are hard to enforce, some feel that the answer lies in legalization. Should the church follow this example?

The church is discussing divorce and remarriage, abortion, homosexuality, alcohol, and premarital sex. The latter is not mentioned as often as it was some years ago. Have we overcome this problem? "We have learned not to ask too many questions," one brother stated, "to avoid lies, not to embarrass people, or to create tension within the congregation." Some people give the impression that a sin which does not involve or affect another person is victimless.

I believe that every sin offends our holy God. Sin destroys what is good and fulfilling in our relationship to him. To violate body, mind, or soul, therefore, is to strike out at God who owns us and indwells us by his Spirit. The word of God still must be accepted as our guideline. In Ephesians 5:3-7 we read: "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them" (KJV). *P. J. Froese, Box 1621, Winkler, Manitoba R0G 2X0* September 8

Enjoyed world conference

Dear Editor: When I heard about the MWC coming to Wichita this year, I decided to attend. One of my last summer vacations had been the General Conference sessions at Souderton, Pennsylvania, in 1941.

The shuttle buses made Wichita very convenient, and the dormitory life was most interesting.

People at MWC were so friendly; I guess it was because they were there by choice.

I enjoyed the singing most of all.

Thank-you for your fine conference issue (August 22). *Henry J. Schultz, Route 1, Box 92, Mountain Lake, Minnesota 56159*

September 11

Review

Look at your Sunday school

Doing Christian Education in New Ways, *by Evelyn M. Huber (Judson Press, Valley Forge, 1978, 112 pages) is reviewed by Sharon R. Sawatzky, resource coordinator, Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.*

Doing Christian Education in New Ways is an attempt to assist churches in more careful planning for Christian education. Evelyn Huber states that whatever model or combination of models we choose, "a congregation needs to be intentional" about its choice(s). The educational model(s) should be selected and developed on the basis of the church's overall goal for education.

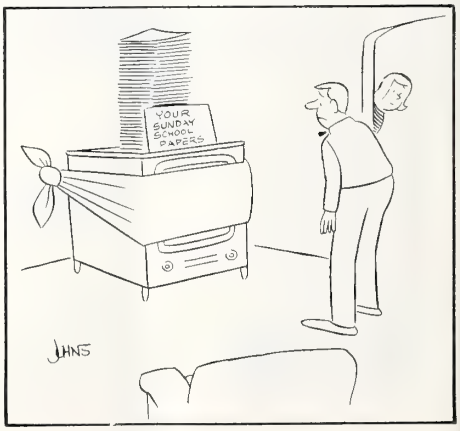
While the book is potentially provocative for any church, *Doing Christian Education in New Ways* admits it will be most helpful to those congregations who prefer a model based on involvement and interaction. Churches who desire a model whose focus is the transfer of facts and information will find more help elsewhere. A congregation can decide their preference by seeking their answers to questions like the following: what is education? what are learning and knowledge? what are the roles of the leader and the group in the learning process?

After the two introductory chapters, this resource provides information about and examples of models with a more open approach to education. It discusses a variety of ways to organize the teaching-learning group (contract teaching, individualized instruction, learning centers, school of religion, festival/celebration); describes alternate models of how learning takes place (action-reflection and inquiry or discovery methods); proposes flexibility and ways of grouping persons for learning (intergenerational, upgraded or broadly graded groupings, family cluster, special interest or need groups); and suggests alternate times for conducting the learning groups.

Also included is a chapter on starting and maintaining a new model. Preparation is the key word—of leaders, participants, parents and congregations. The author advises a specific time period for testing a new model.

There are a number of things to learn from *Doing Christian Education in New Ways.* This brief and easily read book can acquaint you with a number of models, supplemented in many cases with testimonials from experimenting churches. It will sensitize you to various groups and/or areas in your congregation which might need educational attention. A new model can be initiated for a specific group and time, and needn't affect your ongoing education program. And it may give you creative insights into how you can use *The Foundation Series* to its best advantage in your setting.

One use the author suggests for her book is to have it reviewed at a Christian education planning meeting, and "let your mind 'walk around' some of these ideas to see how they look." Try it!



Meditation

Reflections on a miracle

Canada, 1976: A premature baby is born—weighing a mite over a pound. Immediately technology goes into action—one isolette with just the right percentage of oxygen, humidity, and warmth; one respirator in case the infant becomes too exhausted from normal breathing; intravenous therapy based on blood studies so that just the right amount of potassium and sodium bicarbonate is given, and a heart monitor is attached.

Three months later the parents proudly take home their healthy child, now weighing five pounds and a little. It was expensive, true, but with health insurance, government premiums, and a small monthly payment, the bill will soon be only a memory.

The nurses and the doctor and the parents are all pleased. Soon this struggle is forgotten, and another one like it begins. Despite all our technology, this baby, weighing two pounds, dies. The doctor cannot understand. The parents weep. They now have no child to call their own. The nurses are upset for they have lost a battle.

Another wee one is born, and the struggle begins again. This time it's another victory. And all feel rewarded for the efforts.

Egypt, 1977: What do you feel when a baby dies—pain—anger—frustration—hopelessness? One baby died, and I cried. Two babies died, and I had pain. Three babies died, and my tears ran no more. I was angry. God, where are you? Where are your miracles? These babies cannot survive without your help. See that mother's anguish, and that father's pain and tears. "Is there hope for my baby?" they often ask me. Next morning I numbly say, "He died in the night. I do not know why."

My hands are empty. I need more things to make these struggles end in success. Are you listening to me God? We need more nurses, more money, more miracles. Sometimes I wish I were back in Canada in the sterile nursery, where there was more success and less death to cope with. Whom shall I blame for these lifeless babies? The nurses, because there are too few to give the care that is needed? The doctors because their equipment isn't adequate? The country, because of its poverty? The family, who insists on home deliveries and then brings in a premature infant after a few days or a week, and for whom the struggle to live cannot succeed?

Or shall I blame you, God? Shall I praise your name for this, too? Help me see your hand in this work—sometimes I would run away—escape—return to Canada where I would be much more at ease within. Failure—that is hard to take.

June, 1977, Egypt. Success has gone to my head. I'm in a whirl. I'm both sad and glad. This wee boy weighed one kilogram (two pounds) when he came to us. Fifty days later he has more than doubled his weight, and now his mother holds him and he's on his way to the village, his home. He is alive. We actually saw one survive. I can't believe it's true, except for this wee bundle in my arms. Go in peace. God bless you.

Thank-you for this little miracle, God. His mother looks so full of fear; he is still small. She has seen and heard of many babies dying before they reach their second year. I'm elated. . . I cannot see past the glory of this small success. It cost his father 100 pounds. There's no health insurance and that's almost his total wages for this year. No matter. The baby's alive. Success, it feels so good inside.

A baby dies. "Malesh," they say (We'll have another). The country already has more people than it can adequately feed. The farmer's income is low. Premature babies in villages like those I've seen. . . what does the future hold? These second thoughts flood my mind. What of impure water? They need the supplement formula to gain enough weight. What of germs causing diarrhea, pneumonia, measles, tuberculosis, and many more? But the mother will have another, and another, and. . . .

Has it really been success? What is the value of one child? I know what it is in North America, but what about Egypt? Can I accept their values, if different or less than those I cling to? It feels like success. It's life instead of death. That is success, isn't it. . . for now?

Helena Peters

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CONTRIBUTORS

Rodney Eck, 912-4 Savilla, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46807 is a transportation orderly in the nuclear medicine department of Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne and is a member of the Maplewood Mennonite Church. Rod also works with the Single Page, a nondenominational ministry encouraging Christian singles to commitment and joy in their lives.

Marlace Berg Zacharias, Fiske, Saskatchewan S0L 1C0, is a free-lance writer. Marlace reminds us about Christian hospitality.

The writer of "Done comin' " is actively involved in General Conference churches but preferred not to have her name listed with this poem.

Helena Peters is an MCC volunteer at The American Hospital, Box 65, Tanta, Egypt.

CREDITS

Cover, Ken Bazyn, 264 West 22nd Street, Apartment 2C, New York, New York 10011; 594, Ron Engh, Star Prairie, Wisconsin 54026; 596, Paul M. Schrock, Box 200, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683; 598, Vic Reimer; 599-601, RNS; 606, JOHNS, Box 1300, Pebble Beach, California 93953

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Living with change

The Bible paints Jesus Christ as "the same yesterday and today and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). Malachi 3:6 says, "For I the Lord do not change. . . ." There is an unchangeable quality about the Godhead, and this provides us with security and a solid foundation.

Daniel 2:21-22 says that God "changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding; he reveals deep and mysterious things. . ." When Stephen is challenged about his ministry (Acts 6-7-8), one of the charges is "we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us" (6:14). The Christian faith is for us a challenge to constant change. Only by our ongoing changing can we hope to grow more fully into the likeness of Christ.

Somehow we are often caught in the middle. Because our God in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit is consistent we feel that we must not change.

Bruce Larson, in his newest book, *The Meaning and Mystery of Being Human* (Word, 1978), (a book which I heartily recommend for you to read), writes, "tragically, far too often the Christian church has been a powerful change-resisting agent. The gospel of Jesus Christ has been used to fight change and to keep things as they are. . . the Bible has been cited as a defense for slavery and an excuse for the second-class status of women. It has been quoted to justify those opposing scientific advances of all sorts" (page 69).

It has been difficult for us to understand Isaiah 43:18-19, "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?"

Bruce Larson tells (page 71) of an experiment that he shared at the University of Massachusetts. Their seminar group was paired off, told to turn their backs to their partners, make ten changes in their appearance, and then turn around to examine each other and note the changes.

Among several hundred people, almost all made changes by removing something—watches, glasses, rings, pens, socks, etc. *Very few added anything.*

This may help us to understand our fear of change. We feel that we might lose something valuable if we were to *add* anything new.

Yet, if we want to develop in our Christian life, we must do more than just "put off" some old things; we must "put on the new." To combat sinful habits, we must cultivate constructive habits.

Change happens at a variety of levels. **Knowledge change** is probably the most appealing. We can usually accept a change once we know that it is not as bad as we first feared.

Attitudinal change is considerably more difficult. Our attitudes involve the emotions, and feelings are not necessarily logical.

Behavioral change requires a readiness to do something differently. It is the subject of much controversy in the last several decades. Some teachers say that effective changes in behavior can result only from sufficient knowledge that will change our attitudes. Others, including many totalitarian political theorists, say that if we simply practice (enforce?) new behaviors for a while, then these will become accepted parts of our character.

Organizational change is a contemporary concern. In the churches it is being discussed as the most effective way to bring about justice in our society.

The Old Testament advocates a year of Jubilee—a time to change wrongs to rights—and to grow on from there. For Bible-believing Christians, our living needs to regularly experience years of Jubilee.

Arnold Toynbee has defined civilization as "a movement and not a condition; a voyage, not a harbor."

Could Christianity be defined as "changing relationships and not a set of propositional doctrines; a pilgrimage, not a retreat"? *Bernie Wiebe*

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The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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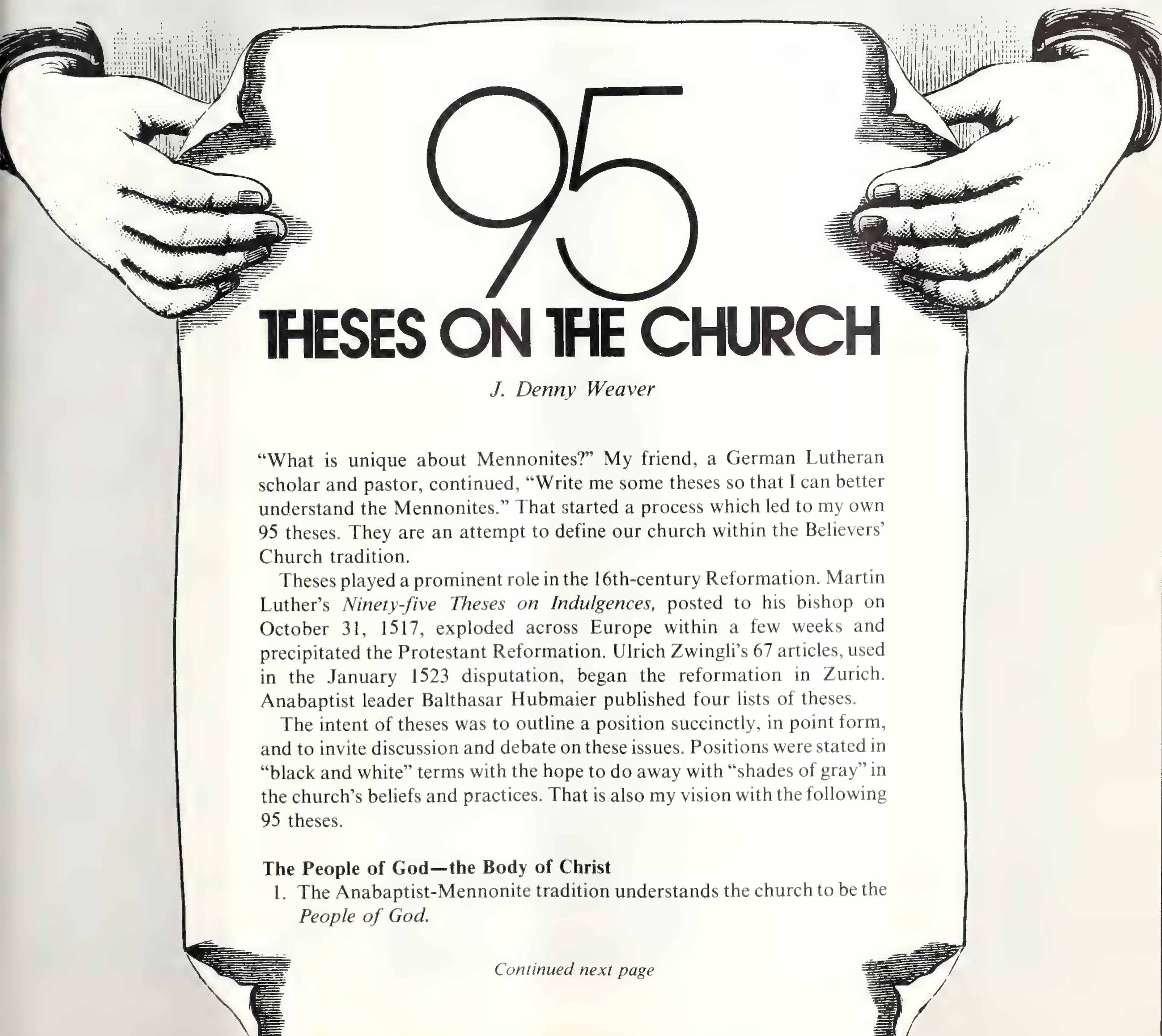


95 THESES ON THE CHURCH

J. Denny Weaver

"What is unique about Mennonites?" My friend, a German Lutheran scholar and pastor, continued, "Write me some theses so that I can better understand the Mennonites." That started a process which led to my own 95 theses. They are an attempt to define our church within the Believers' Church tradition.

Theses played a prominent role in the 16th-century Reformation. Martin Luther's *Ninety-five Theses on Indulgences,* posted to his bishop on October 31, 1517, exploded across Europe within a few weeks and precipitated the Protestant Reformation. Ulrich Zwingli's 67 articles, used in the January 1523 disputation, began the reformation in Zurich. Anabaptist leader Balthasar Hubmaier published four lists of theses.

The intent of theses was to outline a position succinctly, in point form, and to invite discussion and debate on these issues. Positions were stated in "black and white" terms with the hope to do away with "shades of gray" in the church's beliefs and practices. That is also my vision with the following 95 theses.

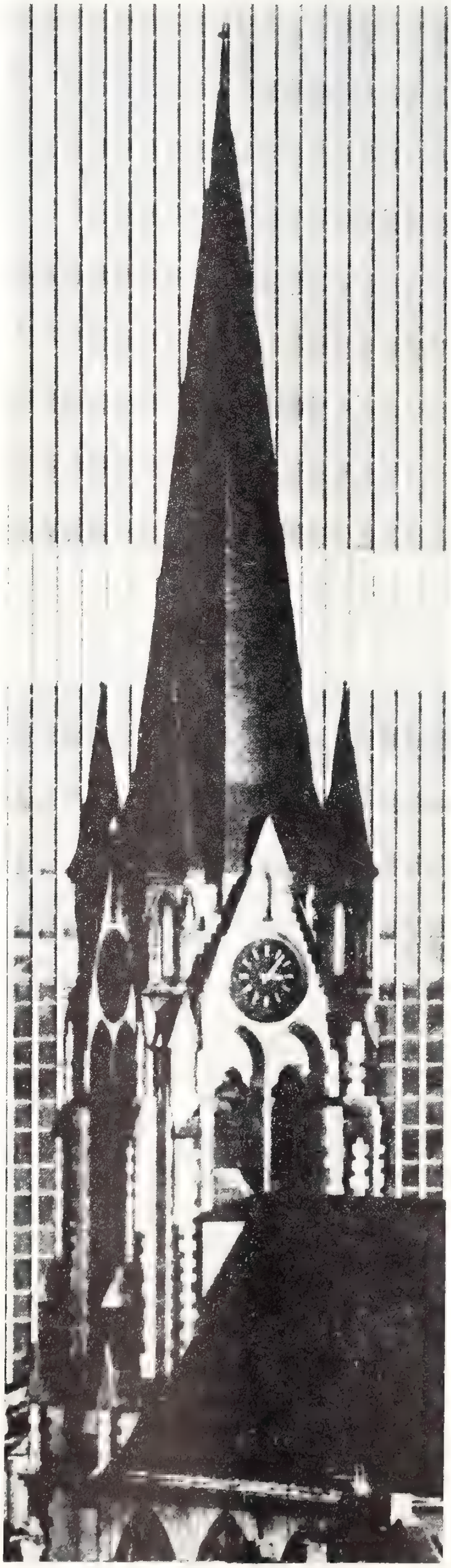
The People of God—the Body of Christ

1. The Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition understands the church to be the *People of God.*

Continued next page

95 THESES ON THE CHURCH

2. The *People of God* (church) are a visible community.
3. The church is continually visible in the daily living of the members, in addition to being visible in worship services and in ministerial functions such as preaching and administration of the ordinances.
4. Although the church, universal and particular, is primarily visible through its members, God alone knows the ultimate identity of each person.
5. The *People of God* represent the kingdom of God on earth.
6. The finiteness of humankind means that the kingdom of God on earth will always be imperfect.
7. The Mennonite tradition defines the church as the *Body of Christ.*
8. Jesus Christ is the head of the church.
9. To confess Jesus as Lord and Savior means to join the body over whom Jesus is the head.
10. The teaching and life of Jesus provide the model for ethical activity (Christian behavior).
11. The witness of the apostles and the early church, who knew Jesus personally, also provide a norm for the life of today's church.
12. The apostles are an example for Christian life because they reflect Christ's headship of the church.
13. God's creation of a people—whether Old Testament Israel or New Testament church—is an act of grace; the people did not earn their selection.
14. Grace is the unmerited uniting of men and women by God to his people.
15. To be a member of the *People of God* is to experience God's gift of salvation.
16. To experience the grace of God is to join and be joined to the *People of God.*
17. To experience the grace of God apart from a local congregation is to fail to experience God's people and God's grace in a complete manner.
18. In Jesus there is continuity between the old *People of God* (Israel) and the new *People of God* (the church) as Jesus comes from one and inaugurates the other.
19. Jesus' daily ministry exemplified God's creation of a people—his church—as Jesus called and taught twelve disciples who became the nucleus of the early church.
20. God's ultimate, decisive act in history is the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
21. In Jesus God acts definitively to create the church.
22. Jesus' death and resurrection free us from the bondage of sin and death and enable us to join and be joined to the *People of God.*
23. Overemphasis on Jesus' substitutionary death makes salvation *only* personal and disregards God's creation of a people.
24. Since the fatherhood of God makes us brothers and sisters with each other in the family of God, it is impossible to consider salvation as only personal.
25. To have God as father is to have others of God's children as brothers and sisters.
26. To stress individual salvation at the expense of the communal aspect of salvation is to deny the nature of the church and the significance of God's acts in history.
27. To consider salvation as only a personal transaction between an individual and God is to deny the church as the family of God.
28. The church consists of individuals whom God saves by reconciling them to himself and to each other.
29. It is impossible to be reconciled to God without experiencing reconciliation to the church.
30. Fellowship among believers is not a by-product of personal salvation, but is one of the things which makes up the church.
31. To deny fellowship as a part of the church is to deny the nature of the *People of God.*
32. In the physical absence of Jesus God continues to create a people through the Holy Spirit.
33. As God's agent for creating a people his Spirit is experienced by a united fellowship rather than by individuals.
34. Salvation has an individual aspect as each one decides personally whether or not to be reconciled to God and his people.
35. Jesus' resurrection demonstrates an advance sample of the future *People of God.*



Ordinances

36. Baptism is the ordinance whereby we join the universal body of believers and one of its local manifestations.

37. Baptism is a public testimony of one's having been reconciled to God's people and to God.
38. Baptism should not be separated from membership in a local congregation.
39. In the Lord's Supper the *People of God* remember Christ's death, which makes possible their unity.
40. To view the Lord's Supper as primarily a symbol of the individual's relation to Christ is to neglect the communal aspect of the supper as well as God's work in forming a people.
41. The Lord's Supper should never be celebrated by a lone individual with the minister because this ritual expresses primarily the fellowship of the *Body of Christ*.
42. When the minister takes communion to a member incapacitated at home, at least one other person should accompany the minister to symbolize the communal and fellowship aspects of the Supper.
43. The Lord's Supper symbolizes our collective unity in Christ.
44. The Lord's Supper symbolizes the church's common participation and unity in the body of Christ.

Ministers

45. The church, as the *Body of Christ*, means that no members have superior status within the body.
46. To belong to the *Body of Christ* implies the potential to exercise all its functions.
47. In the *Body of Christ* women and men are equally affirmed to exercise the functions.
48. It is often necessary to select some members of the *Body of Christ* to exercise publicly, in the name of all, those functions which are the duty and responsibility and privilege of all.
49. The minister should dress for worship according to the common practice of the congregation in order to express oneness with them and to express that he or she exercises publicly a ministry which belongs to all Christians.
50. Unique or special dress for ministers—whether a plain coat, a clerical collar, or clerical robe—serves to set the minister apart from the remainder of the *People of God*, rather than expressing oneness with them.

The church and mission

51. God's creation of a people demonstrates their missionizing function, as God continually adds individuals to his people.
52. By their existence the *People of God* are a missionizing community, as their purpose is to invite others to join the *People of God*.
53. The existence of the *People of God* is the means of missionizing, as this existence demonstrates that men and women are reconciled to each other by God.
54. The existence of the *People of God* is the message which the church proclaims.
55. The existence of the church is both the medium and the message of the gospel.
56. The principal task of the *People of God* is to *be* the church.
57. Being the church means to do all the things characteristic of the *People of God*, such as loving, experiencing fellowship, nurturing, teaching, marrying, burying, counseling, worshiping, discerning, and missionizing.

The Bible and the church

58. The Bible reflects the composite nature and experience of the *People of God*.
59. The Bible reflects the nature and experience of the *People of God* because it was written by them.
60. The Bible—both Old and New Testaments—recounts the history of the first centuries of God's acts in history to create his people.
61. To view the Bible only as a devotional book, or as a personal message to the reader, is to disregard the historical character of the Bible.
62. In its genesis and its content, the Bible is to be read and understood within the *People of God*.
63. Reading the Bible within the *People of God* does not eliminate the need for scholars in understanding it.
64. Reading the Bible within the *People of God* requires the assistance of scholars because they enable the church to read the Bible in the deepest historical and contemporary context.
65. Scholars do not read and understand the Bible for, or in place of, individuals; but rather enable each believer to read the Bible with fuller knowledge of it and of God's people.
66. The Bible takes its authority from Christ, and it is there that the members of Christ's body discover his normative teaching and life.
67. The *Body of Christ* may think or do anything which can be shown to follow in the stream of God's people, beginning with Abraham and running through the apostolic church.
68. The *Body of Christ* should not limit its thoughts or deeds only to items specifically mentioned in the Bible.
69. For individuals alone to read the Bible, reserving for themselves alone the final judgment on interpretation, is to deny the church as the *Body of Christ*.

Christian Behavior and Discipline

70. Ethics or Christian behavior are an inseparable part of the theology of the *People of God*.
71. It is not possible to be a member of the *Body of Christ* without living according to the direction of Christ, the head of the body.
72. To be a part of the *People of God* is to engage in discipleship.
73. To be a member of the *People of God* is to be a follower of Jesus.
74. To perceive Jesus as the head of the body is to make Jesus' life of utmost significance to believers.
75. Concentration on Jesus' substitutionary death results in devaluation of Jesus as head of the body and as example to all believers.
76. Although decisions of personal ethical behavior must finally be made by the individual, it is the duty of the church to discuss these decisions because such behavior becomes part of the visible church.
77. Corporate discipline is appropriate when an individual member's action distorts the visible face of the church.
78. Church discipline should refrain from ultimate evaluations of activity, since any and all actions of the church are only approximations of the kingdom of God.
79. The *People of God* transcend all national, cultural, and ethnic boundaries.
80. To identify any national church as the one true church is to deny the universal *Body of Christ*.
81. To support the armed conflict of one part of the *Body of Christ* against another part is to deny the church as the *People of God*.

Worship

82. Appropriate Sunday morning activities are any which involve the people and express their unity and fellowship as created by God through Christ, including dialogues, plays, musical groups, group discussions, dialogue sermons, panel discussions, and preaching.
83. To think that without preaching there has been no worship service is not to understand the church as the *People of God*.

Continued on page 622

My dream of a consuming fire

Rosa Stone

My dream came in three distinct parts.

1. *A forest fire could be seen in the distance.*
2. *The fire was now very close and threatened to consume us. I told my husband we needed to set a backfire in order to save ourselves.*
3. *Without dreaming of the actual blowing over event there was the aftermath reality of the smoke and the generally charred existence. But we were safe; the backfire had worked.*

I shared my dream with a friend and confessed that I was hard-pressed to make the appropriate connections in trying to work it through in conscious reality. We were en route to a Jungian conference on "Crisis, Dreams, and Diagnosis." It was therefore in order that we prepare for the day by sharing our dreams of the previous night.

The most puzzling aspect about my dream was that I could not connect it with anything in my own life. It seemed to deal with the imminent "holocaust" in another person's life. Dream experts say that dreams nearly always refer to things in our own lives and not to other people's circumstances.

The mystery continued for several days. Finally, in my meditation, following John Sanford's book, *Healing and Wholeness,* and making connections with the input from the Jungian conference, the meaning of the dream became clear. Painfully clear.

Forgiveness processes have not been easy or clear to me. "Forgiving" meant not thinking about the subject. Or it meant pretending there was no hate or ill will. Fellow Christians sometimes accomplished the act of forgiveness but they could not explain the process in a way that I, too, could utilize their technique. Maxwell Maltz in *Psychocybernetics* had been the most helpful when he stated that we cannot begin to forgive until we have already condemned the other person. Forgiveness means, first of all, to remove the condemnation. That helped.

Jungian personality theory describes two pairs of polarized functions. One function of one pair is dominant; the other pair has one of its two poles as an auxiliary function. By our inherent nature we perform one of these four functions more efficiently than the other three This is termed our "superior

By the dream God showed me how my own welfare depends on my ability to forgive.

function." We internally process events and ideas in accordance with the function we utilize most efficiently. The secondary or auxiliary function is also relatively efficient. One of these pairs is an evaluative function; the other is an input process.

In our conference we were informed that we aim to run our lives by our superior function. This is as it ought to be. We need to operate and make our contribution in an area where we do well. This is how we make our most significant contributions. However, this same lecturer also said that frequently *our inferior function runs us.* This is where my dream and the consuming fire come in.

The inferior function correlates with the fallen part of man. It is defined in Jungian typology as being opposite (but in the same pair) to the superior function. You can identify this inferior function or "shadow." Pick the person you hate the most. (For Mennonites this may need to be toned down a bit because we are taught not to hate!) Select the person you most dislike or avoid. You can be relatively certain that their superior function is your own inferior function.

I now recognized that a phone call from a former colleague had triggered my dream and that it had something to do with my own "shadow" (the dark, unconscious, sinister, evil, undeveloped part of me). I began, in meditation, to explore the qualities that my anti-friend possessed. ("Anti-friend" is new terminology for what is called "enemy" in the Bible.) I discovered three characteristics which bothered me. In fact, I had so conveniently projected my shadow onto this person that this seemed to make up that total person. The painful part of the meditation was in recognizing that what I saw in the "other" was more "me" than the other.

The fire? Imminent catastrophe? Ah, yes. I am not good at abstractions without environmental realities, and God had to "spell it out" for me in flesh and blood. Catastrophe did appear imminent for my anti-friend. I was secretly, and almost unknowingly, gloating over this. Finally God's justice was on its way.

By the dream God showed me how my own welfare depends on my ability to forgive. I take very seriously the Lord's Prayer, which petitions God for forgiveness "as we forgive."

I became confronted with the urgent task of seeking my anti-friend's constructive welfare.

And if I did not make intercession and act? The words of the lecturer came back, "We run our lives by our superior function but our shadow (inferior function) runs us." Not to forgive my anti-friend, my dream indicated, was certain catastrophe for me. The dream *did refer to me.* I could not survive psychologically and spiritually unless I did this.

"Individuation" is a Jungian term referring to a growth/integration process that ought to occur in us. The lecturer said, "Only persons who are working with their shadow are effectively engaging in the process of individuation." Aha! The Pharisee and the publican who went to pray were dealing with different subject matter. The Pharisee denied and negated his shadow—disregarding or avoiding his dark side. The publican recognized the need for God's help in dealing with sinister forces within himself that tended to break through into consciousness. Perhaps more of Jesus' contentions with the "righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees" centered around the willful overlooking of the evil within themselves. You and I, even as Christians, have such a shadow.

Anna Mow, Brethren minister and 80-year-old saint, has effectively taught me that there is no power in confessing another person's sins. I am empowered only as I confess and forsake my own sins. I chose not to enumerate or describe the discoveries that I dealt with, following the dream meditation, in a luncheon with my former colleague. I confessed my sins and I want to forsake them. I realize that this will not be the final discovery needing my confession and repentance.

The spiritual law remains that I will be consumed by my unconscious forces if I do not acknowledge their presence and influence. I will be consumed if I do not allow them to become conscious, because they can only be controlled (to even a relative degree) when moved from the unconscious to the conscious life. Dream material can help me to discern the nature of the evils within me so that I can be relieved of projecting evil onto others, society, and the world-at-large. When the publican prayed, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," he was pointing out that God's help is needed for my inabilities to deal effectively with the problems within me. This is a joint venture with God, not a "let God do it" project.

In the course of normal living there are encounters with illness, injury, accidents, and deaths. These crisis times may confront us with shadow images concerning ourselves, images that may have been long buried. New aspects of our identities and desires may appear. To those unaccustomed to recognizing and dealing with the unconscious inferior aspects of themselves, these events bring the catastrophe my dream fire presaged. To those who are sincerely interested in honesty, openness, and integrity with God, these events bring an opportunity for new spurts of growth.

The Holy Spirit enlightens and controls this process as we ask him and allow him to do so. We learn the reality of Kahlil Gibran's statement "Pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses our understanding." And I can only free others as I become free, just as I can only love others as I love myself.

My projection processes led me to consciously believe that my dream referred to my neighbor when, in reality, it referred to imminent catastrophe for me. God wants me, his child, to grow toward maturity in his Spirit, and his instructions are abundantly present whenever my spiritual eyes are enabled to see them. I receive as I give (Lord's Prayer); I need to deal with the evils within myself (Pharisee and publican prayers); and I am my brother's keeper. My "fallen nature" leads me to seek any avenue except a confess-and-forsake process, which is the only life-giving force. I am not proud of the fact that God needs to make it so graphic and so vivid for me before I can understand and follow through.

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Peacemakers shy away from shocking anyone

Green Lake, Wisconsin—Strategies for peacemaking and a shopping trip to a cheese store normally don't have much in common.

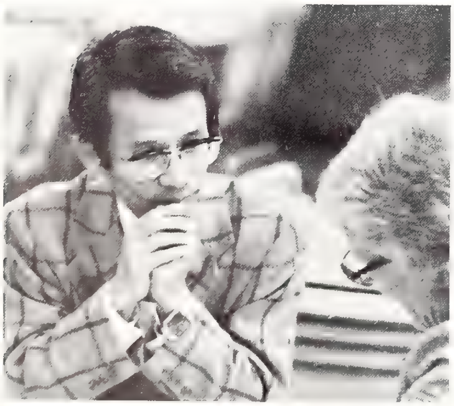
But Wisconsin is famous for its cheeses. And by the third day of the October 5-8 New Call to Peacemaking conference five of us decided we needed a break from high thinking and earnest discernment.

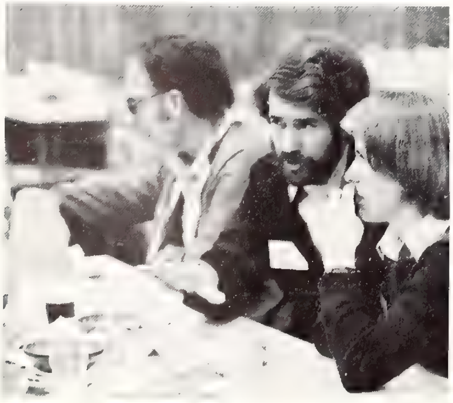
We borrowed a car to drive the four miles from the lakeside 1100-acre convention center into Green Lake. On the way we joked about converting the locals to peacemaking. Maybe, we thought, the 300 delegates discussing peacemaking would create bigger waves if they took their message into the streets of the nearby towns.

Well, it almost happened. We got to the cheese store, sampled goodies until guilt-stricken, and filled the place with lighthearted banter.

A customer near me asked, "Who are you folks? I know you're at the convention center, but who are you?"

"We are Friends, Brethren, and Mennonites—the peace churches," I said. "We're here to talk about peacemaking in a militaristic society. We want to turn this country around."





"Hey," she responded, "that's great. We need it."

Arise, go forth, and conquer

Yet one of the nagging concerns at Green Lake was whether the message of the peace churches would be heard by a security conscious public who believe national security rests in military might alone. Another worry was whether peace church members are genuinely interested in countering militarism.

Dwain Epps, a fraternal delegate from the World Council of Churches and executive secretary of the WCC United Nations office in New York, was both excited and pessimistic. During an interview he observed, "This conference is exciting because the peace churches are self-consciously wrestling with their peacemaking responsibilities. It is exciting to see the spiritual force and the strong emphasis on local action. But I am not confident that the message of peacemaking will be picked up even by the general membership of the historic peace churches. However, if they do, there would be a catalytic effect on other churches because there is a broad interest by other denominations in peace issues."

The Green Lake conference is part of a cooperative effort by the historic peace groups to do five things—stir up rededication to the Christian peace witness, clarify the biblical basis for it, extend a call to the larger church to see peacemaking as a gospel imperative, propose actions the US Government can take for peacemaking, and determine contemporary positive strategy for peace and justice. Planning for the consultation began in 1976 and has included 26 regional meetings in 16 different areas of the United States. Over 1500 people were involved in these meetings.

Discovering shalom

Addressing the Thursday evening opening session was Dale Brown, Church of the Brethren theologian and professor at Bethany Theological Seminary, Oak Brook, Illinois. Brown recognized that no easy synthesis of the historic peace church traditions could occur, but counseled the evangelical biblicists and social activists to discover one another. "The primary biblical word for salvation, *shalom,* in its richness of meaning," he asserted, "encompasses both evangelism and peacemaking, both salvation and justice proclamations."

Brown said one new way of expressing a peace witness was to protest the country's military expenditures by withholding income taxes. Tax resistance, he reflected, is an important symbol because it involves our pocketbooks and enlarges the peace witness beyond what 17- and 18-year-old youth do in response to conscription.

Three more major speeches were given. Between the speeches participants met four times in 27 small groups and in two plenary sessions. The small groups reported their major concerns and made recommendations for action to a six-person findings committee.

Friday morning's session opened with a Bible lecture by Ronald Sider, Brethren in Christ minister and professor at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. Speaking on the topic, "The Cross and Violence," Sider said, "The cross stands as a harsh reminder that love for enemies does not always work—at least in the short run. Jesus grounds his call to love enemies in the very nature of God. . . . It is a tragedy of our time that many of those who appropriate the biblical understanding of Christ's vicarious cross fail to see its direct implications for the problem of war and violence." He described as heresy a doctrine about salvation and Jesus Christ that does not teach nonviolence as the proper way of living.

This thought was echoed by one of the respondents to his speech, Barbara Reynolds of Wilmington College, Ohio. She said, "We need to be prophetic to fellow Christians. Many who call themselves Christian are malignant cells within the body." However, a woman in the audience suggested that the historic peace churches needed to put out positive messages, not negative energy.

The next morning Sider spoke on "Christ and Power." He noted that the peace churches lack a theology of power, but also said that nonresistance is not apolitical. "Power itself," he continued, "is not innately evil. It is part of the good creation. Hence it can and should be used by Christians in loving nonviolent ways in the search for justice."

The gulf some congregations need to cross in relating to questions of power was exemplified by the confession of one woman who told her small group, "I don't even get a chance to talk in my local church. So in many ways my attendance here is futile."

Sider also spoke during the Sunday worship service which ended the conference. He became specific. "The affluence we enjoy is possible in part because of violent structures—consciously established patterns of international trade, vast areas of land in poor nations being devoted to export crops, operations of our multinational corporations—which enrich us and starve others. Our silent support of the unjust status quo is a thundering denial of our peace testimony."

Except for the Sunday talk there were only scattered references to the causes of war and injustice. Scotch Ndlovu, a Rodesian student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Indiana, strongly faulted the conference for this. "There is an unwillingness," he asserted, "among Christians to address the causes of war. Why? As soon as Christians here ask that question seriously their fingers point to their own actions."

Certainly the majority of the 300 participants were WASPS and middle class. Nevertheless, there was a good representation of age groups, male and female, and those who live alternative life-styles.

A major address on building the institutions for peace didn't excite the participants I queried. "That's not where I'm at," one person said. The speech by Duncan Wood, former Quaker representative in Geneva, focused on the role of the United Nations which he said had taught us to think globally.

A great leap forward

Does Green Lake signify a milestone in reactivating an action-oriented peace witness among the historic peace churches? Was the search for a contemporary, practical, and biblical peace message successful?

Green Lake saw a gathering of the committed. Some, especially those active in their denominational peace efforts, said the meeting was highly significant because it brought the several peace churches together for the first time since the 1930s. Although participants knew they did not necessarily represent the convictions of the total peace church membership there was an optimism that the New Call to Peacemaking was "a great leap forward," as one participant said.

Mutual discovery occurred. Some Mennonites were particularly impressed with the Quaker silences which punctuated the four days. Further, despite the common bond of loving peace, there was discovery of diversity in what this means.

Lauren Friesen, pastor of the South Seattle (Washington) Mennonite Church reflected, "As a continuation I think we should have regional interfaith peace activities. The people here represent a prophetic remnant, but I think that among our churches is a latent concern for peacemaking. It is necessary that we energize a mission for peace."

About 60 Mennonites met for a caucus Saturday afternoon to share impressions.

Peter Ediger, copastor of the Arvada (Colorado) Mennonite Church, speaking from his experience as a protester at the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant said, "The call to confront can be a gift. We need to enlarge our concept of what is permissible in confrontation."

Daniel Slabaugh, pastor of the Ann Arbor (Michigan) Mennonite Fellowship lamented the tameness of the conference. He called for aggressive leadership. "I thought we were going to talk about a 'national war' for peacemaking," he cried out. "The Pentagon will be happy if all we talk about is our church differences."

Integrity and visibility

The process of lodging small group recommendations in a findings committee, and then after the committee's editing seeking further discernment in plenary sessions almost mired the conference in its own quicksand. Aggressive persons pushed their particular agendas on some small groups. One group sent a note to the findings committee: "Do not hack up our recommendations," they warned. Nevertheless, the firm leadership of moderator Barrett Hollister, and the conscientious, sensitive efforts of the findings committee created a final document satisfying the diverse peaceniks. For the conservative the final statement was too radical; for the activists it was too limp.

There are two main thrusts to the document—actions that are directed inward among the peace churches to enhance the integrity of the peace witness, and actions that are directed outward to enlarge the visibility of the peace witness. (Watch for that report next week.) *Vic Reimer*

Judy Krehbiel of Arvada, Colorado, taught conference goers the song "The New Call Is an Old Call," specially written for the conference by Peter Ediger.

One way to put the lid on issues

No room at the mike

This daddy has had two heart transplants. Robert Dodge of Los Angeles, who has had two heart transplants, proudly holds up his new-born daughter Sandra Jo. She is the first child to be born to a transplant patient. Medical authorities say that the birth is unusual because large doses of steroids administered to transplant patients to lower the likelihood of tissue rejection also lower the production of sperm.

Nominate an executive secretary

The Commission on Home Ministries extends an invitation to persons to help in the search for a new CHM executive secretary. This calls for discernment of unique gifts.

Please address nominations or assessments by December 1 to Donald Steelberg, Chairperson, Commission on Home Ministries, 405 Trease Road, Wadsworth, Ohio 44281.

Relief agencies undergird community's initiative

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—Sangrami Nagar or "Struggling Village" is a community 35 kilometers south of Calcutta, India.

The people who live in this village had a bleak beginning since they came into India as refugees from Bangladesh in the 1960s. Initially they lived on a narrow strip of wasteland owned by a railway. They existed without any sanitary facilities or water supply. What little they earned came from begging and serving as laborers.

Amalesh Chakravarty, a government employee, often passed the settlement on his way to work. He noticed several strong characteristics among these refugees—an active community spirit and a desire to maintain human dignity. Moved by their spirit he issued a challenge: Would they be prepared to work unitedly if land was provided? They accepted.

Chakravarty located land in a swamp and began negotiations for its purchase. Every man, woman, and child collected funds.

In December 1970 the refugees resettled themselves. Each of 150 families (about 1,000 persons) received a plot of land. Community leaders instructed each family to dig a pond on their plot. This provided fill for roads and raised the ground level.

By breeding fish, growing vegetables, and working in cottage industries this community of displaced farmers and weavers hoped to maintain their families and make the required final payment on the land.

When Mennonite Central Committee worker Charles Edwin visited the site in 1971 each family had a house, a pond, and a vegetable garden. The village had roads and a school. He observed, "It is a clean village with a well-organized cooperative."

Nevertheless, a problem developed. The mud-walled and thatch-roofed school fell into disrepair because the funding agency for the school had stipulated that no fees could be charged to students. Consequently there was no money for maintenance.

When Edwin visited Sangrami Nagar in September 1977 the villagers appealed for funds for repairs and payment of salaries. Edwin said he would ask MCC for money for repairs but not for salaries as that is a recurring expense. By December Chakravarty worked out a student fee structure which would pay a portion of the teachers' salaries. The village committee agreed to provide some cash by selling fish and crops from the community plots. Cathedral Relief Service, a public collection, and Chakravarty added to the funds. MCC gave a total of $1,250.

By assisting this struggling village the various agencies and Chakravarty are an incentive for others to get involved.

For example, the Indian Overseas Bank now intends to make loans to individuals for fisheries, goat herds, dairies, poultry, a grocery outlet, and a laundry. This will further build the resources of Sangrami Nagar—the struggling village.

Women seek to resist global corporations

Des Moines, Iowa (AFSC)—Women workers in global corporations must build networks of support and information-sharing with their counterparts in other nations of the world, according to the participants in a conference which met here October 6-8.

Entitled Women and Global Corporations, the conference assembled a group of some 120 activists, organizers, and workers, concentrating on the three industries which employ the largest female work force—electronics, textile, and agribusiness—and representing all parts of the United States as well as Puerto Rico, Mexico, the Philippines, Africa, and Latin America.

The conference was convened by the American Friends Service Committee.

A Korean textile worker, Lee So Sun, had been invited to the conference but was unable to attend, having been jailed, then released and subsequently beaten by the police for her work in labor education.

Women electronic workers in the United States have assembled information on some of the dangerous chemicals with which they deal. Sharing this information with their counterparts in Malaysia and in border communities in Mexico where electronics industries are now located, was suggested as an example of a first step in network building.

"The global corporations have a vision of creating a world of consumer communities in which we have no ties to each other except through the products we consume," said Barbara Ehrenrich, feminist author.

The conference pledged itself to publish a pamphlet on women and global corporations, to plan regional conferences on women and global corporations, and to assist church groups and other social change organizations in setting up programs dealing with the impact of transnationals on women.

Vocational issues related to Christian witness in developing countries are the focus of a popular evening course being taught this semester at the two Mennonite colleges in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Fifty persons are enrolled. Many are anticipating transcultural service. Attention is being given to economics, agriculture, medicine, education, and theology in developing countries or in underdeveloped areas in Canada. The course is a cooperative venture of Mennonite Central Committee (Manitoba), Canadian Mennonite Bible College, and Mennonite Brethren Bible College.

Church camps are important to Christian nurture. This message was emphasized during a training camp for denominational leaders in outdoor Christian ministries held September 7-19 near Richmond, Virginia. Lois Bergen, director of youth education for the General Conference, and Terry Burkhalter, president of the Mennonite Camping Association attended the camp which attracted 50 persons from 15 denominations. The sessions were experiential and also attempted to plan for the future. For further information write to Terry Burkhalter, 202-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C9.

"Puerto Rico is in fact a colony of the United States, and movement toward genuine self-determination and a new status for the island must begin," said Louis Schneider of the American Friends Service Committee to the United Nations Decolonization Committee on August 28. The report said that prior to the invasion of Puerto Rico eighty years ago by the United States the island was a separate entity with Spanish, African, and Indian roots. "We believe," said the AFSC, "that Puerto Ricans have the right to choose their own path of cultural development and to evolve an identity based on their choice among elements of language and culture."

To symbolize the opening of a new place for worship and proclamation Paul Boschman and Stephen Lee share in the opening of the church Bible.

Chinese Mennonites dedicate building

Canada's first Chinese Mennonite congregation dedicated a former YWCA building in Vancouver, British Columbia, as its church home on September 24.

The building, located in the heart of Vancouver's Chinese district, includes offices which will be used for social services such as counseling and interpretation, and a large room that has been converted to a Chinese and English Christian bookstore.

On 7 August 1977 the Chinese congregation held its first worship service in the lower auditorium of the Mountainview Mennonite Church. Less than a year later, on June 4, the group had its first baptism and an acceptance service for charter members. About 260 persons squeezed into the new location for the dedication service and official opening, which was conducted by Paul Boschman, pastor of the Mountainview Church and Stephen Lee, pastor of the Chinese congregation.

The building was purchased this past summer with the assistance of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia. Extensive renovations on the building were done after possession was taken on September 1. The congregation has applied for membership in the British Columbia conference.

Choirs from the Mennonite churches in Vancouver sang praises. Some of the Chinese churches in the neighborhood were also represented. John Hiebert, chairperson of the missions and service committee of the BC conference, noted that this was the first outreach in the inner city and the first cross-cultural church planting by the provincial conference. *Les Klassen*

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Director for radio and television activities

Full- or part-time (negotiable) in spring of 1979

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Mennonite peacemakers in Ireland

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee and the Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) in Elkhart, Indiana, have begun to work jointly in Ireland. The program's focus is to establish an Anabaptist presence and witness. A team of five persons will be sent to Dublin.

One of the mission's goals is to develop peace education programs, such as peace education in Irish secondary schools, in consultation with area groups and churches. The team will attempt to develop contacts with student and young people's groups.

During September the London Mennonite Fellowship sent Mike Garde, Irish citizen and Fellowship member, to Dublin. This began the MBM-MCC involvement.

Heretofore Mennonites had an unofficial peace presence in Ireland. Marilyn Stahl of Freeman, South Dakota, worked in Dublin for Glencree, a coalition of small peace groups organized to reduce the extreme intolerance between Irish Catholics and Protestants.

Some groundwork for North American Mennonite involvement in Ireland began with a visit to Ireland in 1977 by Atlee Beachy. He recommended a Mennonite mission to the country. Later that year his suggestion was affirmed by a delegation from the London Mennonite Fellowship and the Mennonite Mission Board. Subsequently MCC decided to contribute personnel.

Although 90 percent of Ireland's three million people are professing Christians, many observe their faith only out of habit or social pressure, according to the delegation. Both Catholics and Protestants are influenced by secularism. Neither group, in the judgment of MBM, perceive a biblical vision which relates to the practical problems of violence and alienation in Irish society.

Fifty people from 15 intentional communities attended a counseling seminar in Grand Rapids, Michigan, September 18-21. Three professionally trained counselors from England offered teaching and small group experience. The seminar's purpose was to train participants to bring the healing resources of God (including psychological tools) into people's lives.

October 8 was a good day for centennials. Two General Conference congregations—First Church in Newton, Kansas, and First Church in Mountain Lake, Minnesota—celebrated their 100th anniversaries that Sunday. The Newton congregation devoted the previous week to nightly historical highlights, and climaxed the reminiscences with weekend messages by Myron Augsburger. Both churches featured centennial choruses in their celebrations. Special speakers for the Mountain Lake church were former pastors. The Mountain Lake congregation is also publishing a history of their church.

Women in the church—east or west—is the theme common to conferences being held in Pennsylvania and British Columbia. From October 27-29 the Akron (Pennsylvania) Church will host a Persons in Ministry conference with speakers Willard Swartley, Arlene May, Ruth Brunk Stoltzfus, Dorothy Yoder Nyce, and Emma Richards. On November 18 Columbia Bible Institute in Clearbrook, British Columbia, will host a conference featuring Katie Funk Wiebe and David Ewert as speakers, to be followed by workshops. Inquiries may be directed to either of the hosting institutions.

Record

Workers

Christine Aab will serve as consultant in maternal-child health nursing and will assist in teaching at both the junior and senior levels at Bluffton (Ohio) College. She will also be involved in research activities pertinent to program evaluation. She received both her BS and MS in nursing from Ohio State University. Aab has conducted workshops on nursing and maternity care and has written for publication a chapter in a book on pediatric nursing.

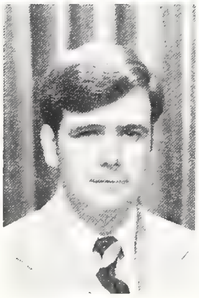
Susan and Harlin Balzar joined the staff at Swan Lake Christian Camp, Viborg, South Dakota, in August, having married in July. Both have attended Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart for the past two years. Susan, a native of Fayette, Ohio, graduated from Goshen College (Goshen, Indiana) with a degree in elementary education. She has spent time teaching in Indiana and also in Labrador, through MCC. Harlin, originally from Inman, Kansas, graduated from Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas) with an industrial arts major. He worked on custom harvesting crews before attending seminary. Harlin will work in maintenance while Susan is interested in programming.

William E. Dunn, Normal, Illinois, has been named executive vice president of the Mennonite Hospital Association. He will have primary responsibility for long-range planning and program development for the association, as well as for external communications with the community and federal and state agencies.

Nancy Durham will teach episodic nursing to senior nursing students at Bluffton (Ohio) College. Durham holds a BA in biology from Miami University (Oxford, Ohio) and an MS in medical-surgical nursing from the University of California, San Francisco. A registered nurse in Ohio, California, Massachusetts, and Missouri, she has written several articles on nursing care for publication.

Dunn

Rowley


Schlicksup

D. Williams

Ronald and Cynthia Krehbiel, Goessel, Kansas, left in July for a one-year assignment in Lesotho, Southern Africa. Ron has been granted a one-year sabbatical by the Alexanderwohl Church (Goessel) to work with the Maseru United Church.

Donald L. Pannabecker has been named Bluffton College provost, a newly created position. He will have overall responsibility for financial affairs of the college and will be in charge of new program planning and oversee institutional research. Pannabecker received an MDiv from McCormick Theological Seminary (Chicago) in 1961 and is completing a doctorate from the University of Toledo in higher education.

Paul Edwin Rowley, Peoria, Illinois, became a full-time pastoral counselor with the Mennonite Hospital Association on October 1. He will work part-time in a hospital chaplaincy role at Eureka (Illinois) Hospital. He will work with local ministers to provide pastoral services to parishoners and will work with the Eureka Hospital staff on behalf of the local ministry. Rowley is an ordained minister in the Lutheran Church and was an associate pastor at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in St. Louis, Missouri, from 1971 to 1974.

Edward J. Schlicksup, Normal, Illinois, has been named senior vice president and chief operating officer of Mennonite Hospital. Schlicksup will be responsible for the operation of the hospital and its major divisions of operations, finance, nursing, patient services, as well as the personnel function.

Mary Jo Steiner, Pandora, Ohio, has been appointed as a consultant in community and distributive nursing at Bluffton (Ohio) College. She will assist in classroom teaching and in clinical supervision. Steiner received her master's degree in public health (MPH) from the University of Michigan in 1967, completed graduate work in American city planning, rural sociology, health education, and administrative sciences at Ohio State University, and is currently studying for a doctorate in rural sociology at OSU.

Donna Williams, Arvada Church, Arvada, Colorado, began a two-year stint with Mennonite Voluntary Service August 1 as a day-care worker in Markham, Illinois. She is a 1978 high school graduate.

Nancy K. Williams, consultant for Mennonite Mental Health Services (MMHS) in the area of developmental disabilities since January 1976, has accepted a position on the faculty of Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania. She left MMHS at the end of August to begin her duties at Messiah.

Your Christmas list, that is.
As you add family members
to your giving list
save room for a brother or aunt
or nephew
or cousin in Christ.

MCC invites your family,
Sunday school, small group
and church to share
God's love
by choosing one or more
of these holiday projects.

Mark your contributions
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Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8

Are you putting us on?

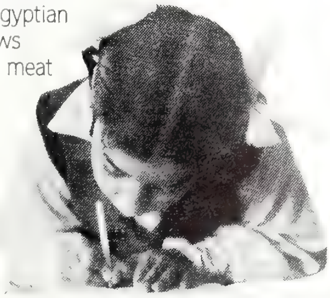
Sunday school kits are used by MCC school teachers in Nigeria, who train their students to teach Sunday school. $5 stuffs one kit with scissors, crayons, pencils and paper.

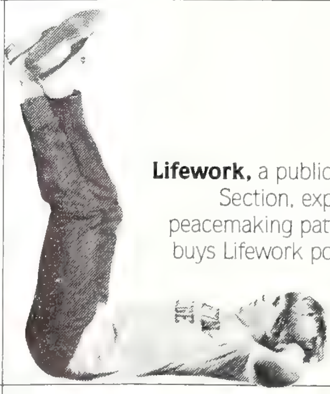
Umsiedler families, those emigrating from Russia to Germany, are met and befriended by an MCC family, the Doerksens. $416 supports the Doerksens for one month.

Mennonite Disaster Service crews are rebuilding and repairing homes for rural families, victims of North Carolina floods last November. $250 buys repair supplies for one home.

Toys, crafts and books are needed for gifts for children in the orphanage at Recife, Brazil. $3 buys a toy or book for one child.

A school lunch program provides balanced meals for undernourished Egyptian children. $10 allows MCC to ship flour, meat and milk for 232 school lunches.





Lifework, a publication of MCC
Section, explores contemp
peacemaking patterns for youth
buys Lifework posters for 100
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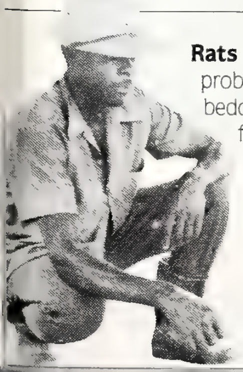

Rats are a major problem for Bebedo, Colombia, families. MENCOLDES, a Colombian Mennonite development agency, pays a bounty on rats killed. $6 will pay the bounty for 200 dead rats.

Sugarcane harvesters in Louisiana need a regular income to support their families. $75 a week supports an employment counselor.

Poor Indonesian children would attend school if they were able. Your $8 scholarship sends one child to school for one year.

Review

Sermons from East Europe

Here They Stand: Biblical Sermons from Eastern Europe, *Lewis A. Drummond, editor (Judson Press, 1978, 186 pages), is reviewed by John R. Friesen, pastor of the Home Street Mennonite Church, 318 Home Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 1X4.*

This unusual book contains 22 sermons from behind the iron curtain. They were all preached "above ground" and were chosen specifically to illustrate that Christianity in communist countries is not all "underground" and that preachers of the gospel can certainly be active in officially registered churches. My own experience in East Bloc countries over a period of 11 years confirms that.

A very helpful feature of the book is the biographical sketch provided for each of the contributors. It includes parental information, educational training, and vocational experience. All of the contributors are Baptists. The title does not convey that, nor does the subtitle, nor does the preface by the compiler. I would have expected other denominations to be included.

There is nothing "red" about any of the sermons. They are biblical, as the title states, and similar to sermons preached in our churches every Sunday.

This book may not interest many readers in our churches. Ministers will not find a wealth of material for their weekly preparations either. However, anyone who is interested in keeping abreast with the little religious material dealing with communist countries will find this compilation rewarding.

Evils are incompatible

Babylon Reform, *by Bob Larson (Creation House, Carol Stream, Illinois, 1976, 11 pages), is reviewed by Harold Peters, Route 1, Box 116, Newton, Kansas 67114.*

In his prologue Larson has Satan scheming to take over the world. Satan is planning to unite many false religions.

In the main part of his book Larson tells of visits to Mexico, Guatemala, and the West Indies. In one place he prays for a woman and watches demons come our of her body. Larson comforts the woman with assurances that God is able to keep her from evil. In another place he watches a man trying to tell the fortune of a girl. Larson rebukes this act of divination and prays that the practitioner be frustrated in his art. But most of the time he just observes. He says his purpose is to gain information so that others may be warned of Satan's devices.

At one time he imagines himself as a modern Gideon. He pictures himself as taking an axe and smashing an idol for the Lord. But then he wonders about the idols in so-called Christian America—secularism, materialism, lust, and pleasure. Will he be able to smash those idols?

For some reason he does not mention militarism. Doesn't he know that militarism is an idol?

In his epilogue Larson again has Satan scheming with his demonic cohorts. Soon, Satan says, we will have East and West worshiping at a common altar; then Babylon will be reborn.

But the forces of evil do not unite as Larson thinks they will. Evil is divisive. Abuse of drugs is an evil. So is materialism. But if you want to get rich, you had better not give your life to drugs. Militarism is an evil. But the militarism of fascism matches itself up against the militarism of communism.

One of the ways in which the grace of God operates in the world is that God permits the forces of evil to oppose each other. The forces of evil cause much suffering to godly people. But the suffering inflicted by the forces of evil on godly people would be much worse if it were not for the fact that God permits the forces of evil to dissipate some of their energies on each other.

Beside my Bible

Mary F. Heisey

Wholeness and unity

Plans for healing and growth are outlined in this week's trio of books beside my Bible. As we experience the transforming power of the cross we unfold and stretch and change. Healthy in the Lord, we bring the comfort of Christ to our ulcerated world. Then true oneness becomes possible.

Healing Life's Sore Spots, *by Frank A. Kostyu (Hawthorn Books, New York, 1976, 156 pages).*

Pain is a password these days. It seems as though everybody is hurting somewhere. How 'bout you?

Painfully aware that most of us don't heal very well in the wintertime, I recommend you put a copy of this book in your medicine cabinet. Try taking a spoonful of its wisdom whenever you ache all over with loneliness, unhappiness, anger, indecision, fear, noncommunication, guilt, anxiety, regret, stress, ingratitude, panic, or grief.

And pray. "Prayer is God affirming life."

The Transforming Cross, *by Charles S. McCoy & Marjorie Casebier McCoy (Abingdon, Nashville, Tennessee, 1977, 111 pages).*

So often we get so caught up in the agony and mystery of the cross that we fail to feel its transforming power. We leave Christ there and run to his empty tomb to find our faith. We want a painless happy ending.

These beautiful and useful meditations on Christ's seven last words from the cross are worth studying during Lent or any time of year. They offer sincere and careful reflection on the story of Jesus Christ as present event. As we penetrate the power they proclaim, the faithful action of the cross will pervade our worship and work.

All in God's Family, *by Fred W. Swartz (The Brethren Press, Elgin, Illinois, 1977, 144 pages).*

Like a lot of things in life and church, ecumenism is something we don't all see eye to eye on. "We'd do well if we could just unify our own church a little," notes the author.

Pastor Swartz understands how difficult it is to fulfill God's dream of a family reunion. Examining history and perceiving trends, he gives practical advice for achieving Christianity.

Excellent for individual and congregational study and witness. After all, isn't the church supposed to be for everybody?

Missionaries' children

Bob Morris

Why do missionaries leave the field? We have the feeling that a high proportion of the reasons for departures, temporary and permanent, is related to the children of missionaries.

Bruce Lockerbie has referred to the education of missionaries' children as "the neglected dimension of world mission." We could extend that description and say that the *children themselves* are often the neglected dimension of world mission.

Sometimes the neglect is seen in the prayers of the people who support missions most sincerely and enthusiastically. Little do they realize the extent to which decisions regarding mission leadership, finances, new assignments, furlough schedules, the viability of new programs, and even the effectiveness of outreach are determined by the children of the missionaries. For those on the field, children often constitute the primary consideration in understanding God's will for their lives.

By praying effectively for missionaries' children we are praying for the entire missionary enterprise. But how to pray? Of course, there is no substitute for praying for individual people and their current needs. But failing adequate information to do that, there are many aspects of life which "mish" kids share in common and on which we can concentrate our prayers. Herewith, then, is a primer of prayer for missionaries' children.

1. **Safety in travel.** Children going to and from school often log more miles than their parents.
2. **Good health.** Adults who can suffer through a great deal of personal pain are often totally demoralized by sickness in their children.
3. **Love for their adopted country; love for their home country.** Otherwise they either have constant tension on the mission field or they have difficulties returning home for secondary or post-secondary education.
4. **Ability to write and read letters.** Family relationships depend on letters much of the time. Both parents and children have to acquire an ability to write and read "love between the lines."
5. **Security.** Some of the ways children find security are in a stable home situation, in the company of parents, and in the various routines of life. "Mish" kids often live in boarding schools with fast-changing personnel and need to find their security beyond the normal patterns of living.
6. **Identification with God's purposes.** Growing up in a missionary family makes it hard to exercise a faith of their own apart from their parents and apart from the religious demands of boarding institutions. And beyond the need for a personally exercised faith is the need to appreciate and be a part of the missionary vocation of the parents in order to avoid the feelings of abuse and neglect which "mish" kids so often experience.
7. **Ability to make and break relationships easily.** More than most people "mish" kids have to meet people for short periods of time and then never see them again. Yet some of these relationships must be intense if their psychological and emotional needs are to be met. Some children respond to the dilemma by withdrawing from social interaction while others relate to people indiscriminately.
8. **Adults to complement absent parents.** Missionaries' children need adult Christians from whom they can learn spiritual values, to whose authority they can willingly assent, and with whom they can share personally all their joys and sorrows. In some cases they need families in home countries who can assume the role of their parents.
9. **Ability to maximize every moment.** Because so many events and relationships are transient, learning and relating have to be efficient. Whether it is the short time spent each holiday period with parents or exposure to a new culture, they need exceptional abilities to observe, learn, and enjoy.
10. **Schools which meet their needs.** Quite apart from all the extracurricular dimensions of schooling, parents have to have the confidence that they are not penalizing their children academically by remaining on the mission field.

This is just a beginning, but hopefully some of God's people will assume the special burden of praying for the forgotten people in the mission task.

Linda and Ed Enns, and their children (from left) Tricia, Keith, and Michael have served in Colombia with the Commission on Overseas Mission since 1976.

Letters

Leads to deep reflection

Dear Editor: Lorne R. Buhr's "A Nuclear Refinery in Your Town?" (September 5 issue) is superb. The technical data and the spiritual questions are brought together in a manner which leads to deep reflection for me. To you, and to Lorne, my deep appreciation. *Ladon Sheats, 1933 Park, Baltimore, Maryland 21217* September 21

Christians must help

Dear Editor: We have been pleased to see the several recent articles in *The Mennonite* about homosexuality. This is an issue which we feel the church must recognize and discuss. We strongly support your efforts in publishing articles which will get people to think about and study homosexuality. We must learn how to help each other deal with the fear and anger which seem to be the initial reactions of most Mennonites.

It is interesting and sad to note that many of the negative letters recognize the gay community's fear of rejection and challenge those fears while rejecting them at the same time. Another observation is the literal reading of certain biblical passages without being consistent in literal interpretations of other texts. John McNeill's book *The Church and the Homosexual,* published by Sheed Andrews and McMeel, is a thorough study of the biblical statements about homosexuality. Christians should read it before making public (or private) pronouncements regarding homosexuality and the Bible. *Ruth E. H. and Jay W. Martin, 1001 Oak Ridge Avenue, State College, Pennsylvania 16801* September 26

The Bible and other sins

Dear Editor: I am upset by the torrent of outraged letters concerning homosexuality. If such outrage and indignant reaction could be focused on sins which the Bible mentions far more often than homosexuality, such as pride, envy, and love of money (which is at the root of all evil), the church might see an unprecedented purification. But we prefer to speak out only on sins of which we don't feel guilty. Homosexuality offers a perfect issue for self-righteous condemnation.

I suggest, however, to those who so proudly flourish the biblical correctness of their views, to go to the same source and see what the Bible tells us about jealousy, turning the other cheek, riches, greed, brotherhood, and sisterhood. Then take the biblical admonitions about these sins and scrutinize your lives, and those of friends and church members, as scathingly as you did those of homosexuals you didn't even know personally. I suspect the results of such an honest scrutiny might make the storm over homosexuality seem a little misguided in terms of attacking the real problems of the church. *Tim E. Schrag, 55.515 Amaragi, Pernambuco, Brazil* September 26

The letters dilemma

Some people are criticizing us for not responding, on this page, to the letters when we print them. I would like to respond to letters but have not yet found a good way to do it.

I believe deeply in the "priesthood of all believers." All of us are precious in God's sight and have a responsibility to the spiritual family. When a reader writes, I believe it is because that person feels compelled by the Holy Spirit (as that person best understands God's Spirit).

My initial reaction to some letters is that the writer is mistaken. But if I say that, is that a Christian response to my fellow believer? Should not my response be, together with you, to try and find out what the brothers and sisters are trying to teach us?

That is why we include full addresses to letters. We hope that our spiritual family cares enough for each other to hear one another and to admonish each other.

Rather than taking editorial privilege to get in the last word on this page, I try to get my word in on the editorial page and in other articles. I also write some personal responses.

To date, my conscience tells me that this has to be your page where you can speak to the editors and to each other.

Ideally, I would like this page to be one where writers could speak openly and we could feel free to respond in a Christlike spirit. At this point I feel that my responses to letters might prevent some of you from writing.

Am I wrong? Do you believe that we should feel free to respond to letters on this page? Can you help us by suggesting a format for better dialogue?

Bernie Wiebe, editor

95 theses on the church

Continued from page 611

84. If its activities and worship only point towards and focus upon Sunday morning preaching, a congregation does not reflect the church as the *People of God.*
85. Sanctuary plans which emphasize the meeting of God's people—for example, circular seating arrangements allowing for eye contact between worship participants with the speaker's location near and at the level of the congregation—reflect the Anabaptist-Mennonite understanding of the church as the *People of God.*
86. Sanctuary layouts which focus attention on the location of the minister and preaching—for example, plans having straight benches, with a center aisle leading to a raised pulpit—do not reflect the Anabaptist-Mennonite understanding of the church as the *People of God.*

Anabaptists and Others

87. Churches outside the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition are part of the worldwide *People of God.*
88. It is the duty and privilege of the Mennonite church to engage other traditions in dialogue over points of disagreement.
89. It is the function of the *People of God* to clarify differences and commonalities among different traditions.

Churchly limitations

90. Limitations on human knowledge render impossible any *absolute* decisions or statements concerning theology and the nature of discipleship.
91. Limitations on human knowledge make it necessary continally to discuss theology and the meaning of discipleship.
92. Because of limits to our reasoning, we can never hope to understand exactly the will of God for the ethical activity of his church, nor to have absolute theological formulations.
93. The church should never pretend to make ethical decisions absolutely, since she is only an approximation of the kingdom of God.
94. Since the church is the only way that the kingdom of God is visible, even if imperfectly, she must continually evaluate her ethical decisions to make them conform to her current understanding of the kingdom and state such decisions publicly in response to evil forces at work in the world.

Conclusion

95. The uniqueness of the Mennonite tradition lies in our concept of the church.

Now let the discussion and debate begin.

Meditation

Someone hurled a brick

Someone hurled a brick through the stained glass window at First Mennonite Church, Allentown, Pennsylvania. Though I knew I had no way to deliver it, I needed to write a letter to that person. Here it is.

Dear Person: Last Sunday morning, August 27, I sat and worshiped under the window that you broke. Somehow that broken window sent a stronger message to me than anything else that went on in church. You smashed the center of the figure of Jesus in the window. Since the window is large, and the figure of Jesus is high on the window, I believe that you aimed the brick to hit where it did.

I feel that you must be an angry person, angry with Jesus, angry with people, and most likely angry with yourself. I feel that you are a person who has never been loved. By love, I mean the kind of love that I have experienced from Jesus, the love that accepts me just as I am today with all my faults, and yet wants me to become all that he planned for me to be.

It doesn't seem possible that you live in or near Allentown and have never met anyone who claims to be a Christian, a follower of this loving Jesus. Most of us who know Jesus have met him because one or more of his followers showed his love to us through their own lives. Are you angry with Jesus because you have met people who said they were Christians, yet you didn't feel that kind of love from them? Did you perhaps meet ugly Christians who rejected you or judged you or condemned you?

Since the brick was thrown through a window at First Mennonite, I need to entertain the possibility that perhaps the ugly Christian you met, the person who made you angry with Jesus, was sitting with me in church last Sunday. Perhaps it was I.

I have been associated with that church for more than 50 years. I am aware that many times during those years I have failed to show that loving, accepting Jesus to people I've met. Sometimes I have been an ugly Christian. Often I have had opportunity to reach out and help a hurting person but have failed to do it because I was indifferent, too busy, too self-centered. Were you one of those hurting persons whom I failed?

I and others at First Mennonite are praying for you. Sometime soon I hope you meet someone who will let the love of Jesus flow through him to you. I pray that you will allow that love to begin to heal all the anger and hurt that is inside you.

The stained-glass window that you smashed portrays Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Jesus said that a good shepherd with 99 safe, secure sheep will go out looking for the one which strayed away and got lost. Jesus is looking for you; you are someone he loves.

Grace Moyer Frounfelker

Concealing our conduct

A woman who did not have a good reputation visited an acquaintance on vacation and stole 20 dollars from a purse lying on the kitchen table. The acquaintance decided to confront the lady. A letter consisting of one line said, "I hope you are enjoying what you took." It was mailed without a signature.

The following week my acquaintance received $20 in the mail and a letter of apology. The thief added, "Don't write me again concerning this. I don't want my husband to find out I stole the money."

The Bible says all hidden things of darkness will one day come to light. No matter how hard a person tries to ignore 1 Corinthians 4:5 and to conceal one's actions, they will come out.

A warning posted on the automatic door at the grocery store reads, "Caution, this door may shut on you as you go out." The first time I walked through the door and saw the warning, I stepped through it cautiously and the door remained open. The sign has remained on the door so long that I have become a bit careless as I step through the door. Ignoring the warning on the door won't prevent it from slamming in my face if I become too careless.

Donna Lehman

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CONTRIBUTORS

J. Denny Weaver is associate professor of religion at Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio 45817. He is a member of the First Mennonite Church at Bluffton.

Rosa Stone is associate professor of psychology at Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana 46526.

Mary F. Heisey, 56 East Street, York, Pennsylvania 17403, continues alerting us to helpful books for our reading.

The article "Missionaries' Children" is by Bob Morris, Pakistan regional superintendent for the Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship, reprinted from a recent issue of BMMF's *GO* magazine, with permission. Their Canadian office is at 4028 Sheppard Avenue East, Agincourt, Ontario M1S 1S6.

This week's meditation writers are Grace Moyer Frounfelker, 82 Sitgreaves Street, Phillipsburg, New Jersey 08865; and Donna Lehman, 3213 Ponema Court, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46815.

Katie Funk Wiebe, Hillsboro, Kansas 67063, is a frequent writer for Mennonite periodicals.

CREDITS

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The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

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Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman.

Flying high

Katie Funk Wiebe

Recently two men flew across the Atlantic Ocean in a balloon. They were risking their lives, and they knew it. Others had died in the attempt. But for these two this task needed to be done—and they did it.

While preparing to teach a fall class in Mennonite literature I reread parts of our church history. Again and again I came upon stories of those who accepted the challenge of a specific task. Money or fame were not their incentives. They struck out alone because they saw the responsibility as one placed on them by God.

The founders of the Mennonite church can be considered one such group. According to historian J. C. Wenger, the Mennonite church was the first believers' free church (meaning not part of a state-church system) of modern church history. These believers led at the cost of many lives; others followed. We have benefited.

According to some scholars, the first protest against slavery in America—the first known in history—was made by some Pennsylvania Mennonites who had converted to Quakerism, on February 18, 1688, nearly 200 years before slavery was abolished in the United States. Their voice was small, but it was a voice for righteousness.

In 1738 the first German printing and publishing concern on this continent was established by Christopher Sauer in Germantown, Pennsylvania. Sauer was a Dunkard in close contact with the Mennonites. He also set himself a task not demanded by his normal responsibilities.

No person in the British colonies had the right to print Bibles at that time. Despite much criticism the Sauer press published the first German Bible in America in 1743 (1200 copies) at the risk of prosecution. As the result of his bold action German-speaking religious groups of the area, including Mennonites, received Bibles.

We are hearing of firsts in other areas today. Mennonites are moving into politics and professions like law. A recent edition of *Mennonite Weekly Review* cited Macler Shephard, a black Mennonite from St. Louis, as serving on President Carter's National Commission on Neighborhoods.

More Mennonites are finding themselves at home in the fine arts—although the Mennonite renaissance some hope for seems slow in coming, except in music. Mennonite identity, Christian truth, and the arts do not as yet have a close affinity among us.

In our secularized society some areas need to be penetrated with a witness for the gospel. Yet how does an individual Christian recognize what needs to be done for this generation? More specifically, what can or should one person do?

We speak of ourselves as a people with a mission. We are reconcilers between God and humankind and among persons. Yet theologian John Howard Yoder said to a Conciliation Assembly last spring at Park City, Kansas, that Mennonites today have "no special successes to show as members of the white majority, social political establishment." He said we react on race issues and on economic justice issues "along with the mainstream of white established America." We tend to blend in well—not stick out because of our beliefs.

Yoder also said that Mennonites have few successes in handling conflict on the local congregational level, in developing leaders, and in problem-solving. In other words, we, who see ourselves as peacemakers, find it hard to make peace among ourselves when conflict arises.

These are some areas which need persons willing to risk balloon flying. There are many others. For many persons, these past months have been highlighted by conferences, seminars, and workshops, culminating in the Mennonite World Conference. I have heard persons speak of "mountain-top experiences," of new awareness of spiritual truths.

No matter how beautiful these experiences may have been, they remain empty unless worked out in practical life. New light is always a call to new action—to get into that balloon and fly. That is also the ongoing essence of the Reformation.

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:39 OCTOBER 31, 1978

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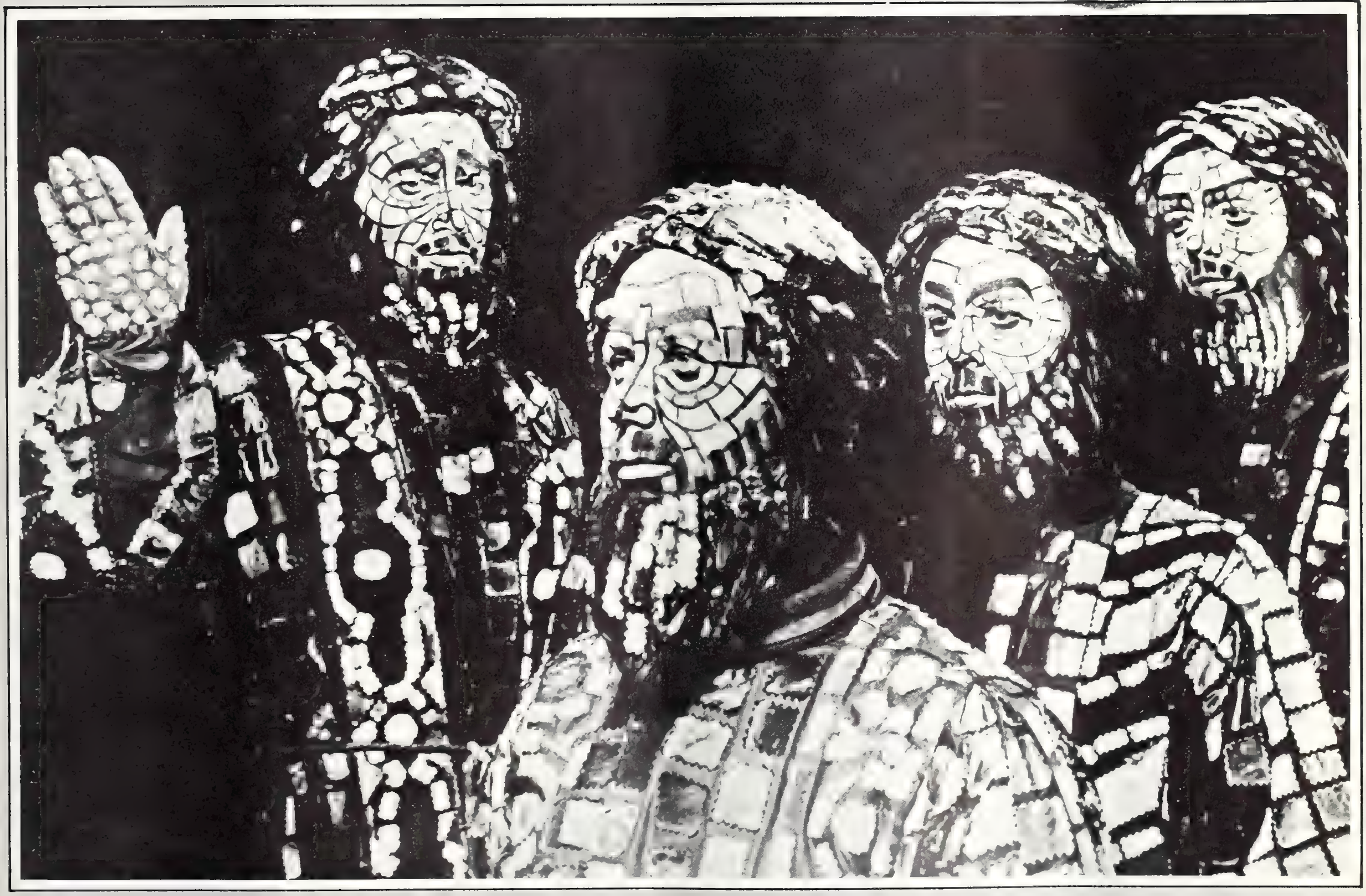

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
- Material and spiritual values
- Paintings signed with a cross
- Abortion and responsibility
- People and programs

Material and spiritual values

The core proble
important than c

Enid Poole

Daisy and David, and Joan and John, are two young couples who graduated from college together and a few years later were married during the same summer. Each paid a down payment on a home and furnished it with a bank loan.

Daisy and David bought only basic needs before deciding that they'd used up all the credit they could handle. Their home was completed with end tables and bookshelves that David had made at woodworking class and with embroidered wall hangings and cushions that Daisy loved to make on winter evenings.

Joan and John felt that on John's salary they could fill their home with expensive furnishings and take a honeymoon trip in a new car. "John's salary," Joan told Daisy, "is adequate for us to meet all the payments." Neither of them realized at the time that their two men earned equal salaries.

We can easily discern which couple was on the right track when we look in on them a few years later. Daisy and David had added new purchases to their home one at a time; they now had the two children they wanted and a happy and meaningful marriage. John and Joan, unfortunately, were talking of divorce; they were beset by money problems, regrets, arguments, and recriminations; in their home there seemed little room left for love.

The difference between these two couples was in their attitudes on what makes for true value in a marriage. Daisy and David put the emphasis on spiritual values, on the home they were creating together, no matter how humble; their family; and the handcrafted treasures into which many hours of love and hope and service had been woven. Moneyed treasures were of less consequence.

Joan and John, however, didn't feel that their home was complete until they had amassed within its walls those "treasures on earth" which the Bible condemns. These, and these alone were the basis on which they built their home and their lives together. Spiritual values were unknown to these two unfortunate young people.

Flagrant materialism, exhibited constantly before the unsuspecting eyes of our younger generation, has overturned the old order where marriages were made in heaven; today they are made in the credit and loan company offices.

at we have created a materialistic world where our social status is more
asic spiritual worth.

The Bible urges us, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consume and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will be your heart also" (Matthew 6:19-21).

There are many young couples in Joan and John's situation. The core problem is that we have created a materialistic world where our social status is more important than our basic spiritual worth.

A generation ago the family that owned a boat and motor, a second car, and a summer cottage was the professional family, the successful businessman and others in a similar salary bracket; the rest worked and saved for years to own even one such luxury. Today we want *all* of these things *now;* we tell ourselves we owe it to our children and we feel that we ought to be able to afford the same as our neighbors. In many cases we'll sell our soul to either "keep up with" or to "pass the Joneses."

What can the church do about this situation, this mania for worldly acquisitions? Has it even the right to get involved?

This flagrant materialism, exhibited constantly before the unsuspecting eyes of our younger generation, has overturned the old order where marriages were made in heaven; today they are made in the credit and loan company offices. Spiritual unity is taking a second place to materialism, creating a social and spiritual crisis in which the church *must* get involved.

The teachings of the Bible must be put before the people in such a way that they connect with and apply to our daily lives and individual situations.

We are all familiar with the situation where we may sit in church listening to a sermon on the evils of drinking, knowing full well to which "other" citizens it could be directed. Or we discuss the need for regular family worship, knowing that many members come to church only for special occasions; "they" don't know what they're missing in their lives.

Now it's *our* turn. We may find ourselves squirming in our pews when we are reminded that "What is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15). Our worldly treasures are worthless unless we seek first the value of spiritual affiliations. The Bible must become a personal doctrine to help us keep an acceptable social and theological balance in our lives. The church must help us, through Bible study, to change our attitudes to materialism (*things* can be good and blessed when Jesus is the foundation in our lives); and to improve our moral and mental well-being.

Is there any hope, then, for couples already in a situation similar to that of Joan and John? Yes, there is. Daisy was able to persuade Joan to cancel her scheduled meeting with a divorce lawyer, and to make appointments instead with Daisy's bank manager and with their minister. She received much-needed financial counseling from the one, and spiritual guidance from the other. By finally linking these two important aspects of marriage Joan and John pulled their marriage together again and are working hard to make it work.

They are learning a lesson on Christian values that we would all do well to keep in mind. They—and we—will be happier if we do. □

HIGH RISK

Louise Dueck

loneliness
like poison gas
infiltrates
the deluxe highrise
as well as
the ghetto;
the teeming city
as well as
the isolated
prairie farmstead

lonely people
everywhere
frantically searching
for someone
to be warm with

personal columns
abound
with pleas for
"companionship,
object matrimony"

"woman in 60s,
good health
still believes
life
could be enchanting,
would like to meet
gentleman
who likes home life
and happiness
every day"

single, widowed,
young, old alike
share high risk
of our society:
loneliness

mobile
mechanized
professionalized
denizens of
loneliness

DOOMSDAY RUN
SPOKANE JAYCEES

Paintings signed with a cross

Elma and Willard Waltner

Stan Miller vividly remembers, as though it were yesterday, the art period when his third grade teacher introduced the class to the elements of perspective; the type of art that goes into the drawing of a building.

"She drew the lines that all converged to a point and showed us how you could draw a box and make it really look like a box. Instead of just one flat side, you could draw three sides and make it look three-dimensional. I remember the excitement I had in learning that. I always found a certain joy in drawing buildings, little houses, and stuff like that. I liked to draw street scenes with big tall buildings in the foreground that would just taper off and get small in the distance."

At 28 and an established artist in Spokane, Washington, Stan is still drawing buildings—weathered old ones in which the warped clapboards, the peeling paint and sagging porches look so real that you feel drawn to enter the sagging screen door and

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◀ *"Annie," is one of the character studies which Stan painted from pictures he had taken of his "adopted" grandma.*

go in search of the ghosts of the past which must surely live there.

This young man was born in Turner County, South Dakota, and there he spent his early years on a farm. Those early impressions are at least in part responsible for his preference of subjects for painting.

Through grade and high school Stan took art courses and enjoyed drawing as a hobby but never thought of it as a career possibility. It was while attending Spokane Falls Community College, where a commercial art program was offered, that he began considering it as a possible career. After completing two years of the three-year commercial art program, Stan accepted a two-year alternative service position with Mennonite Central Committee as their commercial artist at Akron, Pennsylvania. Then he returned to Spokane to complete his studies.

"The summer after finishing the course I floated around," he says. "I did considerable free-lance commercial art work in the territory and painted whenever I had spare time. By this time my interest in painting pictures was beginning to outstrip the commercial art, so I stalled about committing myself to any organization for commercial work. By fall I had sold a few paintings and a Spokane gallery was stocking my work.

"Hence, making my living painting pictures began to look like a very real possibility," Stan says. "It was such a free, enjoyable life, being able to express myself through painting—working where and when I wanted to—it seemed so attractive that I felt I had to stick with it and keep trying. I did less and less commercial work and more and more painting. Various art shows and galleries helped promote my work."

Water color is Stan's primary medium, especially during the summer when he likes to do most of his painting "on location."

"I find a subject I like and sit right down and paint. I sketch in the outline first, then do the painting. I usually try to finish in one session, though sometimes I may return a second time. When working on location I don't put in as much detail. I do the larger, more detailed pictures in my studio during the winter time. Then I sometimes work in egg-tempera, oils, or acrylics."

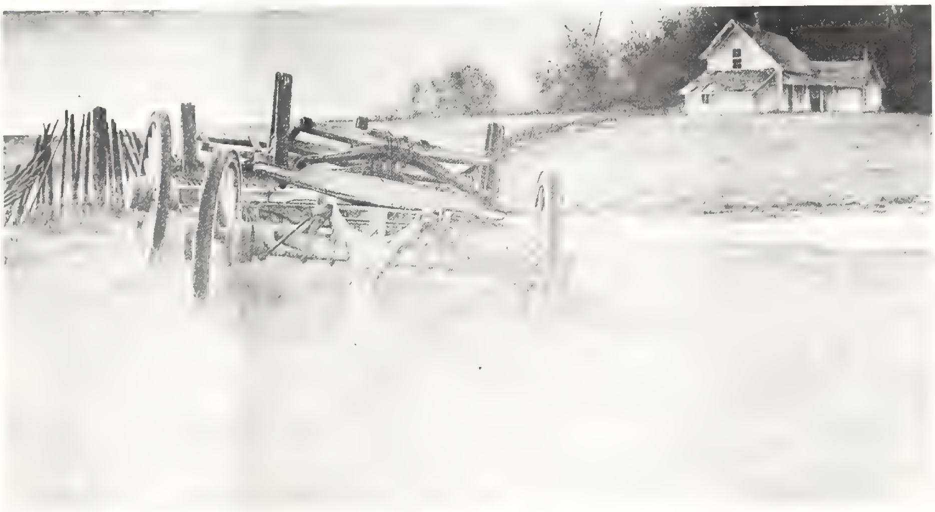
Stan's work is so realistic that he has been accused of "touching up" photographs. He says he believes this quality is the result of striving to paint the scene "exactly as I see it," to capture "the warmth of a spring breeze weaving its way through the rolling waves of meadow grasses or the haze of the afternoon sun bouncing its rays off the weathered, hay-covered bed of an abandoned wagon."

It is Stan's belief that "every artist should first learn to draw things the way they look. You need to be able to draw something accurately. If it is a face it should be drawn the way it looks. If it's a barn or flowers, a tree or whatever, you need to draw it the way it is right there. Once you are able to do that, if you want to paint abstract or throw colors all over, fine. In my art classes I teach that every person should first learn to paint correctly, after that you can adopt whatever technique you please."

He does only one painting of a particular scene or setting, so people who buy a Stan Miller painting have a one-of-a-kind that will not be duplicated. He rarely does commissions.

He is competent in portraying scenes, objects, animals, people—but actually has not done many people paintings.

"Objects are very convenient," he says. "You need not ask whether they will pose for you. You can paint them any time; just go outside and sit and paint. I like to paint outdoors. With people you must usually paint from slides. If you want people to pose for you, it is often an inconvenience for them because it takes a lot of time. However, I am beginning to paint more portraits. One of my neighbors has a four-year-old boy whom I really enjoy. I have taken many pictures of him with the idea of using them for painting."



Old wagons are the most popular subjects among Stan Miller's paintings, closely followed by old buildings. This painting, 26" x 48" is the largest size he does.

While Stan was in Pennsylvania he became acquainted with an elderly lady who became his "adopted grandma." He took candid pictures of her as she went about her daily tasks. These were the basis for several charming character studies.

Every Stan Miller painting is signed with his name followed by a cross symbol. Most people think this is just an extra identifying mark, but those who inquire learn it is a symbol of faith. "I believe all persons should use their God-given talents to the best of their ability," he says. Painting is his talent and for this, "I give thanks to God and faith in him continues to support me." ☐

News

Pilot program on mission interpretation gets good vibes

Change has been the key word in overseas mission during the past decade.

In an effort to communicate what these changes have been and what they now mean for the church, the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference sent a team of interpreters to visit churches in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois from September 13-28. The effort was dubbed "Interpretation '78."

The Indian Valley Mennonite Church in Harleysville, Pennsylvania, hosted a regional meeting which attracted about 45 leadership persons from a dozen churches in the area. John Sprunger, pastor of Indian Valley, said during a telephone interview that the meeting had two values for him. "It gives me a feel," he reflected, "of the struggles and visions which our overseas commission members and staff have. Further, I appreciated the enthusiasm for mission, and the commitment of Jesus Christ which the team expressed.

COM staff members on the team were Tina Block Ediger, director of mission services; John Sommer, overseas personnel secretary; and Hugh Sprunger, Taiwan missionary on North American assignment. These staff persons were assisted at three of the regional meetings by Al Bauman, and at the other regional meeting by Loretta Fast, both of whom are commission members. Traveling by car from Newton, Kansas, the staff persons conducted workshops in the Indian Valley church, at Salem Mennonite Church in Kidron, Ohio; First Mennonite Church in Bluffton, Ohio, and at the Mennonite Church of Normal in Illinois. In addition to these day-long sessions they spoke at church services and visited Bluffton College and the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.

In attendance at the regional seminars were pastors, deacons, Sunday school superintendents, Women in Mission leaders, and youth sponsors. Attendance varied from 20 to 50 persons representing about 10 area churches.

During the seminars the team presented 10 to 15 minute talks which were followed immediately by question and answer periods.

Among the topics were changing missionary roles, mission education, the role of women and singles in missionary work, the call and placement of missionaries, COM philosophy, mission vocabulary and symbols, governments and missionaries, and inter-Mennonite cooperation in missions. This agenda, squeezed into a morning and an afternoon, was generally faulted by the participants for being too much to grasp. One person's evaluation form said, "I'm glad it didn't go into the evening."

James Waltner, pastor of the church in Normal, Illinois, said during a telephone interview that Interpretation '78 had given participants a new awareness of how inflation affects the cost of missions. "If we want missions to continue we will have to dig deeper," he commented. Waltner also said he especially appreciated the talk by Tina Block Ediger on the role of women and single people in mission work.

In her talk Tina addressed not only the question of what it means to be a missionary, but also what it means to be a married female missionary, and a single female or male missionary.

"One of the main changes in missions during the past decade," says John Sommer, "is that 10 to 15 years ago COM was exclusively a sending agency. Today, although we still take some initiatives, we more frequently respond to the initiatives and invitations of national churches and agencies." There has been a shift since the turn of the century from dominance to partnership to servanthood in relationships with national churches.

In their evaluations of the seminars participants said they appreciated learning about the behind the scenes processing of missionaries, the parallels between world mission and urban mission, mission vocabulary such as liberation theology and contextualization, inter-Mennonite mission activity, the reasons for good missionary education, and the opportunity to become acquainted with COM staff. Some weaknesses were also pointed out, such as too much talk in sociological and theological terms, and not enough sharing of personal experiences in missionary work, nor enough variety in the format.

Interpretation '78 was a pilot project of COM. Evaluations of the seminar encouraged COM to do similar ventures in the future. Currently two of these are being planned for the spring of 1979 for other parts of the General Conference constituency. *Vic Reimer*

Skeptical tour guide sees the other side

When the two Mennonite Bible colleges in Winnipeg began to consider a joint summer course and tour in Europe a year ago, I was skeptical.

Is it our calling to enter the tourist business?

Now, after five weeks abroad this last summer with a study group of 27 participants, I am completely convinced of the personal, educational, and Christian value of such a venture.

We spent the first three weeks at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Rueschlikon, Switzerland, just outside of Zurich. Instead of rushing from one tourist attraction to another we came to know at least some of Swiss daily life, both in the small town of Rueschlikon and in metropolitan Zurich. Regular morning devotions, followed by Abe Dueck's lectures on Anabaptist origins, gave some routine to our days.

The routine was broken by a number of field trips. Some of these related to the Anabaptist origins course and took us to Anabaptist landmarks near Zurich—the Bienenberg, the Emmental, and the Anabaptist cave near Baeretswil. I attempted to introduce our group to Schiller's drama *Wilhelm Tell,* followed by attendance of the grand performance of the Tell-drama in the outdoor theatre at Interlaken.

Then we turned tourists for two weeks. Our chartered bus took us south to Rome and north again to Austria and Germany.

The mind requires months to sort out the myriad of hastily gathered impressions.

Should one feast on the peaceful Alpine scenes of Switzerland, or become depressed over the ever-present military installations of this uniquely armed neutral state? Will the soul be lifted up high by a walk through the Uffici Galleries in Florence? Or will a sense of decline take over as one observes the sinking palaces of Venice and the scarcity of children on the streets of Zurich or Munich?

One thing is certain: Whoever is exposed to so many monuments to man's glory and depravity must ask with a new urgency what it is that is worth achieving. This leads to a new appreciation of the way revealed by the Creator and Redeemer. When this happens, a tour like ours can transcend the turmoil of the tourist trade and become a profound experience. *Waldemar Janzen*

Peacemaking is a journey inward and outward

Green Lake, Wisconsin—At the end of the four-day national New Call to Peacemaking conference delegates urged all Friends (Quakers), Mennonites, and Brethren to firmly oppose militarism and to become personally involved in the struggle for justice for the oppressed.

Included in the final paper approved Sunday October 8 is a call to the 400,000 members of the three peace church traditions "to seriously consider refusal to pay the military portion of their federal taxes as a response to Christ's call to radical discipleship." This statement is as strong as the 300 delegates could jointly affirm.

Other parts of the war tax statement are equally muted. In the first draft of the paper, church and conference agencies were asked to "honor" the requests of employees who do not want the military portion of their taxes remitted to the government. In the final draft, however, "honor" is changed to "enter into dialogue with." Several evangelical Quakers were especially antagonistic to even including a reference to war tax resistance in the final document. Yet tax resistance received new encouragement from the conference. About 60 persons attended a Saturday afternoon workshop which detailed tax resistance strategies.

Overall the six-page document has two main emphases—actions that are directed inward among the peace churches to enhance the credibility of the peace witness, and actions that are directed outward to enlarge the visibility of the peace witness.

At the local level this would mean a comprehensive program of peace education, ecumenical and public dialogue on peace issues, evangelism which includes peacemaking as an integral part of the gospel, support groups for those who want to engage in nonviolent action, mediation teams to assist in conflict situations, and adoption of lifestyles which enhance personal relationships and minimize consumption.

To confront militarism the paper urges peacemakers to use the SALT II treaties as an opportunity for witness on disarmament, asks the US Government to halt its sale of arms and production of nuclear weapons, and requests a reduction of 10 percent in military spending next year. Delegates called for a transfer of taxes from the military budget to programs meeting human needs. Continued support for the World Peace Tax Fund was advised. Concern over possible reinstatement of national registration and increasing pressure by the military for ROTC programs caused the delegates to call for opposition and for peace registration of youth.

The delegates want New Call to Peacemaking to continue as a means to cooperation among the peace churches, and for maintaining momentum. It was felt that this could be done without creating a new corporate body by forming a steering committee from the various denominations.

Another recommendation is to send a delegation to President Jimmy Carter as soon as possible "to lay before the President our concerns about military spending, nuclear weapons, arms sales, and related matters." The conference recognized Carter as a "fellow Christian," although during one plenary session a delegate questioned this description.

The three church traditions stated that their concern for peace and justice is grounded in Christian teaching. "Because our security is in Jesus Christ, we reject reliance on 'national security,' " the group said in its statement. *Vic Reimer*

BOOKS·the gifts that keep on giving

Full Circle: Stories of Mennonite Women **Mary Lou Cummings, editor**

"I never thought much about what a 'woman' should do. My main concern was to know what God wanted me to do, and I knew he would help me to do it," says Dr. Ella Garber Bauman. Through the simplicity of these words, a great power is unleashed. This power, this focus, is an unspoken theme in many of these biographies. These women were focused on God's will and this set them free to be themselves.

ISBN 0-87303-014-1 * Paper * 214 pages * 1978 .... $5.25
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Toward Understanding the Bible **Perry Yoder**

This study is intended as an introduction to hermeneutics for the lay person. In a chapter titled "Games People Play With the Bible," the author describes some of the approaches to the Bible that are common among lay people. He then shows how the correct meaning of the text can be found only by taking the author and his context seriously. The book treats crucial issues in biblical interpretation in a nontechnical way.

Perry Yoder graduated from Goshen College with a BA in sociology and received his PhD in Old Testament from the University of Pennsylvania. He is a professor of religion at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

ISBN 0-87303-006-0/20 * Paper * 96 pages * 1978 .... $2.45

A Vietnamese Pilgrimage **Max Ediger**

The war is now over in Viet Nam, but the struggle continues. As people work in their fields, some are still maimed and others killed by munitions lying unexploded in their fields. To shape and create a new society—to reconstruct a new nation—requires an intense struggle. The cost is high. "When and how will we live as one happy family?" asks the author in this poetic recreation of his Vietnamese experience. The drama of what happened in Viet Nam pulsates in the pages of this book.

Max Ediger, served as a voluntary service worker with Mennonite Central Committee in Burundi, Africa. After graduation from Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, he served a five-year term (1971-1976) as a voluntary service worker in Viet Nam. His third assignment with MCC is working for the Christian Church in Thailand.

ISBN 0-87303-007-9 * Paper * 88 pages * October 1978 .... $5.25

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FULL CIRCLE
Hermeneutics for Lay People
A Vietnamese Pilgrimage
Max Ediger

"Unlike violent revolution the power of nonviolence lives on," President Jimmy Carter told a meeting of 250 blacks, including Coretta Scott King, at the White House October 5. "Nonviolence," he continued, "does not depend on the ability to accumulate weapons and arms. It does not depend on hatred to perpetuate it. It does not depend on terror or maiming or suffering or death. It is available not just to the strong and domineering and the eloquent, but is also available to the poor and the meek and those who are often inarticulate or ignorant." Carter said nonviolence was at the heart of his concept of Christianity.

Canadian Mennonite Bible College (Winnipeg, Manitoba) students and staff, together with their families, gathered at Pioneer Camp, located on a small island in Shoal Lake just inside Ontario's border, for a time of celebration, recreation, reflection, and worship, September 15-17.

Roman Catholic writer Battists Mondin (*Worldmission,* Summer, 1978) sees a changing environment for Christian evangelism today: "In the past, the mission of the church was intended for pagans; today, very often, it is for atheists. In the past, Christians proclaimed the gospel to the worshippers of Mithras, Cybele, Odin, Vishnu, or to the followers of Buddha, Mohammed, etc. Today the situation has changed. Nearly all the traditional religions are in crisis. Many of our time profess atheism."

Disasters outstrip responses

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—Who will receive emergency assistance? This is the central problem dogging MCC administrators in the wake of disasters such as flooding, famine, hurricane, and war in India, Ethiopia, Loas, Vietnam, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Lebanon.

"These disasters have come on us like an avalanche," says associate overseas secretary Edgar Stoesz. The most recent request has come from India where another 30 inches of rain have hit the already devastated state of West Bengal, thereby affecting 15 to 20 million people.

No immediate response to the India disaster is planned because several emergency responses are now in progress. Stoesz explains, "This year began very slowly. We hardly drew on the contingency fund. But during the third quarter emergency responses have been made in Ethiopia, India, Laos, Vietnam, and in the Middle East, and we're expecting to help the hurricane victims in Honduras as well as the 8,000 war refugees who fled Nicaragua into Honduras. The India request (for $100,000) is crucial, but it must be seen in this context."

Mennonite Central Committee is involved or is determining action in the following countries.

In India the flood damage in West Bengal is worse than that caused by the tidal wave in Andhra Pradesh last year for which nearly $400,000 was donated by constituents for relief and reconstruction. In contrast, spending for this year's flood damage totals about $45,000.

There will be a response to the famine in Ethiopia. Drought and war may leave one out of every six Ethiopians dependent on food aid. Although geography and the political situation make food transport difficult 1,000 tons of grain as well as clothing, medical supplies, and blankets will be sent to Goba where 280,000 displaced persons are crowded into 130 shelters.

Severe flooding in Laos has created food shortages. Some seeds for replanting have been sent but an additional request for $30,000 by Laos workers John and Beulah Yoder has been deferred.

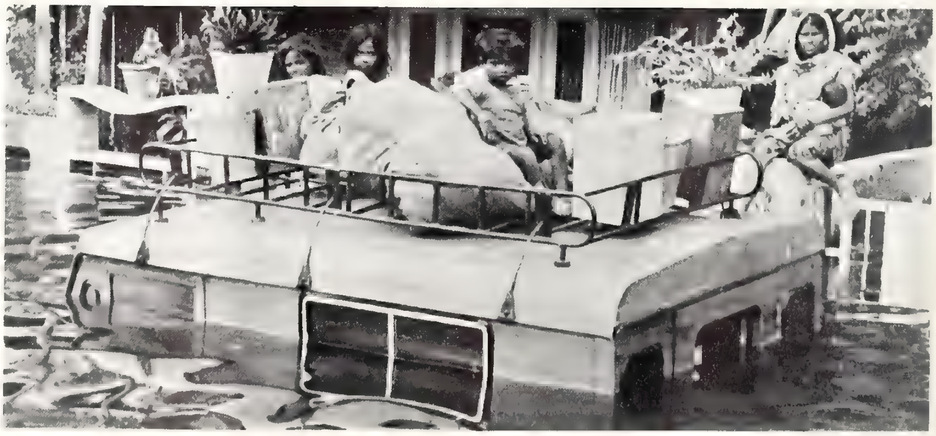
The Viet-My organization in Hanoi has forwarded two emergency requests to MCC, one caused by flooding and the other by a typhoon. More than a fifth of Vietnam's rice crop is destroyed.

The recent fighting in Nicaragua caused 8,000 persons to flee to Honduras, where the Honduran government is refusing them aid because it does not want to endanger its relations with Nicaragua. Honduras was also hit by a hurricane September 18 which left 1,500 families homeless. MCC has shipped $53,000 in material aid for the refugees.

Recurring violence and pitched battles have been the lot of the Lebanese people for years, but the raging battle in Beirut early in October was the worst in two years. More than 400,000 people have fled the area. In a follow-up to earlier relief measures an additional distribution of beef and blankets is being airlifted to these victims.

Near Goba 280,000 Ethiopian refugees live in temporary shelters.

Victims of floods in Delhi wait for rescue. ▼



A Vietnamese congregation has been organized in Ephrata, Pennsylvania, according to Tran Xuan Quang, pastor of the group. Ten persons were baptized and received into fellowship on September 10. About 20 persons attend the worship service which is held in the Vietnamese language each Sunday afternoon. The group meets in the fellowship center of the English-speaking congregation at Ephrata. The Vietnamese group plans to apply for membership of their congregation in the Lancaster Mennonite Conference.

Ottawa (CCP)—The CBC doesn't know how to handle religion, according to an inter-church brief that was presented to the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) in October. The church representatives said they sense the CBC has trouble integrating "matters of faith, ethics, and morality into the mainstream of issue-oriented programming." The brief was submitted by Inter-church Communications, a coalition of media people from Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and United Churches, as well as the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (English sector).

In a front-page editorial the Vatican daily, *L'Osservatore Romano,* condemned capital punishment as "homicide." Calling the death penalty a violation of the gospel, the editorial said, "One thing is certain: if humanity wants to liberate itself from barbarousness, it must first begin to show integral respect for all human beings, whatever their social, economic, civil, juridical, moral, or biological condition. The right to life is inviolable. No human authority can violate it with impunity."

MCC requests conscience clause in new Canadian constitution

Winnipeg, Manitoba (MCC)—The MCC (Canada) executive committee, meeting here September 29-30, approved a brief requesting that the new Constitution of Canada include a provision for the protection of conscientious objectors. The brief was presented to the Special Joint Committee on the Constitution of Canada in Ottawa on October 2.

The brief, prepared by William Janzen, MCC Ottawa office, says in part, "Historically the term 'conscientious objection' has been related most often to military service. This is true in our experience. It is reflected also in this brief. We would like to ask, however, that the provision in the constitution be broader, that it provide protection for those who for reason of conscience do not want to destroy human life, be this in war or insurrection, in police work, in the administration of justice, or in such medical procedures as euthanasia and abortion. We would like a clause in the constitution to ensure the broadest possible recognition of the sacredness of the person and the inviolability of conscience."

Janzen gives a historical basis for the request, tracing conscientious objection to its beginnings in the Anabaptist movements in 16th century Europe, and to the present day, giving examples where different governments have given special provisions on the basis of conscience.

He points out, however, that "the matter of being exempt from certain practices of the larger society is not an exemption from the obligation of contributing to the common good and welfare of people."

The brief concludes with this statement: "The basis of our own conviction regarding these matters is integrally related to our understanding of what it means to follow Jesus Christ. We would like to ask, however, that a clause in the constitution provide protection also for those whose conviction is based on grounds not explicitly religious. We see the protection that has historically been provided in the area of military service as a good basis for granting protection also in other areas, especially those involving the destruction of human life, and for granting it in a way that will be more secure. For this reason we ask for a clause in the constitution to protect conscientious objectors."

University will offer Mennonite studies degree

Winnipeg, Manitoba (UW)—Harry Loewen, the first appointee to the chair of Mennonite studies at the University of Winnipeg, says the chair will specialize in Mennonite literature and art, and works by and about Mennonites.

The chair in Mennonite studies was established at the university in August 1977 as the result of a gift from David D. Friesen of Winnipeg.

Manitoba has the largest concentration of Russian Mennonites anywhere, says Loewen. "There is recognition, especially in this province, that they have made a substantial contribution, and that what they have to offer is worth preserving," he observes. There are other groups who have made important contributions to Canadian society notes Loewen, citing the Ukrainian and Jewish communities as examples, but Friesen's gift makes the Mennonite chair possible.

Loewen expects that within a few years students will be able to complete a BA degree majoring in Mennonite studies. The curriculum will include courses developed and offered by the chair, courses in the German and history departments of the university, and courses offered by the province's two Mennonite colleges, Canadian Mennonite Bible College and Mennonite Brethren Bible College. Loewen's immediate goal is to gather a good collection of documents relating to Mennonite art and culture.

Harry Loewen

Council to give writers counsel

Winnipeg, Manitoba (MCC)—Mennonite and Brethren in Christ writers and would-be authors can now receive guidance on the submission of manuscripts for possible publishing.

The service has been organized by Mennonite Publishing Service (publishers of the *Mennonite Reporter*) with funds for the first three years of operation provided by MCC (Canada). It is projected that by the fourth year Mennonite Book Publishing Service will either be self-supporting through fees for service or through grants from publishers. The grants from MCC will total $3,000.

The council was begun on the premise that there is a significant number of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ writers who are not familiar with publishing procedures.

The members of the council are Daniel Zehr, Rudy Regehr, Hugo Jantz, Larry Kehler, Al Reimer, Sue Steiner, and Roy Vogt.

◀ **Stockholm, Sweden—Evangelist Billy Graham** makes a point in a sermon before an overflow Stockholm audience during his recent campaign in Scandinavia. He was seen and heard on exclusive Norwegian and Swedish national television and by closed circuit relays and video cassette to those two countries and Iceland. Graham was confronted by a hostile press and garbage-throwing protesters in Sweden and Norway. Though the crowds were large wherever he preached, the evangelist's meetings drew small numbers of responses from people deciding to make personal commitments to Christ.

An American Mennonite in eastern Europe reported that Polish Baptists were "bowled over by the wealth and grandeur" of a large tour group from W. A. Criswell's 10,000 member Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas. "Thoughtless touring groups like this 225-member group, rather than 'encouraging' the local believers, achieve the opposite effect," the Mennonite observer noted. He suggested that tours to eastern European socialist countries be more carefully scrutinized with regard to the impressions they make.

Record

Workers

Sandra Bertsche arrived home in Elkhart, Indiana, on July 18. She has just completed a three-year term of service at the missionary children's hostel in Kinshasa, Zaire. Sandra is now enrolled in graduate school at Western Michigan University in the field of counseling.

Herman and Ruth Buller arrived home in mid-July. They have been serving as the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission business agents in Kinshasa, Zaire, doing legal business, and hostessing AIMM guests in the capital city. They are currently living in Millersburg, Ohio.

Norman and Virginia Derstine have now arrived in the US from a term of service with Radio Botswana. They are currently living in Harrisburg, Virginia.

Delbert and Sue Dick arrived home in June. They have been serving at the Studioproka radio program in Kananga, Zaire. They are currently living in South Bend, Indiana, where Delbert is working as a technician for a Christian radio station.

Les Friesen has begun working half-time supervising book rack evangelism with the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia.

Robert and Joyce Gerhart arrived in the US on September 1. They have been ministering to the United Church in Maseru, Lesotho. They are currently enjoying a furnished trailer home maintained by the East Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pennsylvania.

Elda Hiebert arrived in the US in late July. She has been serving in the medical program at Kalonda, Zaire. Elda is now living with her brother Leroy in their home in Elbing, Kansas.

Lorna G. Hiebert, Morden Bergthaler Church, Morden, Manitoba, is serving a two-year term with Mennonite Central Committee in Lethbridge, Alberta, where she will teach special education and work with community services. She attended Canadian Mennonite Bible College (Winnipeg, Manitoba), received a BEd degree from the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, and has been teaching in Berens River, Manitoba. Henry and Hetty Hiebert of Morden are her parents.

Bruce Janzen, Zion Church, Elbing, Kansas, is beginning a two-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pennsylvania, working on the portable meat canner. He received an associate degree in agriculture from Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas). Herman and Ruth Janzen are his parents.

John E. Kyle has been appointed missions director of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship of the United States. A graduate of Oregon State University and Columbia Theological Seminary (Decatur, Georgia), Kyle served the home missions work of the Presbyterian Church in the US for three years. In 1964 John and Lois Kyle joined Wycliffe Bible Translators and were assigned to the Philippines. Since 1977 he has been coordinator of international affairs under a cooperative agreement to Inter-Varsity by Mission to the World of the Presbyterian Church.

Richard Miller, Goshen, Indiana, has been appointed church relations manager at Mennonite Mutual Aid as of October 9. He will be responsible for the coordination of communications, education, field services, and fraternal activities. Miller is a graduate of Goshen College and Wisconsin State University. Since August 1977 he was manager of the survivors' aid department.

Dorothy M. Mills, Deer Creek Church, Deer Creek, Oklahoma, is serving a two-year term with Mennonite Central Committee as a caseworker in Appalachia. She received a BA from Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas) and a degree in social work from Washington University (St. Louis, Missouri) and has been employed as a social worker in Santa Cruz, California.

Al and Martha Rempel have assumed managerial duties at Camp Squeah, Hope, British Columbia.

Dan Schwendeman, associate professor of social work at Bluffton (Ohio) College, has been appointed program consultant at the Lima State Hospital, Lima, Ohio. He will assist in the development of a special youth offender program that has been mandated by federal court order. Schwendeman, who is a 1971 Bluffton College graduate in social work, earned the master's degree in social work from the University of Utah where he concentrated in administration and group work.

L. Hiebert

Janzen

Mills

Forty percent (eight times the national average) of the student population at Oxford and Cambridge universities in England is attending church regularly. The strongest movement on campus today is not the secular or humanist groups but Inter-Varsity Fellowship. Students flock to St. Aldate's Church, centered in the heart of Oxford, which sponsors twenty fellowship groups, seven groups to disciple new converts, and uses drama, dance, and vigorous debates to demonstrate the vitality and truth of Christianity. One of the church's groups, Agnostics Anonymous, draws students to openly debate the issues.

Bienenberg, Switzerland—Analysis of German-language religious broadcasting to Soviet Germans indicates that radio serves as an alternative to church. The research by Mennonite Central Committee worker Walter Sawatsky is based on interviews of Soviet Germans between 1974 and 1978. Sawatsky has made several conclusions: (1) listening regularity is determined by jamming, time of program, and the climate of persecution; (2) listeners prefer speakers who are frequent and have a dynamic speaking style; and (3) music is seen as the best part of the program.

Lodema Short arrived in the US in early August. She has been in charge of the girls school at Nyanga, Zaire. She is residing in Archbold, Ohio.

The Meadows Mennonite Home board of directors announced the appointment of *John Slotter* as the new administrator effective October 1. Slotter has served Meadows Home as assistant administrator since August 1975 and will succeed *David D. Schrag,* who has served in this capacity since June 1961. Schrag has accepted the administrator position of Memorial Home for the Aged, Moundridge, Kansas.

Marsha Weaver, First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, and *Rosemary Reimer,* Emmaus Church, Whitewater, Kansas, participated in the Mennonite Disaster Service long-term volunteer orientation at Stone, Kentucky, September 8-11.

Published

Reaching the Other Side (Crown Publishers, 1978 $10.95) is a story of the chaotic, yet surprisingly peaceful transition from one government to another in Vietnam. The journal of this change is seen through the eyes of the author, Earl S. Martin, and many Vietnamese who were dramatically affected by the transition. Martin, who was in Vietnam from October, 1973, to August, 1975, as a Mennonite Central Committee worker, was one of four conscientious objectors who stayed in Vietnam during and after the war's final days.

Friendship evangelism—warm, personal, natural—it happens in a contexct of mutual trust and respect, says Art McPhee in his new book, *Friendship Evangelism* (Zondervan). Mennonite Broadcasts programs in the coming weeks will focus on relating as friends to persons around us who have needs. Broadcasts offers a resource kit for forming small fellowships in which context friendship evangelism can be fostered. For a copy of the book and fellowship kit, write Mennonite Broadcasts, Box 1252, Harrisonburg, Virginia, 22801.

The report on the consultation on gospel and culture is now available from the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, Box 1100, Wheaton, Illinois 60187 or Box 21225, Nairobi, Kenya, East Africa. Ask for the Willowbank Report. The cost is $1.00. The report is the outcome of a special conference held in Bermuda earlier this year. It gives the biblical basis of culture, discusses culture and biblical revelation, and moves on to understanding God's Word today and the content and communication of the gospel. The relationship between conversion and culture is covered, as is the topic of culture, Christian ethics, and life-style.

Ministers

Steve Dyck, Elmira, Ontario, has begun his pastoral ministry in the United Church, Black Creek, British Columbia. He is a graduate of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.

Lonnie Hofer, Bridgewater, South Dakota, became the interim pastor of Hutterthal Church, Freeman, South Dakota, his home church, for a period of one year, beginning July 1. Hofer is a graduate of Grace College of the Bible, Omaha, Nebraska.

Barrie Lessor, Hague, Saskatchewan, was installed September 17 as assistant pastor at Zion Church, Swift Current, Saskatchewan. He is a graduate of Swift Current Bible Institute and was an MCC worker in Zaire.

Gerald and Deloras Mendenhall, Fort Wayne, Indiana, have begun their church planting assignment with the Berne Church, Berne, Indiana.

Bernie Neufeld, former music faculty member at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, was installed as assistant minister of the Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, on September 10.

Sig Polle, Abbotsford, British Columbia, has begun a pastoral ministry at Langley Church, Langley, British Columbia, on a half-time basis. He was formerly an instructor at Columbia Bible Institute.

Abram Regier became pastor at Rosemary Church, Rosemary, Alberta, in October. He previously served at Bethany Church, Watrous, Saskatchewan, and MacGregor Bergthaler Church, MacGregor, Manitoba. He attended Canadian Mennonite Bible College and Mennonite Brethren Bible College.

Richard and Nancy Yoder began pastoring at First Church, Nappanee, Indiana, on September 1.

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Director for radio and television activities

Full- or part-time (negotiable) in spring of 1979

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Review

Music with meaning

Wherever You Go; Listen; *and* Calm is the Night; *recordings of songs composed by Brother Gregory and sung by his fellow monks of Weston Priory, Weston Priory Productions, Weston, Vermont 05161, are reviewed by Dorothy Petkau, 610 Cathcart, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3R OS5.*

"Happiness is where you are and what you want to be." So begins the first song on one of the recordings by the monks. That song began our introduction to these men as they try to share their faith.

The Weston Priory was founded in Weston, Vermont, in 1953 by Brother Leo, abbot of the Dormition Abbey in Jerusalem, Israel. Members came from all over Canada and the United States. Each brought a different personality, background, and skill, but a common love of God. In their growing together they learned the significance of music in such a process.

The music on the albums is a mixture of folk, liturgical, and ballad. These are songs for every occasion—Christmas, Easter, Communion, and weddings. The accompaniment is well done by bass guitar, organ, piano, and a variety of orchestral instruments. Melodies are simple, beautiful, and easy to sing or listen to.

The words are often passages of Scripture or poetic expressions of life situations. They must be listened to carefully, for they have great meaning and hope for us.

Our family has grown to love this "music with meaning." There are not many days when one or the other of these recordings is not played. They are especially appropriate at the end of a day for sitting and meditating. We agree with the monks when they say, "Singing is a way of expressing a whole way of life, and at the same time it carries the message of that way of life."

This music is available in albums, on eight-track tapes and on cassettes. Song books with music for voice and guitar are also available. Suggestions for liturgical uses of each song are provided with the song books.

Two books on abortion

Should I Have an Abortion? *by Eldon Weisheit, (Concordia Publishing House, 1976, 101 pages);* Abortion: Resources for Pastoral Counseling, *by Eldon Weisheit, (Concordia Publishing House, 1976, 173 pages) are reviewed by Janet Reedy, 423 Prospect, Elkhart, Indiana 46514. Janet is a member of MCC Peace and Social Concerns (US).*

The author of these two books is a Lutheran pastor who explains in the introduction to *Should I Have an Abortion* that he is not trying to answer the rightness or wrongness of abortion. He is interested in helping the woman who is pregnant, but does not want to be, to look at her feelings and assess the realities of her situation, as well as to clarify the implications of the decisions she can make: (1) to have and keep the child with or without marriage; (2) to have the child but give it up for adoption, or (3) to abort. Pointing out the pros and cons of many issues, he recognizes that in the long run it would be more helpful "if I could listen to you rather than talk with you," and encourages his reader to find someone to talk to or counsel with after reading the book. He points out that the two easy answers to abortion are "I would never get an abortion under any circumstance," and "I'd get an abortion any time I needed and wanted one." For most women the answer is not so simple. Each must consider the personal, social, moral, and medical issues, and come to an answer that is in harmony with her values and goals. The author is as interested in the process of the woman's decision-making as he is in her final answer.

He lists reasons why women do not want to have children, acknowledges the validity of those reasons in many cases but adds some "on the other hand" considerations. He asks the woman to examine her attitudes about sex in order to avoid getting into the same difficult situation again. The reader is asked to consider the other people involved in her life—the man, her family, and friends—stating that "it's my body, I'll do what I please with it," ignores the interdependence of people. Almost every woman has family and/or friends who care about her and would help her if she made her needs known. Any decision must be made in view of her understanding of God's laws, with the recognition that she is assured of God's love and forgiveness. Weisheit summarizes a variety of legal, medical, psychological, and theological views on the status of the fetus. After considering all these things the woman is invited to play "let's pretend"; that is, to imagine that she has chosen each of the possible solutions, to see how she would live with the decision. Eventually, she must decide, and each decision is the beginning of a course of action requiring other decisions.

Weisheit writes from his experience of counseling many women who have come to him, considering abortion. His point of view is clearly Christian. He places a high value on human life and describes a loving, forgiving God who works in each person's life. He is aware that as a man his ability to understand the woman's situation may not be complete, but he tries hard and succeeds quite well. He conveys an attitude of acceptance of the woman as a person, regardless of her decision, and accepts the need for the legal availability of abortion. I recommend this book to any woman considering an abortion, whether she is a Christian or not, and to others who want to understand what is involved in deciding about abortion.

Abortion: Resources for Pastoral Counseling was written as a handbook for people who are counseling with women who are considering abortion. It is divided into two parts the first of which was published earlier as *Should I Have an Abortion?* After writing that book, Weisheit discovered that counselors wanted more information than was in the first book, so he added part two, which consists of excerpts from the writings of a number of authors representing a variety of viewpoints on abortion.

He says that the most helpful counselor is the one whose goal is to help the woman reach a decision according to her values and circumstances. Help her find what she wants to do.

There is a section of Lutheran theological statements and a section of articles which give a variety of reasons for advocating or opposing abortion. Some of these articles are by women writers; considerably more are by men. One chapter contains a list of passages from the Bible about issues related to abortion, although Weisheit points out that the word "abortion" is not mentioned in the Bible.

I appreciate Weisheit's emphasis on understanding the woman's situation and the process of her decision as basic to good counseling. In his preface he mentions his own concern that the more involved he became in study and writing this book, and the further removed from direct counseling, the easier it became for him to give absolute answers on abortion. In order to arrive at meaningful answers on abortion there must be constant dialogue between the theoretical and the practical and personal. The theoretical readings are helpful, but this book is more valuable for its emphasis on the practical, personal considerations a woman faces in making a decision about abortion.

Abortion and responsibility

William Janzen and Robert Koop

In the Ottawa House of Commons' question period last June, Mennonite Member of Parliament Jake Epp asked Prime Minister Trudeau whether the government would "review Canada's abortion laws so that children will be given . . . the gift of life?"

Trudeau replied somewhat flippantly that "it is not for the government to give the gift of life to children: that is done by God and by the parents." After a supplementary question he said, "The criminal law is administered by the provinces, so prosecutions under and enforcement of the law is up to them."

The prime minister's reply, while technically correct, is also an illustration of the way the government avoids responsibility for this matter. In 1969 the federal government changed the criminal law so that, while abortions generally remained punishable by life imprisonment, there would be an exception for situations where the continuation of a woman's pregnancy "would be likely to endanger her life or health."

CHOOSE LIFE!
Christians for Life
Abortion

This scene from the past summer's National Right to Life convention at St. Louis is a reminder that the abortion issue is far from resolution.

The power to decide whether there is in fact a danger to a woman's life or health is delegated to a committee of doctors. The law does not require hospitals to set up such committees, but where they are set up they are responsible for giving meaning to the words "danger," "life," and "health" for each person who applies.

Like the prime minister, many doctors have passed their responsibility on. They have taken the word "health" to include various nonmedical factors. According to the government's 1977 Badgley Report, "many physicians . . . openly acknowledged that their diagnoses for mental health were given for purposes of expediency and they could not be considered as valid assessments of an abortion patient's state of mental health."

This has resulted in a situation where whoever wants an abortion is almost sure to be able to get one. The majority of the applicants come from the middle class. It has become a matter of convenience. And the numbers have risen dramatically. In 1970 there were about 11,000 abortions in Canada. In 1976 there were nearly 55,000. Many lawmakers see this as a gross departure from the intent of the law.

Various proposals have been made to deal with this. Some have suggested that one person on the committee be charged with the specific task of defending the rights of the unborn child. That way its rights would be recognized and weighed alongside those of the pregnant woman.

Another proposal comes from parliamentarian Douglas Roche. He introduced a bill which would have made it necessary to obtain the consent of the father of the unborn child or that of a parent or guardian of the pregnant woman.

In debating Roche's bill, the parliamentary secretary to the minister of national health and welfare stated that responsibility for the problem lay not in the present law but it, "in part at least is the result of our permissive society." The debate continued until the House broke up for the summer, so Roche's bill died on the Order Paper.

Some parliamentarians argue that the government should at least refrain from supporting abortion with public funds, which includes funds from people who hold it to be immoral. This argument is directed especially at the $600,000 grant to an organization called Planned Parenthood which, it was said, had "largely become an abortion referral agency."

The question of responsibility is complex. But the way it is redefined and passed on from the federal government to the provincial government, from hospitals to doctors' committees, and finally to "our permissive society," speaks of a general feebleness in ethics.

After the horrors of World War II there seemed to be an eagerness to enact laws that would protect all of life. In 1948 the World Health Organization urged respect for human life "from the moment of conception." In 1959 the United Nations adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child which called for "legal protection, before as well as after birth. . . ."

In contrast, in 1978 the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) banned a poster depicting a child standing next to a visibly pregnant, fully-clothed woman with the words "Respect Life." The TTC's buses and subways carry a full range of other posters but this, it ruled, was "too controversial."

The issue will not go away. The American Congress spent more time debating abortion in 1977, in the context of the Hyde amendment to limit federal funds for abortions, than on any other single issue. No doubt it will also remain in the Canadian political arena.

The political arena will not bring forth complete solutions to all problems. A pregnancy can present difficulties. We do not want to belittle them. But is abortion a Christian way of dealing with those difficulties? And does the magnitude of the problem not call Christians to make a clearer witness?

Letters

Children and sin

Dear Editor: Walter Klaassen's article, "Young Children (Condemned Sinners or Children of God)," (September 26 issue) leaves me troubled. I am not comfortable with his position. I recognize the tension which he is addressing and I also recognize the vulnerability of children to manipulative methods of evangelism. Yet I do not question the validity of children to come to an awareness of their own sin and their need of a savior.

If I am understanding Klaassen correctly he is saying that children are not sinners until they commit conscious acts of sin. I question this conclusion in light of Scripture. Psalm 51:5 directly states that the sin nature is a part of us at birth. We are born sinners. Romans 5 teaches that our sinful nature is imputed to us through the one sinful act of Adam. That sin nature, as well as the acts of sin produced out of it, are condemned by God and in need of forgiveness and salvation to escape judgment. I see nothing unbiblical about calling children condemned sinners. It is to condemned sinners that forgiveness is extended.

The problem Klaassen is trying to solve is the age at which children become aware of their need for forgiveness. At what age can a person make a conscious decision of faith in Christ for the forgiveness of sins? It makes sense that children will be more aware of their sin nature and the need for forgiveness if they have committed acts of sin than if they are still "innocent" of such awareness. But to tell children that they are uncondemned and innocent (innocent in that they have no sin until they commit a conscious act of sin) is a dangerous solution to this problem. Rather, should we not tell the gospel, pure and faithful, and allow the Holy Spirit to bring his conviction at whatever age he wills?

Perhaps this problem has arisen because we have been so zealous to teach "adult" believer's baptism, to distinguish it from infant baptism. The Scripture teaches believers' baptism, regardless of age. Believers are people who have been convicted of sin and have turned to Christ for forgiveness and salvation. Jesus accepts and blesses any repentant sinner, just as he accepted the children. His acceptance does not imply innocence; it implies mercy and grace. *Stephen C. Strunk, 700 South 19th Street, Clinton, Oklahoma 73601*

October 2

Retardation

Dear Editor: My belated reading of the good article by Aldred Neufeldt, "When You Are Different" (April 11 issue) prompts me to make a recommendation.

The magazine *The Other Side* devotes the whole issue for August 1977 to the problem of retardation. It does this in a comprehensive way and is well worth reading. *J. E. Amstutz, Apartment 107, 2500 Lee Road, Winter Park, Florida 32789*

October 2

I chose the ministry

To be a pastor is essentially a willingness to claim the healing, confronting, and serving relationships inherent in a pastoral role. Sometimes I have the uneasy feeling that this is not a "radical Christian witness." A part of me says that it is the real Christian response. But most of me, most of the time, is disposed to being a conscientious participant in society. What does this mean for a conscientious objector? Hopefully I can at appropriate times assume the Christian risk of being an objector.

My master's thesis topic is "The Mennonite Church and the Prison Chaplaincy" with a subtitle "A Case for Conscientious Participation." In it I try to make a case for a professional style of ministry which reflects a believers' church theology.

I am enjoying pastoral care, administration, preaching, and teaching. They make me feel that my pastoral ministry "pays the rent" to the congregation.

I also enjoy my involvement in community-related and conference work. *Darrell Fast is pastor of the Toronto United Mennonite Church, 1772 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario M4L 1G7.*

Subscription Increase

Effective January 1, 1979, congregational and every-home-plan subscriptions to *The Mennonite* will cost $8.00 per year (an increase of $1.00). Individual subscriptions will cost $10.00 annually (an increase of $1.00). However, if individual subscribers renew for three years the rate is $27.00.

If you have friends who are not receiving *The Mennonite*, consider gift subscriptions for them, or suggest that they can order it themselves by contacting the Circulation Secretary, The Mennonite, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114, or 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Consumers' prayer

Joyce M. Shutt

throw away bottles
throw away cans
throw away friendships
throw away fans

disposable diapers
disposable plates
disposable people
disposable wastes

instant puddings
instant rice
instant intimacy
instant ice

plastic dishes
plastic laces
plastic flowers
plastic faces

Lord of the living
transcending our lies
infuse us with meaning
recycle our lives

Meditation

People and programs

Out of the "rat race"
What a refreshing change!
People are more important than programs:
- people walk great distances
- people have many less "wants"
- people seem to need much less
- people living in extended families
- people not schooled in "rugged individualism"
- people matured within a "caring community"
- people taking religion seriously
  - meeting frequently for worship
  - celebrating for many hours
  - giving freely of their meager earnings
  - seeing all of life as "religious"
  - deeply involved in worship
    - leading out in song
      in prayer
      in dance
      in witness
      in praise

People are more important than programs.
Forgive Lord, my seeming frustrations
You too, believed that people
were important
More important than any man-made program
Out of the "rat race"
What a recurring frustration!
People *are* more important than programs:
- programs do not begin at the "appointed hour"
- programs are not "programmed"
- programs without "Western agendas"
- programs, assignments—slow in developing
  - time seems to merge into eternity
  - time seems to be "a-wasting"
  - time: past-present-future not clearly defined
  - time is neither slave nor master
  - time is more plentiful than anything else

Frustrated with frustration, I muse—
Does the pendulum need to swing this far, Lord?
Does the concern for program really mean
less concern for people?
Conversely, does concern for people mean less
interest in program?
Are "Western people" who have been schooled in
efficiency not usable here?
People are more important than programs.
Forgive Lord, my recurring frustrations
You too believed that people
were important
More important than any man-made program

Norman Derstine

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CONTRIBUTORS

Enid Poole, Box 868, Gravenhurst, Ontario P0C 1G0, is a free-lance writer. Enid speaks to the challenge of integrating our material and spiritual values.

Louise Dueck, 55 Flerimac Road, West Hill, Ontario M1E 4B1, is a member of the Toronto United Mennonite Church.

Elma and Willard Waltner, Box 190, Freeman, South Dakota 57029, are a sister and brother journalism and photography team. They are members of the Salem Mennonite Church.

William Janzen and Robert Koop are the director and associate director of the MCC office at 803-63 Sparks Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5A6.

Norman Derstine was serving with the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) at Gaborone, Botswana in November, 1976, when he wrote the meditation. It is reprinted from the AIMM newsletter.

Duane Heffelbower, 1619 11th Street, Reedley, California 93654 is an attorney at law. Duane is a member of Reedley First Mennonite Church.

CREDITS
Cover is an RNS photo of actors in Byzantine mosaic costume for the drama "The Book of Job." In this scene, Job is mocked by his friends, who suggest that he forget God. 626, Wallowitch; 628, 629, Waltner; 632 (top), MCC photo by Marianne Anderson, (bottom), MCC; 634, 637, RNS.

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman.

There was no will

Duane Heffelbower

The tragedy shocked everyone. Marilyn had been killed a few months ago in a traffic accident, leaving Bill to care for two toddlers. And now Bill's light plane had crashed on takeoff. The children lost both parents within a short time. Both sets of grandparents were ready, willing, and able to care for them.

That is where I became involved. The grandparents could not agree on custody of the children. No problem would have existed if everyone lived in the same town, but the two families lived 1,000 miles apart. Neither wanted to "lose" the children. Without admitting the real reason the grandparents began to discuss shortcomings in each other which might harm the children.

The argument was resolved, to no one's satisfaction, after a large expenditure for attorney fees. I should not object to large attorney fees, since I am on the receiving end; but I believe that the young parents would have wanted a different result.

Why was there a problem? There was no will. Young parents often think that the only purpose of a will is to leave money to charity. To the contrary! The last concern of a young person's will is money. The first concern is to appoint a guardian for minor children.

The second concern is to make sure that the surviving spouse inherits the entire estate. Most people are not aware of the law, which exists in many states, that a share of the estate will pass to children if there is no will (Canadians should check current laws for their province).

The moral of the story is that a will should follow hot on the heals of a honeymoon. You don't need to have children before you provide for their welfare. You also don't want parents sharing the estate of the surviving spouse just because you did nothing.

While you are making your will, you could consider adopting a charity, such as the General Conference, as one of your children. You don't have to. If the surviving spouse couldn't afford the gift, you would not be doing the right thing. Do, however, check over your financial situation and make a conscious decision to give or not to give.

Before you rush down to the stationery store to buy a will-making kit, let me put in a word for lawyers. We are not expensive when it comes to wills, and we can save you from some unfortunate foolishness. Call and ask what a will costs. At the very least, after you have written your own will, let a lawyer tell you whether it will hold up. I personally much prefer giving any bad news to you rather than to your heirs.

Meeting our budgets

The radio announcer was interviewing pastor Maureen Gaglardi of Vancouver, British Columbia. On Sunday, September 10, their morning offering was over $2,000,000. The smallest gift was 36 cents from one of the children. Three wealthy businessmen together gave one million dollars. The other 1,000 members and children gave the rest. WOW!

The announcer asked Maureen how this had been possible. She said they had prepared themselves through a careful biblical study of stewardship. There are principles like "cheerful giving," each person doing what he or she can "as the Lord has prospered them," and a laying by of the tithe immediately when wages are received. They had set their goal for one million dollars, but the Lord gave them over two million.

We are at that time again when we wonder about all our budgets. I believe that the Vancouver church has a message for us. Instead of worrying, let's look at our own responses to God's Word about stewardship. This will obviously include more than our finances. But generally the pocketbook is a good measure of our overall faithfulness.

I have just received the 1978 *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches.* It is encouraging and discouraging. It's encouraging that among US churches the benevolence percentage of our General Conference giving is 49.4 percent, third highest of all churches listed. It's discouraging to note, however, that between 1972 and 1975 religious and welfare activities show the smallest increase in the United States (next to foreign travel) among twelve categories. In Canada, even in Winnipeg, the city with the largest Mennonite population in the world, the average citizen gave only 0.5 percent of net income as religious contributions in 1974.

Let us not get hung up on such statistics. They reflect "averages." No individual is an "average" person. You and I are created "in the image of God." We cannot imagine our potential should we experience the fulness of God's Spirit.

This fall, instead of looking at dollar signs, let's look at God's Word and seek a greater appropriation of his will for our lives. *Bernie Wiebe*

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:40 NOVEMBER 7, 1978

ASSOCIAT MEN LIBRARY INARIES

"No missionaries should cross a gospel frontier unless they have an Antiochean fellowship for support."

Ada Lum

To be a missionary

A bitter ex-missionary had not been asked to return. We talked for half the night. I asked if she had ever had the conviction of being sent by God. No, she hadn't.

In Mary's second year at the university she had been converted to Christ from an almost pagan background. She attended many Christian meetings. Soon she was asked to testify to her conversion experience. After a dramatic 10-minute testimony the leader beamed and said, "Won't Mary make a terrific missionary one of these days!"

That was her first "call" to missions. She knew little about what was involved, but she sincerely wanted to serve Christ with her gifts of music and drama. When she told other Christians she was considering going to the mission field, she was admired. This was "confirmation from the fellowship."

For the next five years she attended three Bible colleges and worked for five Christian organizations. She changed church membership three times; each "seemed to be for the better." But she also described a trail of unhappy relationships—"People just didn't understand my particular background."

When her denomination recruited missionary candidates, she applied. She admitted surprise at being quickly accepted. Her friends kept telling her it was "great" and promised financial and prayer support. Before long she was overseas and into language study—which she hated.

I wasn't surprised about the conclusion of her missionary term. In the country of her assignment I sometimes visited the mission station where she worked as a secretary.

Once while I was there a local church member came in with a stencil, asking if he could run it off. In front of others and to the man's obvious embarrassment she replied, "When is your church going to buy its own mimeograph machine? You people are always expecting us missionaries to provide everything. Your church should learn self-reliance. It's good for you. Indigenous church work, you know."

That was a few years ago. Now, visibly contrite, she asked, "What went wrong? Why did I fail as a missionary?" It was a poignant moment. I wept quietly with her.

There she was—a sincere Christian who never should have spent those frustrating years (to herself and her colleagues) in the role of a missionary. How did this happen? Why are there others like her? And what about those who still return to the field after a questionable first term and continue to pass their days in deepening frustration or in the spiritual delusion of being "faithful though fruitless" and having others comfort them by quoting Romans 8:28?

Mary wasn't prepared as a disciple or trained as a disciple-maker. Her theology was biblical. She had gone to "sound" churches and Bible colleges. She knew the discipline of a regular quiet time. But she wasn't experienced in obeying Christ in the adverse situations of life. It had always been easier to move away from roommates, to enroll in another college, attend another church, and find another job.

She wanted to win people to Christ and sincerely tried. But she made offensive thrusts and alienated non-Christians. I once asked her if she had ever brought anyone to Christ for salvation while at home. No, she hadn't. While I don't consider evangelistic "success" an absolute criterion, it certainly is a clue to one's probable effectiveness overseas.

But it was not only Mary who failed as a missionary. Christian friends failed and misled her—by playing up a new convert, by glamorizing the missionary role, and by being too anxious to send a candidate without the consent of the Holy Spirit.

Conspicuously missing in Mary's background was a strong sending church like the Apostle Paul's in Antioch (Acts 13:1-4). I consider it essential that no missionaries should cross a gospel frontier unless they have an Antiochean fellowship for support.

Missionaries should have a consistently caring church which feels directly responsible for their ministry and to which they have a certain responsibility. This kind of church will sense the Holy Spirit guiding them as a body to recognize among their members who should be sent out. The church will not wait for individuals to come up and say, "Would you please take me on as your missionary? The Lord is leading me to go overseas."

To be a

To be a servant of Jesus Christ sometimes seems much easier than to be a servant to others, especially when they are unresponsive. But we can be servants of the Lord Jesus only when we serve the ones to whom God has sent us.

I met a fellow student worker, who had just come from a ministry in Japan. When he mentioned a certain missionary, we both spoke enthusiastically. I said, "Oh, the students love her." He said, "She is the only missionary I have observed who is a servant to Japanese."

If a missionary is basically a servant, many problems are more readily worked out—the ability to cross invisible but rugged mountain frontiers of racial feelings, cultural strangeness, climatic and dietetic changes, shifting mental and emotional gears to a different pace of life, adjusting to varying ideas of hygiene and sanitation, empathizing with people in their personal dilemmas, communicating Jesus Christ in the face of inevitable opposition—these are almost impossible without a servant's heart.

S. J. Palmer's *Korea and Christianity* compares missionary work in Korea and China. Palmer believes that the Korean missionaries were more effective because they took seriously some of the basic religious concepts and other traditions they found in Korean culture and built on them, showing Jesus Christ to be the full and final revelation of *Hananim* (the one true God). This is what Paul did in Athens (see Acts 17:22-32).

Many missionaries to China, on the other hand, rejected the Chinese *Shang Tai* (the God above) and the peculiar cultural traditions, believing them to be purely heathen concepts and practices.

Palmer's thesis needs more analysis. In any case he shows the importance of understanding the culture of the people to whom God has sent us. To reject their cultural forms, to despise their customs even though they are religiously neutral, is to reject the people themselves.

A hard but essential lesson to learn is that "different" doesn't necessarily mean "inferior" or "wrong." We tend to make value judgments about other people's cultural forms when we feel strange. At my first prayer meeting in Korea I was horrified to hear 75 people praying aloud at the same time. I thought it was irreverent noise. A brother remarked to me: "Your churches are quieter, aren't they? I think that's why so many fall asleep during the sermon."

It is absolutely essential for missionary candidates to involve themselves in cross-cultural ministry at home. It doesn't take place just because we cross geographical borders. If we don't know how to exercise a cross-cultural ministry at home, we are likely to slip into an overseas subculture with colleagues.

Subcultural mentality is developed at home. A Latin American Christian used to be disturbed that many missionaries could not participate in the Spanish culture—their community festivities, their arts, their literature, and their music. Then he went north to study theology. He observed that

missionary

"To be a servant of Jesus Christ sometimes seems much easier than to be a servant to others, especially when they are unresponsive."

these missionaries back home participated only in their church life and had practically nothing to do with community life.

Joseph Damien, a young Roman Catholic priest, came from Belgium in the 19th century to minister to the lepers on an outer island of Hawaii. He spoke of his flock as "my brothers and sisters." While ministering to their needs he caught their deadly disease which in those days was still incurable. Thereafter in his letters he would say without regret, "we lepers."

Should a missionary identify with people in their culture as far as Father Damien? The answer is—as far as necessary to communicate Jesus Christ clearly.

People do not want us to be exactly like them. They want us to be our authentic selves, but with genuine respect for them and their cultural values. They love it when we naturally participate in their family and community life. They appreciate it when we learn about their unique arts and crafts.

Identification in some things can be ridiculous. I recall a church social in Saigon where some "large" missionaries wore the *ao dai* that Vietnamese women wear. The *ao dai* is gracious and becoming for slim Vietnamese girls. But it is form-fitting, and my language tutor whispered to me, "It is better for the missionaries to wear Western clothes. In the *ao dai* they look like water buffaloes."

It may not be necessary to eat their food three times a day with the acceptable slurps and burps. But not to eat it at all, and worse, to wince at their slurps and burps, speaks of proud refusal to participate in their common life.

Should every missionary preach, teach, and pastor?

Our answer is yes and no. No, when missionaries work in teams that together cover these basic ministries. The wise missionary society makes assignments so that individual gifts complement each other. In time these teams should be more and more a healthy mixture of missionaries and local workers.

But the answer is also yes; a missionary should preach, teach, and pastor when as individuals they pioneer in an unevangelized area.

I am always delighted in Malaysia when I meet persons who were brought to Christ in a remote area that was evangelized by lay Christian doctors, teachers, and engineers. About 10 years ago a group of Christian graduates from the University of Singapore dedicated themselves to planting churches in towns where there was no witness to Christ. They scattered themselves as professional men and women in various parts of the country, after Christ's Great Commission. Today you find churches there because those laymen preached and taught and pastored.

A great joy during my last North America leave was to see among students a resurgence of interest in God's world mission. The most common question next to "Where could I serve?" was "How can I know my gifts so they can be developed?"

Our answer was simple: You'll never know what they are until you start serving the Lord and others. Keep your eyes—and heart—open. Who needs help? How can you help? Do what you can in the best way possible.

Make disciples. Regardless of a missionary's gifts, the overriding purpose is to make disciples for God's kingdom.

When I was asked to join the Inter-Varsity staff 18 years ago, my sincere answer was, "Oh, good night, no! I'm not the intellectual type. I can't answer all the students' clever questions about science and the Bible, behaviorism, existentialism, and all that." I am still grateful for the response of that elder brother. "We're not asking you to intellectualize Christianity. We're asking you to join us in teaching and sharing with students all that you know about living with Jesus Christ."

When we take that seriously—teaching and sharing with others all that we know about living with Jesus Christ—we're making disciples.

Grow disciple-makers. Missionary work is as strong as its leadership training. In one sense we can't train leaders. V. Raymond Edman, former president of Wheaton College, was right in saying, "Let's be concerned with training servants, and God will train the leaders." Yet the Bible is clear about learning to "pass it on."

Candidates need to consider seriously whether the missionary calling is theirs if they cannot help to train others. It is sobering to realize that "the church is always one generation away from extinction."

Each year our family has open house on Christmas Sunday afternoon. The invitations say, "Come when you can, leave when you must." Perhaps this is not a bad guideline for a missionary's tour, to come when you can and to leave when you must. "Must" depends on a sensitive tuning to the Holy Spirit. "Must" prevents undue dependence on the missionary. "Must" means that local disciple-makers can have full freedom under God to exercise responsibility in their national church.

Pioneering a Muslim region or Bible translation may be exceptions, but generally if a missionary stays on in one position decade after decade, something is wrong.

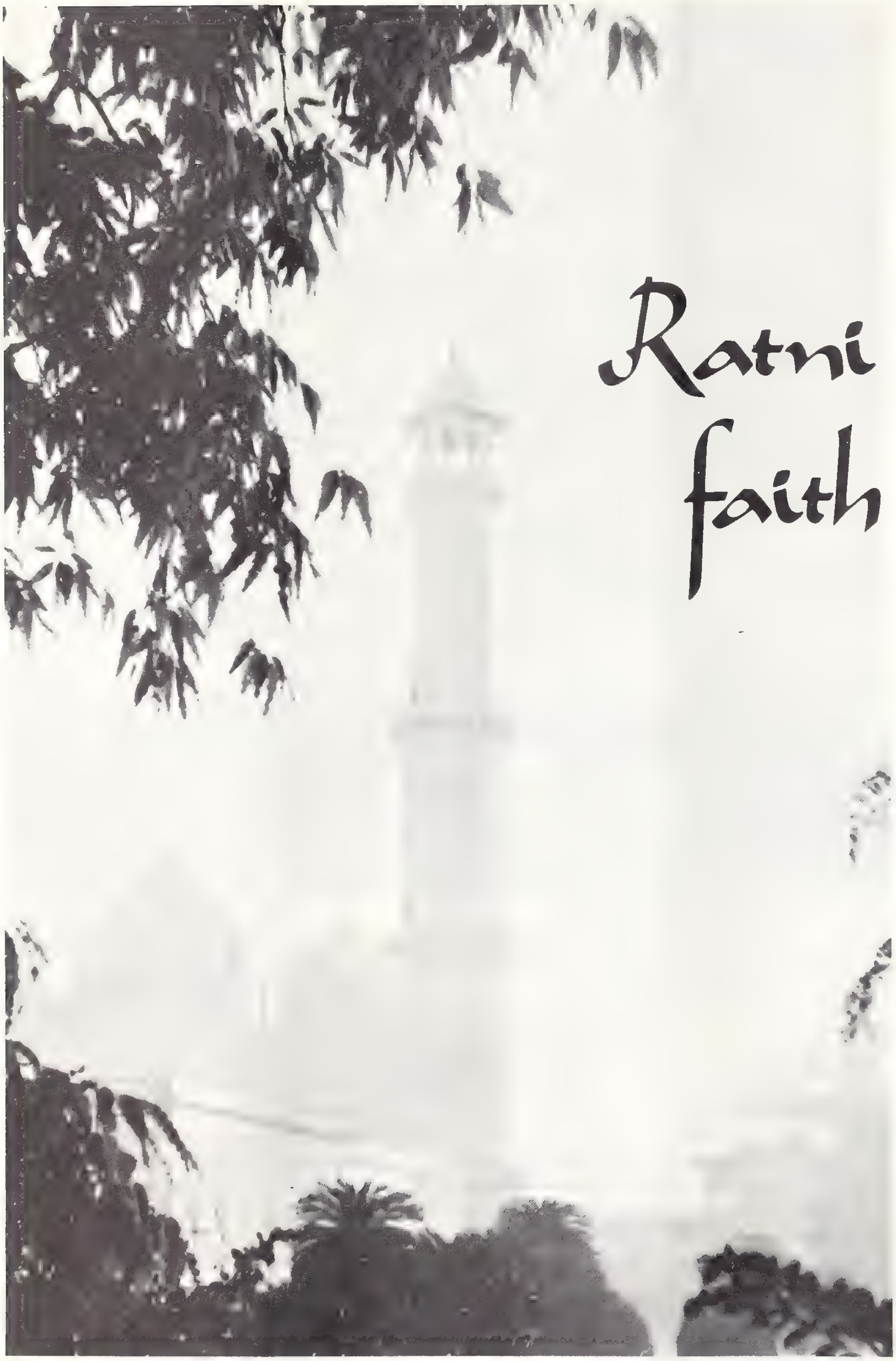
A true missionary is a linker, linking sinners to God, linking young disciples to Scripture and fellowship, linking disciple-makers to resources that will train them for ministry.

I received a letter from a fellow student worker. God has used him to help establish a healthy Christian student movement in a pioneering country. I was momentarily stunned to read that he had been asked to consider moving to another country. Then I began to understand.

He has worked himself out of a job. But he has not worked himself out of his calling. His geographical location, his status, his relationships, and his emphasis may change, but not his missionary calling from God.

In summary, what does it take to be a missionary? First, be sure your calling is from God and have a home church that recognizes and supports your calling. Learn to be a servant, to identify with others, and to cross social and cultural frontiers in your present living situation. Be a discipler by sharing all you know about living with Jesus Christ. Finally, work toward the time when your job is done and you can move on to whatever God has next for you.

"But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may accomplish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24). ☐



From the country of the Taj Mahal comes this touching story of the faithfulness of one person and the penetrating power of the Holy Spirit.

Ratni Bai's faith perseveres

Leah Sonwani

How long does it take for the seed of the gospel to come to full Christian flower? How long can early growth lie dormant without suffocating and dying? In our North American hurry and impatience, we do well to ponder a story which unfolded recently in the General Conference Mennonite Church in India. It is the story of Ratni Bai.

Ratni Bai was 13 years old when she came to study at the Annie Funk Memorial Girls' School at Janjgir, over 30 years ago, 1946-48. This was a boarding school founded by missionary Annie Funk, who died in the tragic sinking of the *Titanic* in 1912. Ratni Bai stayed at the girls' hostel directed by Shirin Mahajan. Her schoolteacher was Masih Das Amar Singh, who is no longer living.

Ratni Bai's family had recently become Christians. They were baptized at Mauhadih, location of a Mennonite mission station about thirty miles southwest of Janjgir. Ratni Bai also became a Christian. At school in Janjgir she learned to love the Christian worship, Bible study, and hymn singing.

While Ratni Bai was in Janjgir, her family returned to live in their home village of Taldevri. This was a non-Christian village, and the family was persecuted and ostracized

"At the first Christian worship service in the village, the Scripture was read from Ratni Bai's old Bible, which was well marked from over two decades of private study and devotion."

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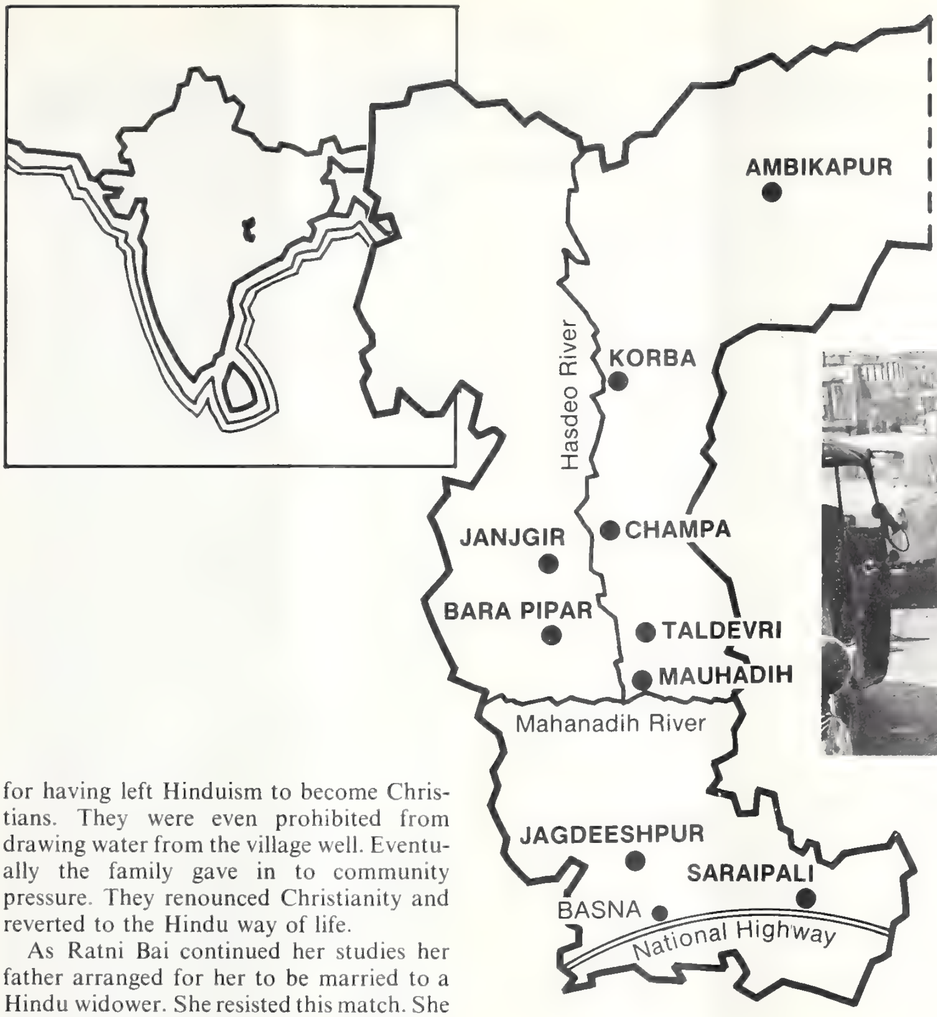

This serene cow amidst the bustling city traffic symbolizes some of the contrasts and conflicts which face the Christians at Bara Pipar even today.

for having left Hinduism to become Christians. They were even prohibited from drawing water from the village well. Eventually the family gave in to community pressure. They renounced Christianity and reverted to the Hindu way of life.

As Ratni Bai continued her studies her father arranged for her to be married to a Hindu widower. She resisted this match. She would have preferred to marry a Christian. But eventually she gave in, thinking God would take care of her because she was honoring God by obeying her parents. She was married into a Hindu family who lived in the backward village of Bara Pipar, where she was the only person who could read and write. She took her Bible along to the village when she was given in marriage.

As years passed Ratni Bai made her home and began raising a family. She did not give up her inner faith, however, and her hope that the Christian gospel could somehow take root through her life. She was fortunate that her husband did not scorn her Christian ideas. He was a good listener and did not interfere when Ratni Bai spoke and taught about Jesus to her children and her in-laws.

After many years Ratni Bai came to Arthur Thiessen at Champa for medical treatment. There she met the preacher, Phool Singh, whom she invited to visit and teach her family in the village.

Once Ratni Bai and her family had been afflicted by evil spirits. They tried the Hindu rituals to get rid of the affliction, but these failed. Then they called upon Ratni Bai's God Yeshu Masih (Jesus Christ) and received complete deliverance.

It happened that Mennonite Central Committee began a major dam building project near Ratni Bai's village of Bara Pipar. Ratni Bai's 15-year-old son, Resham Lall, was employed on the project and became well acquainted with the project director, missionary John Pauls. John and his wife Mary, together with Indian Christian workers, taught about the newness of life in Christ. Ratni Bai's son and two of his friends became Christians and were baptized in 1975.

A year later Ratni Bai's husband was baptized, and she herself was taken back into the church. In the same year the in-laws and two brothers of two other families were baptized. At the first Christian worship service in the village the Scripture was read from Ratni Bai's old Bible, which was well marked from over two decades of private study and devotion. Presently the new Christian community at Bara Pipar includes 27 persons, including children.

Ratni Bai's son was sent to seminary for two years training in Christian leadership. Now he will be working with his wife in the village of Bara Pipar and nearby. Leah Sonwani, evangelistic church worker for the General Conference Mennonite Church of India, includes this Christian group in her itineration for church nurture and women's work.

The Christians at Bara Pipar face many challenges for the future. They are a small group. Most of the people in their society reject Christianity as a "foreign" religion. The dam building project, which was intended to improve the economic life of the village, could not be completed because John and Mary Pauls were forced to leave India before their term was finished.

But Ratni Bai's dreams have been realized in ways she could not have anticipated 30 years ago when she had to leave the girls' school at Janjgir to marry a Hindu husband. It is a story of a patient and determined woman's love for her Lord, and of her desire that her people might walk in the Light. ☐

News

Seminary board debates curriculum, building, minority leadership training

Building needs, curriculum issues, and minority leadership training were the main points discussed when the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries' (AMBS) board met in Elkhart, Indiana, October 19-21.

Discussion about curriculum had different foci, among them urban education, church history and theology, the social sciences, the use of adjunct faculty, and proposals for revising the Master of Divinity program.

Proposed revisions for the MDiv degree, presented by dean Ross Bender, reflect a move toward more required courses within a well-defined focus. Bender said the new package came about in part because congregations were demanding certain skills from seminary graduates. Although the proposals will be refined further the three-year MDiv program will begin with four tracks—pastoral ministry, counseling, overseas mission, and Christian education. Other tracks are under consideration.

Several board members questioned the seminary administrators about training opportunities for urban ministries. Recently AMBS withdrew its membership in SCUPE, a Chicago-based pastoral education consortium for urban ministries. Bender asserted, "Urban ministries are not a priority for our students." J. Winfield Fretz observed, "After 50 years of Mennonites moving to the cities we are far behind. The fellowships springing up in the cities are pointing a new way."

Fretz, a sociologist, also faulted the AMBS administration for neglecting the social sciences. There should be more emphasis on the sociology of religion, he counseled. Richard Yordy, chairperson of the Goshen Biblical Seminary board, agreed and commented, "Sociology is not a live issue on this campus."

Out of these discussions on the mix of courses in the curriculum, and from the dilemma of faculty changes weakening the church history and theology department within two years, the possibility of hiring part-time staff from nearby seminaries was explored. Some board members noted the advantage of students being exposed to another theological tradition, but most seemed to think that adjunct faculty do not integrate well into a small seminary setting. "It works only if you have strong faculty members of your own to organize the program around," said one board member.

The AMBS administrators broached tentative plans for adding one large classroom for seating 100 persons, additional office space (some staff members share offices), and residences. Only about one-third of the AMBS student body of 200 live on campus. The board was open to the proposals but wanted more work done on them before a decision, possibly in February 1979. One of their key concerns was that if campus expansion was necessary there should be only one campaign to the constituency for the anticipated $500,000 cost. Nevertheless they did approve immediate construction of student duplexes if individual donors could be found to finance them. Another question the board asked was whether the proposed plans gave adequate attention to future growth, or was there a chance that the proposed extensions would create an overbuilt campus. The seminary administrators said the new facilities would simply meet needs for the current student population. The message was clear, "The present facilities are crowded."

Ross Bender proposes . . .

Board members consider . . .

In other action the AMBS board extended a welcome to the Concilio (council of leaders of the Spanish-speaking congregations of the Mennonite Church) in their request to have minority leadership training moved from a Nazarene college in San Antonio, Texas, to the Elkhart-Goshen area. Marlin Miller, president of GBS, declared that the training program in Texas was unsatisfactory, and though the Concilio realized there were problems in moving into a primarily English-speaking area, they wanted to have direct connections with Mennonite institutions. The board decided to help meet the need with specifics to be worked out by summer 1979.

Yet the request generated excitement. One board member commented, "It will be a test of how well our institutions can relate to the frontiers of church growth." Others reflected that Spanish-speaking students on the AMBS campus would effect changes in Mennonite identity.

Registrar Weyburn Groff reported 199 students enrolled, 135 through GBS, and 64 in Mennonite Biblical Seminary (MBS). Of the total 133 are men, 66 are women; about two-thirds of the students attend full-time. More than half (105) are new students, and their average age is 31 years.

Since the AMBS board is composed of all members of the board of trustees of MBS and the board of overseers of GBS, the individual boards also met separately to conduct business particular to each seminary.

Both boards reorganized for the coming year. For Mennonite Biblical Seminary (the General Conference partner in AMBS) the new executive is J. Winfield Fretz, chairperson, professor at Conrad Grebel College in Kitchener, Ontario; Waldemar Janzen, vice-chairperson, professor at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba; Helen Kruger, secretary, teacher, Kitchener, Ontario; and Fred Liechty, treasurer, banker living in Berne, Indiana. *Vic Reimer*

Seminary president urged to lead like a heavenly eagle

Henry Poettcker

Henry Poettcker, the fourth president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary since its founding in 1945, was inaugurated October 20 in the Chapel of the Sermon on the Mount on the seminary's campus in Elkhart, Indiana.

Pipe organ tones blended majestically for the processional. The congregation remained seated as 80 guests, including 20 representatives from other seminaries and colleges, the board members and faculties of Goshen Biblical Seminary and Mennonite Biblical Seminary (MBS), and representatives from General Conference institutions, filed to their seats at the beginning of the festive service. About 200 people attended.

Robert Kreider, director of Mennonite Library and Archives located at Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas, gave the inaugural address—"The People's Representative . . . Carried on Eagle's Wings." Kreider presented a brief but colorful review of the schools which General Conference leaders have founded and sometimes foundered. He recalled that as a young boy in Bluffton, Ohio, he had been in the halls of the short-lived Witmarsum Seminary and that "there were fewer books in the entire Witmarsum Seminary library than in any of the offices in faculty row in this seminary." Observing that the General Conference has enjoyed the allegiance of diverse Mennonites, Kreider said, "Our new seminary president symbolizes the multiple ethnic strands which comprise the General Conference." Poettcker is a Canadian citizen, but was born in Russia in 1925.

Jethro's advice to Moses (Exodus 18:13—19:6) was held up by Kreider as a sound plan for management. "Administrators need friends who speak the truth in love," counseled Kreider. He also observed that the team approach to administration at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries provided a circle of counselors capable of giving admonition and assurance. Continuing, he urged the seminary's leadership to lead out in the movement of a people searching for a new sense of community and identity in the wake of the spirit-expanding thrust of the recent Mennonite World Conference. For this there would be divine support; they would be carried on eagles' wings (Exodus 19:4).

MBS chairperson Peter Sawatzky read the charge to the new president. Then as Henry Poettcker knelt, board and faculty representatives laid hands on him, and Elmer Neufeld, president of the General Conference, spoke a sensitive prayer for guidance and strength. It was a powerful moment. Everyone stood. A litany of support was spoken.

The new president responded energetically, emphasizing the seminaries' task—training persons for ministry. "I would hope," he said, "that we might continue to be . . . the academic institutions which our churches need, providing the intellectual and theological grist for study and research—and to be the faith community which embodies, wrestles with, and lives the faith taught." Poettcker highlighted a theology of action or a "moving from the classroom to the arena."

Poettcker received his PhD in New Testament from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1955. He served as president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1959-78. *Vic Reimer*

Yaounde, Cameroon (EPS)—Certain ritual acts, social structures, and healing practices were commended to the churches for serious study, patient understanding, and selective emulation by the participants of a consultation on "Religious Dimensions in Humanity's Relationship to Nature" which met in Yaounde, Cameroon, September 15-23. Various myths, symbols, and social practices from many parts of the world were analyzed to illustrate similarities and differences in traditional culture.

Edward L. Johnson has been appointed US national chairperson for the global Here's Life discipleship and evangelism program sponsored by Campus Crusade for Christ International. April, 1979, will be kickoff month for the billion dollar fund-raising effort to support Here's Life. Oilman and investor N. Bunker Hunt, executive committee chairperson, said the Here's Life program represents the most massive program of Christian discipleship and evangelism in history.

Palestinians remain skeptical

Jerusalem, West Bank—The American press has widely heralded the Camp David summit. There President Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Begin of Israel not only agreed to conclude a peace treaty between their countries, but also developed "A Framework for Peace in the Middle East" including an invitation to other parties in the conflict to join in effecting a "just, comprehensive, and durable settlement."

So far no other states have expressed a willingness to join the proposed process. The people most intimately affected—the Palestinian Arabs—have until now also rejected the proposal, even though Israel for the first time formally recognized their existence, their "legitimate rights," and allowed for the development of a "self-governing authority." Why is there a rejectionist reaction?

First, the Palestinians have been shocked by the very fact of these agreements. The humiliation of occupation and the previous inflexibility of the Israelis has made any agreement appear impossible. The biggest shock, however, is the apparent lack of support for their cause by Egypt. Since the formation of the Arab League in 1944 the essence of the Palestinian case was based on a common Arab front vis-a-vis Israel. Sadat has now broken rank and the Palestinians feel weakened if not betrayed.

Second, the Palestinians are unsure what the Camp David accords mean. The accords provide a framework which includes Jordan and "representatives of the Palestinian people." Jordan has not agreed, and who the representatives might be is unknown. The extent and timetable of the Israeli military withdrawal is unclear. Numerous dimensions of the occupation are not mentioned.

Third, the Palestinians were not party to the negotiations. Can they really think of themselves as a self-conscious, self-determining people if other powers, especially the Israelis, now presume to determine their destiny? How can the most immediately affected people respond enthusiastically if the accord appears as a diktat? Israeli violation of the Geneva Convention regulations regarding captured territory has been blatant. Palestinians cannot understand why they should trust Israeli promises which to date have been meaningless.

Four, the agreements do not guarantee a role for the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in the negotiations. Indeed, the language can be interpreted to recognize any group except the PLO. Having experienced Israel's attempt to develop its own Palestinian party, the bulk of the people suspect a new attempt to divide and rule. How, they ask, can there be a bona fide Palestinian government which does not cope with the reality that nearly two-thirds of all Palestinians live outside Palestine?

Five, the agreements do not specify what will happen to the enormous Israeli investment in the West Bank and Gaza. Here the beginning and end is the question of the many settlements and extensive building especially in east Jerusalem. If Israel does move completely out of the Sinai, then the Palestinians might expect a similar move in Gaza and West Bank. During the past 11 years Israel has systematically tried to integrate the occupied territories into Israel. The Palestinians insist that justice requires a return of the land.

Six, Palestinians are afraid the agreements do not guarantee the return of east Jerusalem to Arab control. Even though Prime Minister Begin once said Sinai was a holy mountain never to be returned to Egypt and has obviously reneged, Palestinians know that there is much emotion attached to this unique city. Many Israelis have declared that Jerusalem will never again be divided.

Seven, the Palestinians hesitate to respond to Camp David because they are a divided people. These divisions are geographical: between those in the West Bank and Gaza; between those in the occupied territories and those in the surrounding states. They are divided ideologically: between rejectionists who can never accept the reality of Israel and those who accept the fact of Israel and might try to negotiate a settlement; between those who support a strong Jordan connection and those who want as little a connection as possible. Not the least damaging aspect of the long Israeli occupation has been the sustained prohibition of Palestinian political activity as a not too subtle attempt to develop a network of collaborators.

Eight, the Palestinians are not sure that they have human resources for the risks of negotiation. Palestinians have never ruled themselves as an organized state. Though a highly talented people, their spirits have been bruised, their hopes disappointed many

Among the Palestinians living outside Israeli-
400,000 of these have become refugees since hea
refugee camp near Sidon.

Lima, Peru (WMC)—During September meetings in Lima the 25-member evangelism committee of the World Methodist Council decided to climax its current five-year thrust in world evangelism with mission strategies for local churches. To be launched in 1980, "One World Mission" will feature a worldwide interchange of Christian leaders, an international youth conference on evangelism, the publication of pass-it-on books to aid the person-to-person witness of Christians, and a book on the theology of conversion. A special launching event will be held in churches the first Sunday in 1980.

Formosa City, Argentina (MBM)—Budding Indian writers produced a booklet of their original material at a six-day workshop in the Chaco area of northern Argentina. None of the participants—seven Toba Indians and two Pilaga Indians—had gone beyond the seventh grade in their formal schooling. Each of them was required to complete seven assignments: a paragraph about himself; a personal letter; "how I came to the workshop"; "how God changed my life"; a description of something in nature; a comparison describing something and relating it to daily spiritual life; and a story with a moral application.

Harrisburg, Virginia (MBM)—The Spanish radio program produced by Mennonites in Latin America, *Luz y Verdad* (Light and Truth), was one of the few allowed to remain on the air in Mexico after a government order cancelled others, according to a report in the July 12 edition of a major Mexican newspaper, *Excelsior*. Mexico's Office of the Interior ordered the suspension of a number of Spanish-language religious broadcasts because they "lend themselves to swindle the public."

rritory are those who live in Lebanon. About
ing began in Lebanon in July. Pictured above is a

times, their property exploited and often expropriated. Many of their most capable leaders have suffered imprisonment and exile. The end result is the domination of fear and distrust. Accepting Camp David requires a style and spirit that hasn't been part of their recent historical experience.

In spite of these and other reservations there is some evidence that during the next weeks small clusters of Palestinians will decide that Camp David presents the best alternative available. This group may even gain enough self-confidence and influence to enter a slate for the promised elections. The victors might then join the negotiations. Then the issue will no longer be Palestinian hesitation but the reality of the Israeli commitment to a "just, comprehensive, and durable peace." *John Lapp, MCC consultant, West Bank*

Counseling of military curbed

Washington, DC (NISBCO)—A bill passed by the Senate October 15 is becoming a matter of concern to organizations involved in counseling military personnel.

The bill (S. 274) prohibits union organization of the armed forces, and could make it unlawful for civilian counseling organizations to represent members of the armed forces to other members in the chain of command. This has traditionally been an integral part of the counseling services provided military persons by religious and other groups.

A bill before the president makes it unlawful for "any person" to "negotiate or bargain . . . on behalf of members of the armed forces, concerning the terms of conditions of service. . . ."

In arguing for the bill when it passed the House of Representatives on September 26, Samuel Stratton (Democrat-New York), member of the House Armed Services Committee, stated, "The committee did not intend that the counselor should be permitted to act as a representative of the members in grievance or disciplinary proceedings.

"A counselor may," Stratton continued, "if he chooses, accompany a member who has been absent without leave on his return to his military organization and assist him in surrendering to military authorities. . . . But he would not be permitted to interject himself into the chain of command by acting as a representative of the individual."

The bill prompted a response from Edward Snyder, executive secretary of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, and representatives of the United Church of Christ, the Mennonite Central Committee, the Church of the Brethren, the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, and the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors (NISBCO).

Writing to the Senate Armed Services Committee the groups stated:

"Because of the sweeping nature of some of the language in S. 274, it appears that military counseling activities which have been traditionally carried on by groups such as ours may be prohibited by this legislation. For example, the broad definition of 'military labor organization' would prohibit any organization from representing any member of the armed forces in connection with any grievance or complaint arising out of the terms or conditions of military service.

"This could be construed as preventing a religious organization from supporting an applicant for conscientious objector status. It could also prevent a military counseling organization from interceding on the behalf of a service member to expedite a discharge or to interpret his or her position in a disciplinary or emergency situation. . . ."

Opposition to the bill came not only from representatives of peace churches and counseling organizations, but also from the Department of Defense. Charles H. Wilson (Democrat-California), member of the House Armed Services Committee, took the Defense Department view during the September 26 debate, saying, "I was impressed with the testimony of the legal counsel of the Department of Defense, who held that there was a greater opportunity for unions to become active and organized with this legislation because of the possibility of its being ruled unconstitutional. . . ."

Theodore S. Weiss (Democrat-New York), in an interview in the *Army Times*, October 16, said that President Carter should veto S. 274 because the bill fails to safeguard the constitutional rights of military people.

"We have serious questions about the constitutionality of portions of the bill," says Warren W. Hoover, executive director of NISBCO. "It is our hope that the bill will be vetoed."

◀ **Following his naming** as the 1978 winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, Isaac Bashevis Singer, author of many popular Yiddish books translated into English, knots a favorite tie as he prepares for a Surfside, Florida, press conference. In acknowledging the award Singer cited the Bible as an example of great literature, saying, "The Bible is not obscure, it is wonderfully clear, yet I am sure that when Moses came down from Mount Sinai, the intellectuals of his time said, 'For this, he had to go up to heaven? Couldn't he have brought us something more profound?' But heaven is not interested in phony statements."

Philippine farmer seeks survival through cooperation

"If we small poultry producers (2,000 to 6,000 chickens) can get together and help each other, we can survive despite competition from big producers," says Vir Montecastro, a poultry farmer in the Davao, Mindanao, area of the Philippines.

Montecastro took over a small mismanaged farm a year ago and has yet to make a profit. His farm has 1,300 laying hens. Prices for eggs fluctuate wildly because large producers control the supply of chicks, eggs, and feeds.

The cost of feed is about 2,200 pesos ($300) weekly for 1,300 chicks. Protein-rich feeds are the most expensive and are often imported, although theoretically the Philippines could grow enough. Much of the locally grown soybean, a vital feed ingredient, is diverted to Taiwan or Japan.

The poultry farmers are now faced with a rise in the cost of feeds which will surely drive them out of business unless they can unite into an organization to buy feeds in bulk.

"There is still a market for the small farmer," claims Montecastro, "but when we are squeezed by the large corporations, we will close down and the big ones can complete their monopoly."

During the rainy season when large farms cull their laying hens, production is cut sometimes as much as 40 percent and egg prices skyrocket. Most small farms try to make a quick profit during this time.

Montecastro operates differently. He has a steady customer, a chain of restaurants. When the price of eggs increases, his prices remain the same or go up slightly. In exchange, when the prices are low, customers continue to buy from him although they could get eggs elsewhere more cheaply.

When a priest visited Montecastro to say that a church school was willing to purchase all the eggs he could supply, Montecastro asked, "Where do you get your eggs now?" When he discovered it was from another small producer, he refused. "I can find markets more easily than my neighbor. He is struggling too. Keep buying from him."

Not everyone has that long-range vision and commitment to cooperation rather than competition. Montecastro believes cooperation is necessary for survival. *Dorothy Friesen and Gene Stoltzfus, MCC Philippines*

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From relief to development

A great many English words have been introduced into Hindi, the language of the majority of Indians. One of these is "relief."

Even after being in India for two years "preaching" development, I still hear people saying that I have come here to do relief work. Unfortunately, "development" is not part of Hindi vocabulary.

The people in the states of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh understand well what relief means because they have firsthand experience. In response to the famine conditions of 1967-68 large amounts of food and money were distributed free or used in food-for-work projects.

In large measure, we Westerners have taught Indian villagers the meaning of relief. However, we have not been too successful in teaching development. Relief-oriented work has been carried on much too long after the emergency period ended. True, there was a shift in emphasis from food kitchens to food-for-work projects, but it was essentially an approach which created dependency on outside resources without moves toward self-reliance. What we thought was development was often relief.

Development strategy continues to undergo revision. Relief requiring a large infusion of funds and materials over a short period of time is certainly needed in crisis situations. However, if we expect to decrease poverty, then development is needed. Money is not the central thing; rather, development requires people and time. Relatively small amounts of money and materials are needed over a long period.

Unlike relief, development is a process and so it cannot be given. It is never a handout. Development is a process of change set in motion by the people of a community. This means that the village community is not to be seen as the object of development but as the social vehicle whereby the process of change is set in motion. *Henry Fast, Bihar, India*

◄ **This emblem is the symbol of the 1979 International Year of the Child,** designated by the United Nations and honoring children of all races and creeds everywhere in the world. The yearlong observance will find church groups accelerating their support for the rights of children—including their right of advocacy. There is also increased concern for the welfare of the world's youngsters, and Christian leaders are seeking improved methods to provide effective programs in nutrition, health, and education.

"Wichita '78," an 11-minute film documenting the spirit of this past summer's Mennonite World Conference in Wichita, Kansas, is now available for rental or purchase from Film Division, The People's Place, Main Street, Intercourse, Pennsylvania 17534, or in Canada from Dueck Film Productions, 295 Wallace Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2E 0B1.

Record

Calendar

November 22-24—Ministers' course, Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, British Columbia

November 24-15—MCC (Alberta) annual meeting, Mennonite Brethren Church, Coaldale, Alberta

November 25—MCC relief sale, Fairview, Oklahoma

Audiovisuals

A packet on militarism in education is now available as a resource for parents, ministers, teachers, and organizers. The packet includes information on military recruitment and testing, college research and ROTC, national service, Selective Service and filing as a conscientious objector, counterrecruitment, and the delayed entry program. To obtain the packet, send $2.00 to The National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors (NISBCO) 550 Washington Boulevard, Fifteenth and New York, Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20005, or call (202) 393-4868.

A new filmstrip entitled *People's Technology* is now available from all North American Mennonite Central Committee audiovisual libraries. The seventeen-minute color filmstrip is accompanied by a cassette tape soundtrack. It focuses on Mennonite Central Committee's involvement with peoples of developing countries, describing local development as a process that involves community members. The filmstrip is available in Canada from MCC (Canada), 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 2C8, and MCC provincial offices. In the United States it is available from MCC Audiovisuals Library, 21 South Twelfth Street, Akron, Pennsylvania, 17501; MCC regional offices, and some church conference AV libraries.

Rice field workers in Chad harvest grain with locally developed rice thresher, as seen in People's Technology *filmstrip.*

Ministers

Henry Paetkau, Vineland, Ontario, will serve as pastor at Harrow Church, Harrow, Ontario, beginning January 1, on a part-time basis. He graduated from Canadian Mennonite Bible College in 1973 with a BTh and is completing a doctorate in Anabaptist history at the University of Western Ontario (London).

Ernest W. Neufeld, Chicago, Illinois, was installed as pastor of Bethany Church, Freeman, South Dakota, on September 24. Neufeld is a graduate of Bluffton (Ohio) College and Mennonite Biblical Seminary. He previously served congregations in Allentown, Pennsylvania; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Summerfield, Illinois; and most recently in Phoenix, Arizona.

Patricia Shelly, senior student at the Iliff School of Theology, is beginning a year of pastoral internship at Arvada Church, Arvada, Colorado, working with copastors Peter Ediger and Marilyn Miller. Shelly is a graduate of Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas) and has served the church in various capacities including camping programs, music, and educational ministries.

Ward Shelly has submitted his resignation from Calvary Church, Washington, Illinois.

Deaths

Peter B. Wiens, editor of *Der Bote* from 1963-76, died of cancer at his home in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, on October 10. He is survived by his wife Katharina, three sons, and two daughters. Wiens, born in Friesdensdorf, Russia, in 1906, immigrated to Canada in 1924. Married in 1928 to Katharina Wiens they farmed near Hershel, Saskatchewan for 35 years. In 1963 Peter was called to become editor of *Der Bote,* the German-language weekly published by the General Conference. He often referred to himself as the "farmer editor." Poor health caused him to retire in 1976. Before his death, however, he edited a selection of his editorials which have been printed as a book, *Wenn Der Farmer Schriftleiter Wird (When a Farmer Becomes an Editor).* Funeral services for him were held in First Mennonite Church in Saskatoon on October 13.

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My gift for ____________________

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by Phyllis Pellman Good

With so much being written that speaks of growing older as decline, depression, and hopelessness, here is a Christian couple in their eighties who have grown older with grace, love, and hope. Much is spoken today of the "simple lifestyle"—here is a couple who have lived the simple life together for over 60 years. Wisdom literature—spicy, full of stories, tried. 80 photographs. Paper, $7.95, in Canada $8.90.

My gift for ____________________

Singing Christmas carols at the annual Christmas Eve fellowship

SOUTHERN HILLS MENNONITE CHURCH

A group of small children is seated on the floor, close to their minister. It is Sunday morning in Southern Hills Church, Topeka, Kansas, and time to visit with the children. A banner on the wall proclaims: "Take a moment of time to celebrate."

In 1952, 1-W's began coming to Topeka for alternative service. Feeling a need for weekly worship they began meeting in a house at 721 Polk, with guest speakers. Then they met in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In 1955 they organized a church, and the next year Floyd Bartel became the first pastor. A constitution and a statement of faith were written.

The original dream was for all Mennonites in Topeka to be united. But this was not fulfilled. In 1958, the Mennonite Brethren withdrew to form their own congregation.

A parsonage had been purchased, and General Conference Mennonites continued to meet there.

The next three years were discouraging, with the average attendance down from 70 in 1958 to 27 in 1960.

In March 1961 land was purchased at 511 East 37th. Construction of the building was begun in August. The men from our church, supplemented by many hours from men of other district churches, did most of the labor. The church was dedicated on 16 September 1962.

In 1965 Floyd Bartel resigned and Lamont Woelk became the new minister. The present membership is 81. Since 1-W days are over, others have come to Topeka to pursue various careers.

When I think of Southern Hills Church, I think of a small group of warmhearted believers. I think of the minister visiting a member who had experienced a death in the family. With some psychological skill, but mostly as a concerned fellow Christian, he helped release the pent-up emotions.

I think of the men in our church sharing the moving day for a member. They have now formed their own version of Mennonite Disaster Service and are roofing a house for someone who can't afford it.

I think of a local agency calling our minister for help. The church maintains a diaconate fund through which we help people in a jam. This might be used to pay a utility bill for someone who can't make the welfare check stretch far enough. Members contribute to keep the fund operating.

We contribute food, clothes, money, and labor to the I CARE Association. This is an organization of six churches, including Southern Hills, which is concerned with the material needs of people in southeast Topeka.

The Friendship Circle makes quilts to be sold for relief. The one contributed to Bethel College last fall sold for $625.00.

A preschool meets in our church basement. It was begun by private individuals, but recently several members of our congregation formed a corporation to buy it.

Our Sunday morning worship is a harmony of the formal and informal. Sundays with typical sermons are interspersed with guest speakers, panel discussions, or slide presentations. We have been plunged into drama with the young people doing a newscast about the events of Easter.

Children's and adult Sunday school classes meet every Sunday. We enjoy music by a children's choir and an adult choir. We have tried various forms of Bible school in summer.

The athletic "souls" organize baseball, basketball, and volleyball teams. They're building character. At least that's what they say when they hit a losing streak.

An annual camp-out has become a tradition for a weekend in summer.

Our congregation has two basic commitments by which we seek to serve our Lord. We want to provide a warm, rich, fellowship which will meet the spiritual needs of everyone in our group. We also want to reach out into the surrounding community to share Christ's love. The world is often cruel, and we wish to ease the burden of someone in distress. Comparing the size of Topeka with our membership, the latter is truly a "loaves and fishes" undertaking. But our banner said, "Celebrate." How could we celebrate without attempting a witness to his caring love? *Elsie Stucky*

CONGREGATIONAL
PROFILE

Letters

Type is too small

Dear Editor: At the present time there is no greater frustration for us than trying to read *The Mennonite* because the type is so small. This must be true for many older people. Fewer young people than old people take time to read it. We are glad you use larger type for the last page. At least we can read that much without a magnifying glass, even wearing strong glasses. *Mrs. John V. Lowenberg, Donnellson, Iowa 52625* October 5

Editor's note: You are right: others have also complained. We are in the process of introducing a larger type size as soon as possible.

On poverty and funerals

Dear Editor: I want to thank you for the exceedingly thought-provoking editorial on "Modern Poverty" (October 3 issue). Editorials like this should help us as Christians to avoid following the path of least resistance and to keep alert to the dangers of succumbing to "this lying propaganda" and thus experiencing "an added dimension of disutility."

I would also like to add my voice of concern to that of Isaac H. Wiens (Letters, October 3 issue) about the high cost of dying. His letter ends with the question, "Why don't our churches organize in a way to bury our own?" On several occasions I have shared with friends, small groups, or Sunday school classes a practice that one of the Jewish communities in Bogota, Colombia, has which might serve as a model for some of our churches. Perhaps sharing it on a wider scale might prompt a group or church to try something similar.

This synagogue community has a standing "funeral committee." As I understand it, each person or family is assessed a modest annual fee for the "funeral fund." When a person within the community dies the family calls this committee and they take over, making all the arrangements for the funeral—mortuary, casket, burial service, and cemetery plot. The family doesn't have to worry about anything. The expenses are paid from the fund. It doesn't matter whether the person who dies is a millionaire or a pauper, the rabbi himself or the custodian of the building, every one is treated the same—same price of casket and same type of service.

Perhaps something like this could be organized in our local or area Mennonite churches to do away with the high cost of funerals and the "exploitation of grief" by some (not all, of course) morticians, as well as the well-nigh idolatrous practices now in vogue in some areas. Perhaps some of our Mennonite carpenters could make caskets as part of their daily work. I am sure that our brother- and sisterhood can come up with a workable proposition. As Mennonites, who have always placed great emphasis on mutual aid, we should be able to come up with a solution to this problem where "mutual aid" is desperately needed. *Mary Becker Valencia, 1012 East 7th Street, Newton, Kansas 67114* October 5

Another Bethel College

Dear Editor: Thank-you for the recognition given me in the "Workers" section (September 26 issue). However, I must point out a grievous error.

While it is true that I attended a "Bethel College," it was not, I'm sorry to say, the Bethel of North Newton, Kansas. Instead it was the Bethel of St. Paul, Minnesota—that bastion of Bible-believing Baptists that integrates "faith and learning" to the fullest extent possible (our football team has been at or near the top for quite a few years now).

If it is any consolation this is not the first time I have been confronted with this mix-up. Having just joined Mennonite Central Committee, I have had to explain many times that I went to Bethel in St. Paul.

But that doesn't excuse the mistake. I will forgive you this time, but in the future beware—there may be more Bethel/St. Paul alumni joining MCC or Mennonite Voluntary Service; I wouldn't want them to face the same traumatic identity crisis I have had to face in my brief fling into Mennonite circles. *Your Baptist brother, Robert Haarsager, 1743 Kilbourne Place, North West, Washington, D.C. 20010* October 5

Notes on church growth

Strengths become obstacles

Some of our congregational strengths can become obstacles to growth. Many of our relatives often belong to the same congregation we do. That's great. The more completely the whole family—even the extended family—belongs to Christ and the church, the better.

This strength, however, can become an obstacle. It need not, but sometimes our family character makes it difficult for new people to find a "place" with us. To new persons it can feel as if they must become our blood relatives in addition to joining our spiritual family. We joke about playing the "Mennonite game"—the common practice of figuring out who your relatives are and telling you mine. There are times when this is helpful. But persons of non-Mennonite background are left feeling "out of it." This is doubly true when our socializing and our attention are focused upon the in-group, even when done unconsciously.

We must learn the art of getting acquainted with new persons in ways that are common to all. Almost everyone has an immediate family, Mennonite or not. Everyone is from somewhere, Mennonite or not. Everyone has special interests, Mennonite or not. It would help if we could know better how it feels to be the "outsider" in a new situation, and to remember how others have helped us to find acceptance.

Often nearly 100 percent of our congregation is made up of longtime believers who have also grown up in the church. Longtime believers are a strength in the church because they know the Scriptures and the ways of Christian living "from childhood." But they may also have forgotten, if they ever knew, what it was like to be a new Christian with so much to learn and with old patterns of life that may be hard to change. The longtime believers have maturity but may have forgotten the enthusiasm of a "first love" for Christ that a new believer feels. Longtime believers also have most or all of their friends among Christians like themselves with few significant evangelizing opportunities. New Christians still may have many more friends and relatives outside of Christ with many good opportunities to share the good news of Jesus.

Longtime believers help a local congregation to be strong, but they also need to affirm the enthusiasm of new believers and rejoice in the way God is bringing persons to himself through their witness. *Floyd G. Bartel, CHM secretary for congregational mission*

Meditation

Marriages can grow

"The nicest thing that a father can do for his children is to love their mother." These words constituted one of the posters hanging in the meeting room of the Marriage Encounter retreat at Spruce Lake in eastern Pennsylvania. A great variety made up the 22 couples who registered for the May 19-21 event. There were bankers and their wives, a medical doctor with his schoolteacher wife, a clinical psychologist with his wife, a Philadelphia policeman with his wife, five pastor couples, a nuclear engineer, factory workers, homemakers, nurses, and other vocations represented as well. The husband of one young wife had never had the opportunity to learn to read or write.

Included in this colorful group was pastor Richard Greene and his wife Lottie, from Frostburg, Maryland. The Frostburg Church of the Brethren is constructing a new church building according to the exact dimensions of Noah's Ark. The ark church is going to be called "God's Ark of Safety" as a witness to the world of the soon coming of our Lord.

Here are some of the testimonials written about the retreat: "Even though we have had a good marriage, there are areas in our lives that need much improvement. This weekend helped to show us what they are." *Maryland*

"What has happened here this weekend has been different. The emphasis on making good marriages better is so important. The foundation upon which this weekend was built, that of Christ's relationship to those he loves, is such an important conception." *West Virginia*

"Thank-you for caring enough about other couples' marriages that you took a step of faith and started these marriage retreats." *Pennsylvania*

"I have been so richly blessed this weekend; it is unbelievable." *Maryland*

"How can we say thank-you? I honestly feel that this retreat was led by God. My husband and I are completely one now. We each had one area that kept us from total oneness, but thanks to your help we are *one* and plan to stay this way, with God's help, forever." *Maryland*

One of the wives called on Tuesday after the retreat and said, "Life is really beautiful. I am so happy. My husband is like a rose just opening up. Now when I talk to him he is there. It seemed like I was living in the past and my husband was living in the future and the kids were running around saying, 'Where are Mom and Dad?' Now we are going to live together today with Jesus." *Pennsylvania*

The marriage retreat is structured to help good marriages become even better. It is not primarily for deep problematic situations, although some have come with serious problems and have found answers. The weekend provides a stimulus to achieve a richer relationship in marriage and a closer walk with God. You might call it a "crash course" on communication. We believe that the ability to communicate on a deep, intimate level is the secret of a strong, growing marriage. That, coupled with commitment to Jesus Christ and his Word, will help any couple grow in their marriage.

The retreat is not a sensitivity session or group dynamics. There are no discussion sessions where you are put on the spot. The only person you share deeply with is your spouse. It is a time for couples to spend together away from children, away from home, away from schedule, away from jobs—a time to concentrate on the togetherness of marriage.

The weekend is for couples of any age or any church. We have had couples from four months (newlyweds) to those who have been married for thirty-eight years, and from many different churches.

Team couples who worked with Janis and me on the recent May retreat were Henry and Jane Gehman, Clarence and Arlene Carbaugh, Ken and Eloise Shaffer—all members of the East Swamp Church. We thank God for a core of eleven team couples that we can draw on for help. It takes three team couples, plus the lead couple, to conduct each marriage retreat weekend.

The weekend begins with the first session Friday night and ends Sunday about 3:00 p.m. The total cost for a couple varies from $50.00 to $75.00, depending upon the accommodations available.

Interested couples may contact East Swamp Mennonite Church, 25 East Swamp Road, Quakertown, Pennsylvania 18951.

Specific goals for the weekend are to accept self and spouse for who each is, to grow in marriage togetherness, and to deepen relationships with God as a couple.

Norman J. Schmidt

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CONTRIBUTORS

Ada Lum travels thousands of miles each year, primarily in Asia, visiting students and staff with International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. She has been associated for 20 years with Inter-Varsity, 5206 Main Street, Downers Grove, Illinois 60515.

Leah Sonwani, Mission Compound, Champa, Madhya Pradesh, India 495-671, is an evangelistic worker for the General Conference Mennonite Church of India.

Norman J. Schmidt, 25 East Swamp Road, Quakertown, Pennsylvania 18951, is pastor of the East Swamp Mennonite Church.

CREDITS

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

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Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Countdown to Minneapolis

The midtriennium special session of our General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) is only three months away. Decision-making time is upon us.

Congregations must decide on delegates. Delegates need to decide on the meaning of civil responsibility.

Some GC members are afraid of Minneapolis. They wonder if most churches will even send delegates. And they worry that delegates may come with minds made up, unwilling to search together.

The scenario will provide a test of the GC family. We are 350 sister congregations at many stages of growth and interest. Some in our family believe that the issue exists only for a few people. Others say that the concept of tax-withholding should never have been introduced prior to the conference, because it will cloud the process. Several Canadians have insisted that the issue belongs "south of the border," and they don't want anything to do with it. And there are those who feel that our GC family has other more important business to attend to, such as developing our evangelistic potential.

The "real issue" may well be decided prior to the roll call at the Leamington Hotel on February 8. Are we a spiritual family or are we not? If we are a family, then the biblical teaching "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together" (1 Corinthians 12:26) has much relevance. Even if only a small group in our GC family is hurting on this issue, can we do less than hurt with them? In any human family, would we not look to the lesson of the waiting, concerned Father (Luke 15:11-32), as a reminder about our attitudes toward "erring" children? Could we be like the "elder son"—faithful but callous?

It was a "family" vote at Bluffton that called this conference. You and I are involved. It is our issue and it challenges citizens of all countries. What does it mean to be faithful Christians and faithful citizens?

Suppose the larger Mennonite family had never asked if we can serve our countries without taking up arms. Would countries have voluntarily granted exemption and alternative forms of service?

Could it be, in a time when bodies are not nearly so important to technological warfare as our dollars, that God is calling us to update our peace witness? Is it possible that the 1980s call for new evidence that we believe in Jesus Christ as the Prince of Peace? The Holy Spirit might lead us to something far removed from tax-resistance.

I have wondered, pondered, and prayed about the midtriennium. My spirit has also worried about it. But I have come to a fresh inner peace.

The General Conference Mennonite Church is a strong spiritual family. We have demonstrated that by our history of maintaining a powerful and God-blessed missionary outreach program, in spite of the fantastic diversity among us. Our GC family continues to grow: over 50 new churches and fellowships have emerged in the last 10 years. We have just embarked upon the second year of the creative Foundation Series in our Sunday schools. And Wichita showed us many brothers and sisters in the larger Mennonite family that embraces over 40 nations.

On February 9-10, 1979, the GC family will have a super opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to Jesus Christ and to each other. We have excellent resources in the Charlie Lord and Larry Kehler books to study the issue in advance. The world, tottering constantly at the brink of nuclear holocaust, is waiting for a word from those who believe that Jesus Christ can reconcile "though sins be as scarlet." We cannot fail to face this challenge. "Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord . . ." (Isaiah 1:18).

Let us pray, prepare, and choose our delegates. God's Holy Spirit is surely waiting to bless our "family" in a new way. *Bernie Wiebe*

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Finding ourselves complete

God helped Wendell find a way

finding ourselves complete

Betty Harms

A tragic automobile accident took the life of her young husband less than two years after marriage. Betty, the young widow, is finding new hope for wholeness.

Since my widowhood, beginning January 1975, I have struggled to rediscover my identity and the potential within me. I have read books and articles on singleness, marriage, and widowhood, many of which express or react to the stereotyping of women into a wife/mother role. I find myself disagreeing with the idea that a person is incomplete outside of marriage. I also disagree with overreactions which blame society for the struggles of singles and widows. I feel that there must be a channel, other than marriage, leading to my wholeness.

We *are* "total"—complete—as individuals. God says, "Two shall become one." He doesn't say, "Two halves make a whole"—what would be the miracle in that? He says, "Two wholes shall be one." *That* is a miracle. Beautiful. But we do not need marriage in order to be complete.

But right now I am somewhat fragmented. All the parts are here but not properly assembled. Some are lying unused. Others grind against each other rather than running smoothly together. It did not require a great personal catastrophe to produce this disorder. Maybe the center of gravity has been displaced for some time. I have neglected to place Christ at the core and therefore the parts have been drifting about aimlessly rather than being drawn together *by him* to work together *for him.* It is this center of gravity I need as a woman (or man, if I were one), single or married, in order to be complete. As a whole person in Christ I can then give to others in whatever kinds of relationships I encounter.

I read several articles which expressed the philosophy that in marriage and other relationships we bring our individual selves into these relationships in such a way that two still remain two. Theoretically, by being individually whole selves partners in a relationship need not go through a catastrophic trauma should separation occur, because they do not *need* the other person to "fulfill" them and make them complete.

Applying this to myself, as a widow, I reacted negatively. For one thing I could not believe it was possible to have a biblical "two shall be one" marriage if I refused to give up some of my individual identity so that oneness might happen. My experience was that the greatest completeness and joy happened for Walter and me when we were willing to "get inside" each other; to become so much a part of each other that we could see and experience from the same place. That was a deeply spiritual thing, I think, because we seemed to occupy the same "space" at such times of "perfect unity."

Secondly, I think that one of our greatest needs as individuals is to be needed by others. One of Walter's most persuasive arguments when he wooed me was that he needed me. And this was one of the buoys for me when death separated us. The less-than-two-years relationship seemed trivial in this eternity of time, and the trauma of separation hideously gigantic in comparison, but there was comfort in the thought that he needed me while we were together. It fulfilled some purpose. I would never trade this purposefulness for a vain attempt at avoiding trauma by hoarding my individuality.

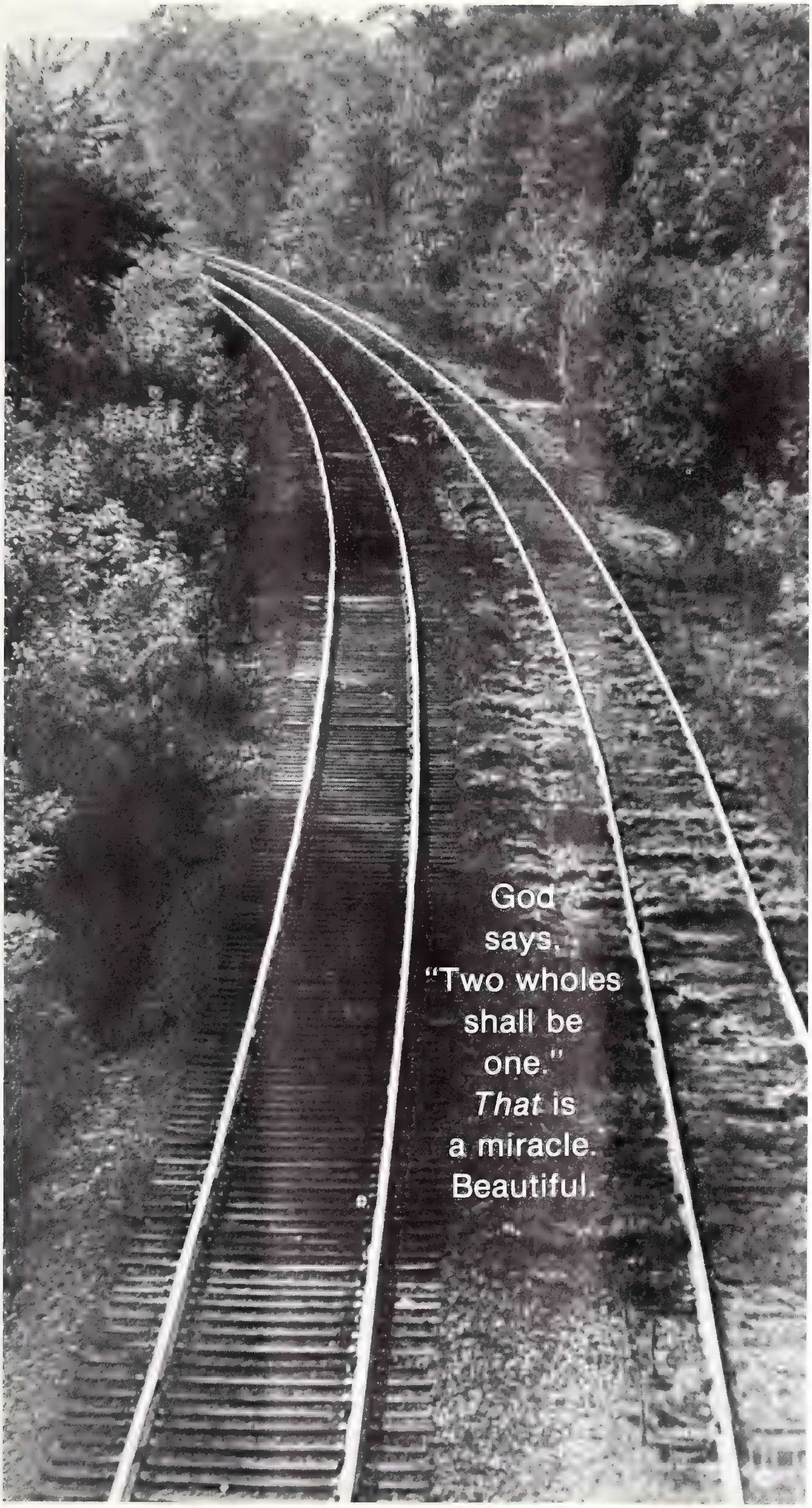
I imagine shouts of protest from those who have forgotten what I said at the beginning of this article, for I seem to have contradicted myself. But think again. I have merely tried to express the idea that the intended unity in marriage is a miraculous blending of two complete persons into one. (We use the same concept for the Trinity—three-in-one, yet three.) The fuller and more unified these two persons are within themselves the fuller and more unified may be their marriage. Each brings more resources and the center of gravity for each is the same—Christ—and thus oneness is made possible.

Dissolving that oneness is a difficult thing and I think it should necessarily be so. I cannot imagine any *one* thing, which would not be traumatized by being divided into two equal parts. The trauma is far greater for living things than for inanimate objects, because all the parts of a living organism are in some way dependent on one another.

I believe that I retained my wholeness while blending my self with my husband. I had a career, read enough, and watched enough TV to be fairly in touch with the world, struggled about my own personal relationship with God, and coped with depressions which were more my own personality conflicts than a result of some marital problem. Walter helped. He included me in his career and business adventures. He respected my intelligence, my need to be complete in myself, and helped me to find my self. I think he knew there was more "oneness" together when there was more "wholeness" individually. He never suffocated my individuality.

Yet when he died I did not feel whole. I had been many things: daughter, sister, nurse, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law, Walter's wife. I was still what I had been, except that I was no longer Walter's wife. I was a widow, and widowhood, even at 23 without children, is not the same as having always been single. I couldn't go back to that but had to integrate these collective experiences into a new person. I *felt* very much a half. Much of me was so blended with the man who wasn't around anymore that I felt as though part of me had died with him. I often wished my body would die too, so that my spirit—what was left of it—could find the rest of itself and become whole again.

But our spirits are not as tied down by our bodies as we sometimes think they are. Slowly I began to gather the shattered fragments—all the parts were there somewhere—and to reassemble them into a functional whole once more. I had to reclaim many parts I had given to Walter, a thing that could have made me feel I was being unfaithful to him if Christ had not said in response to the Sadducees in Mark 12:25: "For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven." And in the process of reassembly I found that I was allowed to



"The less-than-two-years relationship seemed trivial in this eternity of time, and the trauma of separation hideously gigantic in comparison, but there was some comfort in the thought that he had needed me while we were together."

keep many parts that Walter had given to me. This was a little surprising and was a major source of joy in sorrow. I had become a bigger person with some of the rough edges worn off.

It was not a new hoarding of my individuality which made the trauma of separation easier. But when I recognized my complete individuality and usefulness before God, I realized that I could contribute something to the people in God's world, regardless of my marital state.

I said *I* did the gathering and reassembling; and thinking back on the exhaustion, I'm inclined to believe I must have been working hard at it. People often complimented me on my strength to perform this task, but I could never understand them because I felt weak and tired most of the time. I believe it was Christ, the magnetic center, who made the achievement possible at all. I worked hardest at keeping him in his proper place, because I was keenly aware of my inability to get myself together without him. Even now when I replace him with some other center I can immediately see fragmentation begin, and the efficiency of the whole machine drops rapidly.

Christ comes to each of us individually. I believe he comes to a complete person—not a half—and offers to provide each with a center around which you may organize yourself. If you are single—still or again—I want to say: don't let society tell you that you are incomplete without marriage. You are all there. Develop that person for God's sake and your own. But remember, when society cramps your style, that Christ did not ride roughshod over others to complete his difficult assignment. If you are married and have children develop the total person within your self. You will have more to give for those whom you "leave to mourn your passing," or you will have a little more to work with when you are the one left.

Let us see ourselves through Christ's eyes as individuals, complete in our selves, but blending with others to live and work in unity in marriages and/or in the Christian community. ●

God helpe

LaVernae J. Dick

"Are you sure that your youngest son is old enough to hear?" the cancer specialist in the hospital room queried. I had said that our boys should also hear from him the diagnosis of their father's illness. He had just told me that my husband, Johnny, had acute myelocytic leukemia. The prognosis was not good.

"Yes," I reassured the physician. "Wendell is old enough to hear."

He got up, quickly walked out into the hall, and returned with the boys, Stephen, 23, and Wendell, 16. Wendell, the first to come into the room, immediately went to the low, recessed window seat and sat down. He pulled his knees up to his chin and clasped his hands tightly around his legs. The doctor and Stephen sat facing the bed where Johnny was lying, and I sat with my arm around him.

The specialist went through the details. Johnny had one of the worst types of leukemia. There was no hope for a cure and not even a good chance for a remission. The best that could be done was to try to buy some time by giving him chemotherapy. If it worked, he might have six months to a year. As the specialist was talking, I glanced often at Wendell. He was sobbing quietly and his hand moved frequently to his eyes.

After the doctor finished, he got up to leave. "Please discuss it among yourselves and let me know what you want to do," he stated. "If you decide on treatment, we will start tomorrow."

An awesome silence settled over the room. I could see Wendell, still sobbing, Johnny was the first to speak. "Do you think that I should have treatment?" he asked.

"Yes," Stephen answered quickly, "but only as long as there is progress."

"That's the way I feel, too," I added.

Wendell and his Dad had bantered back and forth about many things when Wendell suddenly said, "You know, Dad, you're pretty special. I wouldn't do this for just anyone."

Wendell find a way

"Me, too," Wendell said slowly, making a deliberate effort to steady his voice.

"Then I'm agreeable," Johnny stated.

Stephen decided to go and tell his grandparents what the specialist had said.

After a while Johnny drifted off to sleep. I noticed Wendell, still in the window seat, periodically raising his hand to his eyes. I walked over to him and placed my hand on his shoulder, "Wendell, your aunt Diana was just 16 when she lost her father. It is not easy, but God will help you find the way."

It was a beautiful day, so I suggested that we take a walk in the park. We were just outside on the sidewalk when Wendell turned to me and said, "Mom, I'm glad that you thought I was old enough to hear what the doctor had to say about Dad."

Then he began asking questions about the future. Could he go to college? Could he still play baseball and football? When assured that all of these things were still possible he took my hand and we strolled through the park in silence.

The next day at school he immediately went to the library and read all he could about acute myelocytic leukemia. That night he said to his grandma, "It's usually young people who get leukemia like Dad has. We may have him around for a long time yet."

Wendell made frequent trips to the hospital and helped bring his dad home at the end of what seemed like a successful five days of treatment. We had decided to have Johnny at home as much as possible. Our family doctor had agreed to coordinate his care with the cancer specialist.

One day, when Johnny's fingernails were rough and snagging everything he touched, I asked Wendell if he would file and polish them with clear nail polish. Although he had never done that before he took the equipment and set about doing it. He and his dad had bantered back and forth about many things when Wendell suddenly said, "You know, Dad, you're pretty special. I wouldn't do this for just anyone."

Later, when it was necessary for Johnny to spend a few days in the hospital again for further chemotherapy, Wendell was there every day once, and sometimes twice. He never stayed long. But he always had something to report to his dad about what had happened, and to inquire about his dad's day.

In the following weeks Johnny's condition continued to deteriorate, but we were still able to care for him at home. I began to realize that he might die at home. I wasn't certain that I could handle that alone. I explained to Wendell about the various ways his father might die. Then I asked, "If it should happen in the night, do you think you could help me? It will be a hard thing to do."

Wendell thought a while and then said quietly, "Yes, Mom, I think I can help. You may call me."

Johnny's condition continued to worsen. It was evident that he couldn't live many more days. It was still less than two months since we had learned about the seriousness of his illness. When I telephoned the family doctor after Johnny had a very restless night, and hallucinated for the first time, he said we would need to hospitalize him. The two boys told their father goodbye when they left that morning.

Before the ambulance came to take Johnny to the hospital he slipped into a coma. He died within a few hours after reaching the hospital, never regaining consciousness.

Our pastor offered to go to Wendell at school. He told him what had happened. His father's body was still in the hospital room and I was also there.

"I'd like to go to my mother," Wendell said calmly. When he came into the room, I got up and walked over to him. We stood at the foot of his father's bed with our arms around each other and we gazed into his father's face, no longer distorted with pain.

"Oh, Mother," Wendell said, "he looks so much more peaceful now than he did this morning when I told him goodbye."

"Yes," I said.

God had helped Wendell find the way. ●

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A MOMENT SHARED

Helen C. Coon

"I'll buy a Coke,"
  were his words to me
  with a grin on his face
  quite cordially,

Few words were spoken
  but I felt instead
  a kind of communion
  like wine and bread.

Just friendship shared
  at an auction sale
  midst a crowd of persons,
  no fancy tale,

Yet I felt a caring
  that spanned the years,
  a moment shared
  before death nears.

Then laughter shared
  from a hospital bed
  where pain was a part
  of his life instead . . .

Of Cokes at a sale
  or fishing by creeks
  or watching the sky
  like a person who seeks.

And now by some
  tumbling brook I think,
  he's grinning and
  handing the Master a drink.

News

Western District ups budget, defers abortion resolution

A flashing red light on the podium, a resolution on traffic safety, and police threatening to tow away cars illegally parked weren't the heavy items at the Western District's annual sessions held in Newton, Kansas, October 27-29.

What were the biggies?

A brief resolution (27 words) on abortion created a flurry of Kansas dust storms before the 400 delegates decided to defer a statement on the issue until after the General Conference has completed its study. The defeated resolution stated: "Recognizing that life is sacred, we the members of the Western District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church, go on record opposing 'legalized abortion upon demand.' " Critics said the issue could not be simplified to a "yes" or "no" vote.

Awkward moments

Three new churches were accepted into membership but not without some flak. All are Kansas congregations—Covenant Mennonite Church of Hesston, Jubilee Mennonite Church in North Newton, and Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship in the university center of Manhattan. All have or intend to join the South Central Conference of the Mennonite Church, and the Manhattan fellowship is also applying for membership with the Mennonite Brethren.

Awkward moments occurred when delegates scrutinized the covenants written by each group. One delegate wanted to know why the Western District executive recommended the Jubilee group for membership since a member of the group, the delegate claimed, expressed beliefs in evolution. "Doesn't it matter what we believe?" he asked. District president Walter Neufeld said the fellowship's covenant was the basis for the recommendation. The Manhattan fellowship was chastised for not including the terms "savior" and "sin" in its covenant. Their representatives did not respond to this criticism. Though some votes were cast against admission, these doctrinal questions did not deter the majority of delegates from "validating" the three churches.

The historical committee received a big affirmation to their proposal to write a history of the Western District. Its beginnings date back to 1877 as the Kansas Conference, and to 1892 as the Western District. Currently there are 14,000 members in 69 churches. Delegates committed the district to a four-year schedule in which 1979 and 1980 will be used for information gathering. The book is to be written by 1982. Five thousand dollars was voted for the work in 1979.

The total budget for next year is $279,815. This includes a $64,000 item for staff salaries and $84,000 for home missions. Not all receipts come from donations since there is significant income from other sources, such as the camp program and the Agri-Urban program. But the budget calls for an 11.6 percent increase over the 1978 budget of $250,672. Treasurer Dewayne Pauls reported that to the end of September receipts totaled $137,260.

The home missions committee noted that their spending competed with other valid projects. "Do we set limits on church planting?" they asked. They observed that the mandate on church planting set during the General Conference triennial sessions in 1977 could only be implemented by districts. But who provides financing? Other problems experienced in church planting are inter-Mennonite groups which face conflicts in traditions, emphases, and convictions, and also new churches which bring together people of different cultures and values. Spanish ministries are a growing part of church planting efforts in the Western District.

Peace and conflict

Perry Yoder, professor of Bible at Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas, presented two lectures on the theme, "Peace as it Relates to Conflict Resolution." In the first, which emphasized personal relationships, Yoder said, "The base of our notion of justice is that the punishment ought to fit the crime. But Jesus Christ shatters this notion of reciprocity. He tells us to do something which will transform the situation."

The issue of war taxes was central to Yoder's second message. Noting that the issue, like most peace-related issues, was divisive, he described three theoretical strengths which the General Conference has to cope with the problem. These are openness, being a peace church, and being a biblical people.

However, each strength has its limitations. Openness which is encouraged by congregational autonomy also creates benign neglect by most members on issues such as war taxes. Yoder asked whether it was possible for an active peace church to actually operate by consensus. And though Scripture is taken seriously different interpretations of the Bible fragment rather than unify.

In concluding his war tax talk Yoder said church members are generally more ready to disregard what the church has to say than what the government says. Issuing a direct challenge to those who believe war tax resistance is wrong he counseled, "It would be more credible if those who are in favor of paying all their taxes would show through some other action what they are doing to love our national enemies."

Walter Neufeld, pastor of the Eden Church in Moundridge, Kansas, was reelected president; Rosella Regier, teacher, of Newton, Kansas, was elected vice-president; and Lois Schrag, homemaker, of Kingman, Kansas, was reelected secretary.

The red light on the podium? Each committee was given 10 minutes to report on its current activities. After 10 minutes the red light flashed and the reporting had to stop. Consequently the conference moved along briskly. *Vic Reimer*

Tension continues on Lebanon's southern border

Sidon, Lebanon—Despite the presence of 6,000 UN peace-keeping troops in South Lebanon, Lebanon's border with Israel remains a highly sensitive area.

According to a UN Security Council Resolution, the Israeli forces withdrawing from South Lebanon following Israel's invasion of the area in March 1978 were to hand over their positions to the peace-keeping force. The Israelis chose to ignore the resolution in an area about five miles deep along the border, handing over their positions instead to right-wing Christian militias.

Besides serving as a "security belt" for Israel, the border area also serves as a source of cheap labor for Israel. Tension in the border area has discouraged Lebanese farmers from cultivating their land for the past several years. Israel does not permit anything produced in South Lebanon to be marketed in Israel.

Farmers are afraid to take their produce north out of the border area to the main centers of Tyre and Sidon because their close association with the Israelis makes them a target for the Palestinians. As a person from the Christian border village of Aalma Ech Chaab recently said, "The only other option we have to cooperating with Israel is to leave the area."

"Our task is to recreate a people"

Oraibi, Arizona—"We are a people who have been crushed, a bare remnant who are attempting the almost impossible task of recreating a people. This work is going to bear fruit because it is ordained by God."

These words of Ted Rising Sun spoken at the opening session of the Mennonite Indian Leaders Council's (MILC) annual meeting seemed to capture the spirit of faith and hope which was present throughout the October 19-22 weekend. The sessions were held at the Oraibi Mennonite Church.

Willis Busenitz of the White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church, Busby, Montana, was selected to succeed Joe Walks Along as MILC chairperson. Elmer Myron was elected vice-chairperson and Anola Waters was chosen secretary. Other business included the presentation of reports on activities of the Indian churches of Oklahoma, Arizona, and Montana, as well as Anna Berg's work with native Americans in Denver. Financial needs of the congregations were discussed and a budget of $149,355 was proposed for 1979. This budget will be submitted to the Commission on Home Ministries in February 1979.

Meals served at the Hopi Mission School, nightly worship services, and a tour of the Oraibi area, including a visit to the mesa-top Hopi village of Walpi, provided many opportunities for fellowship and informal sharing. *David Orr*

Conscription scare faulty

Washington, DC—Reports that military conscription is near are not true says Delton Franz of Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section.

A Senate vote on August 7 to reactivate Selective Service registration of all 18-year-old males was overwhelmingly defeated. Another amendment to increase the budget allocation for the Selective Service System was also overruled September 13.

Writing in *Washington Memo* (October issue) Franz states, "From these restrained actions it seems clear that Congress is not ready to reactivate Selective Service in fiscal year 1979, much less registration or inductions." He says there are three reasons why conscription is not imminent: (1) After the Vietnam experience it is not clear that Americans would support peacetime conscription. (2) In the light of Proposition 13 it is unlikely universal military conscription or a national service would be started because they are enormously expensive. (3) There would be challenges to the claim of the military that the All-Volunteer Force is not working.

Charles and Suzanne Conrad watch intently as Isabelle Smucker spins wool.

Seniors put life's needs all together

Ida Belle Smucker, 91, and her three daughters, Isabelle and Christina Smucker and Irene Smucker King, live near West Liberty, Ohio, in a life-style inspired by the biblical description of a virtuous woman: "She seeketh wool and flax and worketh willingly with her hands. . . She layeth her hands to the spindle . . . She maketh fine linen, and selleth it . . ." (Proverbs 31:13, 19, 24). Through the spinning and weaving enterprise they have created in their own home these four women exemplify the productiveness of older people.

Managing alone with the loving care and companionship of her daughters who live with her brings joyous Christian living to Ida Belle Smucker. The life-style which the sisters have created for 30 years has also been a way of providing an equally important life-style for their mother.

The Smuckers have found that by caring for each other they have created a marvelous life-style that is interrelated, because they all need each other in a spiritual and emotional sense, and interdependent, because they can meet each other's needs for food, housing, clothing, transportation, and health. The result is a happy combination of self-fulfillment and a true expression of the simple life.

"Our father raised sheep and we were eager to learn to use this lovely wool in a creative way," Isabelle Smucker said. At first the women spun for their own use—fleece from the sheep on their farm was dyed, spun, and woven into fabrics for garments, and silk and flax into household linens and rugs.

Isabelle, with 30 years experience spinning wool, prefers to spin unwashed wool, which contains lanolin. She designs the fabric as she spins by controlling the twist and type of wool, which makes the texture of the fabric more interesting.

The sisters' looms are always humming with wool, linen, silk, cotton, or combinations of these fibers. A very interesting and beautiful coat was made from lambs' wool and silk. The braid around the neckline and front was handwoven on a separate loom. Imported alpaca, mohair, camel hair, and caracul are sometimes used.

Seven years ago Irene King's sons took over the farm and her mother and sisters moved to a smaller house just east of West Liberty, which was originally an old schoolhouse. The small barn nearby has been converted into a work area.

The goal of an older person is to be independent. In the Smucker household the younger-older are active, productive, professional people and the older grandmother derives a great deal of happiness by being close to her daughters. This is an example of "putting the pieces all together"—psychological, physical, and social phases are combined in this family unit. Spiritual needs are met through their church, their musical compositions, and their fellowship together. They face the future with a great deal of hope. The serenity in which they live is closely related to their work of producing beautiful and useful clothing, household linens, and rugs. *Carl and Irene Smucker, MCC (US) project on aging*

Very few Mennonite churches that started 30 years ago took root in their communities. So notes Richard Showalter, a specialist in church growth principles who serves under the home ministries department of the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions. The primary reason he listed for this "failure to take root" is the fact that Mennonite church patterns and practices have been "foreign" to most Americans. The question now, he says, is not whether we can receive new Christians into our churches, but whether we can participate in congregations which are truly theirs.

Work on a new Czech translation of the Bible from the original languages has been completed after more than 16 years of concerted effort by a team of Protestant scholars. Some parts of the Old and New Testaments are already in print and the whole script is to be published by the end of 1979. The team of translators is now working on the Deutero-Canonical books (the Old Testament Apocrypha).

Persons pursuing mental health studies will be eligible for one of four 1979 Mennonite mental health scholarships. The scholarships are administered jointly by MCC Voluntary Service and Mennonite Mental Health Services. To qualify candidates must be college juniors, seniors, or graduate students with a declared major and vocational interest in a mental health-related field. Requests for application forms should be made to: Director, MMHS, 4905 North West Avenue, Suite 118, Fresno, California 93705.

Mennonite theology has room to grow

Winnipeg, Manitoba—Any systematic comparison between contemporary theology and Mennonite theology is premature says Marlin Miller, president of Goshen Biblical Seminary of Elkhart, Indiana.

"There is as yet no fully worked out Mennonite set of beliefs," observed Miller in the first of four lectures, October 17-18, at Canadian Mennonite Bible College. Miller spoke to the theme "Mennonites and Contemporary Theology" and is the first to lecture in the newly founded J. J. Thiessen Lectureship.

Miller noted that in the last several decades Mennonites have attempted to define themselves theologically by reconstructing the Anabaptist history of the 16th century. This approach he stated assumes that the beliefs of the 16th century can be simply translated into the 20th century. But since Anabaptist theology was forged in dialogue with 16th century Catholics and Reformers a 20th century Anabaptist theology must be developed in a similar manner.

Mennonites have often been accused of possessing an inadequate concept of grace. In the second lecture Miller assessed this criticism. Though the Anabaptists stressed (with the other Reformers) that justification was by faith alone, grace was for them not only God's favorable disposition towards sinful man but also his creative power. Grace transformed individuals enabling them to lead lives of discipleship. Consequently, the Anabaptists had greater expectations of righteousness than did many other groups. Hence, they were accused of basing their righteousness on good works.

In contemporary theology grace and discipleship are again being brought together. Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer have led the way in proposing that grace and obedience are two aspects of the same entity. What is surprising, remarked Miller, is that the two major Catholic theologians of our day, Hans Kueng and Karl Rahner, have said that Barth's redefinition of grace is not incompatible with Catholic theology.

What is the believers' church? Miller's third lecture described the church as first of all a worshiping community. It is also a mission community which seeks to integrate nonbelievers into the fellowship. The church manifests God's authority in human life by being a forgiving, discipling, and reconciling community. Both spiritual and economic sharing are an important function of the church. The church must be an alternate community which lives by a different set of standards than the world.

In order to facilitate the reaching of this ideal Miller argued that some church structures need to change. He stressed the need for the regular meeting of smaller groups within the larger church.

The title of the final lecture was "Mennonites and Liberation Theology." Although not uncritical of this theology Miller outlined its challenges.

Church leaders in South America are aware of the church's long history of blessing the wealthy and powerful as they oppressed the poor. Liberation theology is a cry for a more just social and economic system.

Further, liberation theology is a new theological method. Liberation theologians do theology. Their concern is not only to study the truth but to do it in a concrete situation. A good example of this is Gustavo Gutierrez, who spends part of his time teaching in a university and the rest working in the slums of Lima, Peru. *Daniel Thiessen*

Christians urged to be catalysts in Rhodesia

New York (UCC)—The president of the 1.8 million-member United Church of Christ (UCC) has endorsed direct negotiations for peace in Rhodesia between the Ian Smith transitional government and the opposing Patriotic Front.

In a speech delivered October 26 to the executive council of the UCC president Avery Post said, "White rule in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) is doomed. The church should rally behind the British-American position instead of being faced with the dilemma of supporting either Prime Minister Ian Smith's controversial regime or the Patriotic Front guerrillas who are trying to topple Smith."

"It would not be wise for the United Church of Christ or the churches of the world to take sides in this conflict," asserts Post. "Rather, we should envision all of the groups as a whole that can create a stable democracy in which the people of Zimbabwe govern themselves. We should uphold those principles and practices that will best bring about majority democratic government in Zimbabwe. We should try to be a catalytic element that will help bring together all parties in the hope that a peaceful solution may be arrived at."

He lists two objectives for churches to work for in Zimbabwe. "One is to have the violence stopped so that people—black and white—may return to their homes and live in security and peace. The other is to bring about majority rule without preferential rights for whites or any other minority," he says.

Speaking of the $85,000 grant by the World Council of Churches (WCC) Post concludes, "Given the critical needs of the refugees, and past experience of the WCC in providing this kind of humanitarian aid, we have reasonable assurance that the money will be used for its stated purposes."

Essex, Ontario (CCP)—When the schools close for teacher's Professional Development days here, parents just send their children to church. Essex United has found that opening its doors to community children on "PD" days has been a boost to its youth organizations as well as a boon to bored children and working parents. Two "fun and fellowship days" were held in the last school year, with the second one attracting 80 youngsters. This year the church hopes to continue the program with even more children.

Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island (CCP)—A major national effort is under way across Canada to gather names on a petition (RIGHT) to be presented later this year to the people of Quebec to convince them that Canadians from coast to coast want Quebec to remain in Confederation. The idea of the petition began earlier this year among "ordinary citizens," including Catholic and Protestant clergy, in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island—where Canadian Confederation began.

Can you drive?

Markham wants to know.

Mennonite Voluntary Service is heavily involved in various Mental Health Programs in Markham, IL. TWO (2) VAN DRIVERS are needed immediately to help transport clients to and from these programs. If you are willing to help, let us know! We need to hear from you now!

A TRUCK-DRIVER is needed for early spring.

The Markham Day Care Center is also looking for additional staff from MVS. If you have interests and abilities in this area, don't hesitate to check us out.

Mennonite Voluntary Service is looking for two year volunteers - preferably longer. One year volunteers can be considered for a good number of positions. Service opportunities available in many other locations across the US and CANADA.

Please write for more information:

Mennonite Voluntary Service
722 Main Street
Newton, Kansas 67114
(316) 283-5100

Estimates place 3.4 million refugees in Africa

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—The number of African refugees has increased dramatically since 1960. Recent statistics indicate 1.6 million refugees exist outside their homelands in 27 African countries. An additional 1.8 million have returned to their home countries and are awaiting resettlement. Zaire has over a half million refugees.

There are several causes of the African refugee problem. During the colonial period European powers established territories that cut across political, religious, economic, and cultural entities. Sometimes tribespeople were cut off from each other by artificial barriers created by the colonial powers.

When independence came to African countries in the late 1950s people who fled in the ensuing conflicts often crossed into another country.

Zaire is one example of internal conflict causing a refugee problem. Independence brought turmoil there in the early 1960s and still erupts as it did recently in Shaba Province. In Angola rival factions that arose after independence from Portugal displaced 710,000 people by 1977. Internal conflicts in Rhodesia have recently caused 62,000 people to spill over its borders.

Besides internal conflicts, countries find themselves in disputes with other countries largely over territorial rights. One example is the disruption caused by the squabble between Ethiopia and Somalia over an area called the Ogaden resulting in population displacement.

South Africa forms the seedbed for another refugee group. The surge for equal rights plunged many of its young black people into conflict with the repressive government's policy of apartheid. Many young men and some young women fled to neighboring enclaves such as Lesotho and Swaziland. Others went north to Botswana, Zambia, and Kenya.

Denominational execs give each other counsel

Chicago—Chief executives of four Mennonite and Brethren in Christ denominations met near O'Hare Airport October 13-14 to discuss inter-Mennonite acitivities, financing for Mennonite World Conference, a proposal for a North American Bible conference, and how to face issues.

The Council of Moderators and Secretaries (CMS) meets annually to provide interdenominational counsel.

A major review of inter-Mennonite activities occurred. Currently there are more than 70 inter-Mennonite agencies and groups. One of these, Mennonite World Conference, received special attention because the General Council of MWC has asked constituent groups to increase their financial support to MWC. CMS is recommending that congregations be given an opportunity to contribute to MWC through an annual event such as "Worldwide Fellowship Sunday."

CMS also noted the major issues which are facing each of the constituent groups. There is much similarity in the issues faced by the groups. Included in the sharing was, "How are the issues being handled?", "What issues are being faced?", and "How can the constituent groups best work together and help each other in resolving these issues?"

Consideration was given to a proposed inter-Mennonite Bible Conference for 1982. The Bible conference, for all of North America, would be on some theme of common interest and concern. Each of the groups is to appoint one person to a planning committee which will give further consideration to this proposal. *Ivan Kauffman*

Because of exuberant response to the first *Mennonite Your Way Directory,* a second edition will be published in May 1979. It is again being compiled by Leon and Nancy Stauffer, whose idea it was to institutionalize the old practice of hospitality. "This is a completely new directory," Stauffer said, "We're starting from scratch, none of the hosts listed in the first directory will be listed in the new directory without their permission; all hosts wishing to be listed will be asked to submit an application form." When completed, the directory will be mailed to all persons or families listed and to all persons who want to purchase copies.

The Stauffers (left to right): Chad, Leon, Brian, Kim, and Nancy

Please rush me information on how to be listed in the new *Mennonite Your Way Directory II.*

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____

Complete this coupon and send to:

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USA

Record

Workers

Brad Dueck, Bergthaler Church, Altona, Manitoba, began a one-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service September 2 in home repair services in Wichita, Kansas. Brad graduated from W. C. Miller Collegiate in Altona in 1976 with vocational training. He has worked in all phases of house construction, and in patternmaking in wood, metal, and plastics. His parents are Jacob and Helen Dueck of Altona.

Cheryl and Dan Enns, Home Street Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, began one year of voluntary service October 16 with the Mennonite Voluntary Service unit in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Cheryl will be working in child care ministries, and Dan will work in home repair. Cheryl is a 1976 graduate of Swift Current (Saskatchewan) Bible Institute, and has worked as a secretary-receptionist, as a homemaker for senior citizens, and as a pharmaceutical technician. Her parents are Jacob and Mary Klassen of Winnipeg. Dan also graduated from Swift Current Bible Institute. He has worked in cabinet installation and sales. His parents are Theodore and Mary Enns of Rosemary, Alberta.

Sally Forrester, Community Baptist Church, St. Clair Shores, Missouri, began one year of service with the General Conference on October 1 working in home repair in Wichita, Kansas. Sally is a 1978 graduate of Spring Arbor (Missouri) College with a BS in sociology and a minor in art. Her work experience includes being a director of arts and crafts in a camp and as a leader of activities for children with working parents. Donald and Violet Forrester, Mount Clemens, Missouri, are her parents.

Dueck

Forrester

C. Enns

D. Enns

Cheryl Lehmann, Salem Church, Freeman, South Dakota, is working with Mennonite Voluntary Service as a kindergarten teacher at Hopi Mission School in Oraibi, Arizona. Her two-year term began August 15. In 1969 Cheryl graduated with an AA from Freeman (South Dakota) Junior College, and in 1971 with a BS from Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas) in elementary education. From 1971-78 she taught in Markham, Illinois. Her parents are Henry and Elta Lehmann of Hurley, South Dakota.

Monty Ross Nolan, Port Arthur, Texas, began two years of work with Mennonite Voluntary Service on September 13 as a day-care worker in Hutchinson, Kansas. Monty graduated from Lamar University (Beaumont, Texas) with a one-year certificate in vocational nursing. Since 1973 he has worked in hospitals in Beaumont, Port Arthur, and Houston. His parents are Kenneth and Mildred Nolan of Port Arthur.

Lehmann

Nolan

Stanley Weaver, Goshen, Indiana, has joined the Bluffton (Ohio) College faculty as assistant professor of education. He will teach introduction to teaching and social issues for secondary students, and will

Director needed for School of Nursing

Goshen College in Indiana is seeking a new director for the School of Nursing. Applicants should have a doctorate or be studying for it, and should have experience in nursing education. Salary and rank depend upon background and experience. Include a resume of qualifications, transcripts of all academic work, and two letters of recommendation with your letter of application.

Apply to: Orville Yoder, Dean
Goshen College
Goshen, Indiana 46526

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Starting a Shoebox Library, a new 16-page booklet published by the David C. Cook Foundation, tells how to start shoebox libraries in any country. A Christian interested in becoming a shoebox librarian chooses eight or more books and puts them into a container such as a shoebox. The container is registered and placed in a prominent location at the person's home or place of work. Books are lent on the basis of the shoebox library theme: "the right book for the right person—at the right time." The libraries provide a focal point for Christian witness.

The new energy-saving Shoker Science Center, built totally underground, was dedicated at Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio, October 20. The $900,000 all-concrete structure, designed by Rooney, Musser and Associates, Findlay, Ohio, was built into a hillside to conserve energy and preserve the environment. The hexagonal building is now in full use for fall term courses.

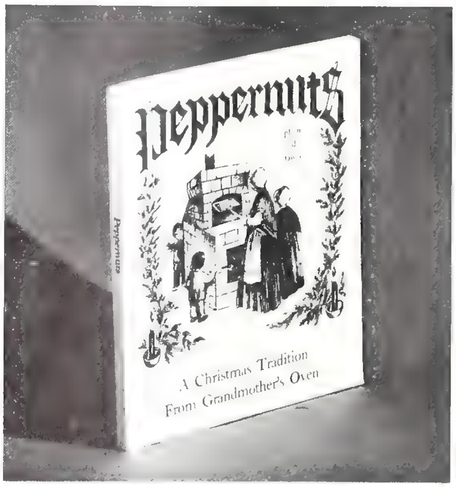
supervise student teachers. Weaver earned a BA in biology and education from Goshen (Indiana) College in 1967. In 1971 he received an MS in biology and education administration from the University of Missouri. For two years Weaver served with Mennonite Central Committee in Jordan as administrative assistant to the principal of Beit Jala Secondary School for Boys.

Peter and Lois Voran, First Church, Pretty Prairie, Kansas, were recommissioned as missionaries to Japan on October 22. The Vorans were the first missionaries of the General Conference to Japan, serving as evangelists and church planters on the island of Kyushu from 1951-71. They attended Grace College of the Bible (Omaha, Nebraska), and Peter graduated from Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas) with a BA degree. During the past year both attended Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries (Elkhart, Indiana). They will leave in December to begin work with the Hyuga Christian Church, Hyuga, Kyushu.

Vorans

Published

To help congregations through their study process the family life committee of the General Conference has collected statements which congregations and conferences have adopted, and is making these available to other congregations wishing to draw up their own statements. For a free packet write Family Life Committee, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. The packet includes a number of statements: (1) In August 1975 the leadership of the Kidron Mennonite Church prepared a position paper on marriage and divorce. (2) The executive committee of the Mennonite Conference of Ontario wrote a paper in January 1977 called "Guidelines for Dealing with Persons Involved in Divorce and Remarriage." (3) "Divorce and Remarriage" is excerpted from the Church of the Brethren statement *Marriage and Divorce.* Herta Funk, director of adult education for the General Conference, says an excellent resource just off the press is G. Edwin Bontrager's book, *Divorce and the Faithful Church* (Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, 1978). The book has a bibliography and lists all biblical texts relating to divorce and remarriage. An additional resource is the statement of the Ohio and Eastern Conference of the Mennonite Church titled, "Congregational Process Guide for Dealing with Issues of Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage" (1978). It can be ordered for $1.50 by writing to the Office of the Secretary, Ohio and Eastern Conference of the Mennonite Church, Box 455, Smithville, Ohio 44677.



A charming Christmas collection of heirloom peppernut recipes brought by Mennonite grandmothers from the Ukraine more than one hundred years ago has just been released by Herald Press. For the newcomer to this old tradition, peppernuts are tiny, spicy Christmas cookies about the size of a hazelnut or dime. *Peppernuts: Plain and Fancy* by Norma Jost Voth is published by Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and Kitchener, Ontario, at $2.95 ($3.30 in Canada).

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR

The Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Altona is looking for an individual to direct its Christian education program on a full-time basis. Responsibilities are to include administration of the Sunday school program, as well as assistance with some pastoral duties.

Potential candidates should have a sincere interest in people of all ages, enthusiasm for the work of the church, and a commitment to spiritual growth.

If you are interested, direct inquiries to:
Levi Reimer,
Chairman, Search Committee
Box 612,
Altona, Manitoba R0G 0B0

Phone: (204) 324-5366 (home);
(204) 324-6622 (business)

I Care...

...about healing the sick.

We all care about healing. Sometimes we can actually do something about the poor who are sick and need medical attention, but most often we must say "I Care" with our checkbooks. It takes money to send knowledgeable volunteers to places in North America and other countries to help those who cannot help themselves.

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General Conference Mennonite Church
Box 347/Newton, Kansas 67114/316-283-5100
600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4

Review

The writings of Pilgram Marpeck

The writings of Pilgram Marpeck, *translated and edited by William Klassen and Walter Klaassen (Herald Press, 1978, 612 pages, illustrated) is reviewed by J. C. Wenger, professor of historical theology, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana 46514.*

One of the services of the Associated Seminaries to the Mennonite constituency is performed by its research arm, the Institute of Mennonite Studies (IMS), headed for the last two decades by Cornelius J. Dyck. One of the IMS projects is its publication series, Classics of the Radical Reformation (CRR), of which two volumes have thus far been published: *The Legacy of Michael Sattler,* translated and edited by John H. Yoder, 1973; and *The Writings of Pilgram Marpeck,* 1978.

Sattler was a South German who came to Zurich in 1525 and united with the Swiss Brethren. He rendered yeoman service to the new movement by becoming its theologian. He wrote a number of significant brief monographs and convened the brothers and sisters at Schleitheim—who in turn adopted his Schleitheim Articles of Faith unanimously. He died a martyr's death in May 1527.

Marpeck was a native of the Tirol, born around 1495, and a civic leader of prominence, rising rapidly to serve as one of Europe's mining magistrates or directors. His troubles began when he became a hounded Anabaptist; his property was confiscated and he fled for his life. (The Rothenburg congregation had at least 70 martyrs—people who failed to, or were unable to flee.) Marpeck then spent about four years in Strasbourg, a small part of which he was in prison; then a dozen years are somewhat obscure, but he was possibly in Switzerland; and finally his last twelve years were spent in Augsburg, South Germany. He died in 1556.

In Strasbourg Marpeck was a skilled engineer, floating rafts of wood down the Kinzig River into the city. In Augsburg he was once more an engineer, the *Stadtwerkmeister.* Everywhere he went he labored to win and baptize converts, to witness to all men against the oath, and especially to try to bring unity to the fragmented Anabaptist movement.

The two scholars who translated and edited this volume of his writings have done a splendid piece of work. The volume includes his *Admonition* on baptism and the Lord's Supper, nineteen letters, and the "Preface" to the *Explanation of the Testaments.* For reasons of length, this volume does not include Marpeck's lengthy polemic against Schwenkfeld, the *Reply* (over 500 huge pages of small type), nor his topical concordance on selected biblical topics, dealing with *Gestern* ("Yesterday"—the Old Testament) and *Heute* ("Today"—the New Testament era), the *Explanation of the Testaments.*

We are much indebted to C. J. Dyck and the IMS, and to the scholars Klassen and Klaassen, for making this body of Marpeck material available in English, because Marpeck deserves the title, "The Menno Simons of the South."

Beside my Bible

Mary F. Heisey

The comfort of love

The Art of Listening with Love, *by Abraham Schmitt (Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1977, 174 pages).*

This profoundly beautiful book is all heart and soul and mind. It maintains that "caring is a contagious process."

If you want to develop a listening lifestyle, deepen your concern for the other person, and transform interpersonal relationships, study this important valentine. Then "listen with love to your neighbor as you listen lovingly to yourself."

Like teacher-counselor Schmitt you may discover that sensitive listening helps you to respond to pain before it is verbalized.

How to Find Comfort in the Bible, *by Herbert Lockyer (Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1977, 160 pages).*

Seventeen comforting chapters later, you will feel closer to the open Bible beside this book and nearer to the ever-available "God of all comfort."

Comfort isn't a need that only death initiates. Certainly the grievous corruption of our age causes us to crave comfort constantly. Consequently, the preaching and practice of comfort are sorely needed.

God calls us to comfort his people (Isaiah 40:1). He gives us a tender heart and devotional encouragement to accomplish our ministries of consolation.

For the Love of My Daughter, *by Mary Ellen Ton (David C. Cook Publishing Co., Elgin, Illinois, 1978, 153 pages).*

Here we cry again. "Perhaps there is no greater heartbreak for parents than when their child rejects all the values that are a part of their life."

In this bittersweet true story, mother-author Ton tells what happened—the guilt, growth, insights, freedom, and hope—before, during, and after her teenage daughter, Jill, ran away.

The story is a bundle of raw emotions neatly packaged for prevention and cure. But I found Goldie Bristol's *These Tears Are for Diane* more meaningful (reviewed in the October 10 issue).

Subscription Increase

Effective January 1, 1979, congregational and every-home-plan subscriptions to *The Mennonite* will cost $8.00 per year (an increase of $1.00). Individual subscriptions will cost $10.00 annually (an increase of $1.00). However, if individual subscribers renew for three years the rate is $27.00.

If you have friends who are not receiving *The Mennonite,* consider gift subscriptions for them, or suggest that they can order it themselves by contacting the Circulation Secretary, The Mennonite, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114, or 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Letters

Response to rape question

Dear Editor: I read Susie Esau's letter (October 3 issue), wondering about the responsibility of preachers and women's fashions in her relative's suicide, following his conviction for rape. Because rape victims are often pronounced guilty by society, and because some women may feel immune to rape because of their modest clothing, may I answer publicly in this paper?

Rape is not a crime of lust. It is a crime of hatred and violence. Did you know that most rapists are married men with children? If they "need" sex, they have their wives. Did you know that baby girls, six months old, have been raped? Did you know women, 88 years old, have been raped? Those rapists were not stirred by their victims' beautiful exposed legs and breasts.

Victims find the experience painful, debasing, and emotionally disturbing. The important thing to remember is that *the rapist frequently plans his crime,* looking for the right chance and easiest victim.

Avoid "rape situations" at home—use locks on your doors and windows; don't open the door to strangers; check the ID of servicemen; never reveal to a telephone caller that you are alone; know your neighbors.

Avoid "rape situations" while walking—avoid walking alone; walk at a steady pace with a confident expression; try to avoid clothes that hamper and slow you down. Don't walk too close to bushes, trees, or entrances to buildings and alleys; and walk on the curbside. *Keep alert.* If a loiterer acts suspiciously, looks at you closely, or follows you, head for bright lights and people, and be ready to scream or use a whistle. *Never hitchhike.*

Avoid "rape situations" in your car—have the car key in your hand. Before getting in check the floor of the back seat for intruders. Have your house keys in hand before getting out. Keep your doors locked and windows up while driving. If you suspect you're being followed, drive into a busy, well-lit business establishment and call the police. If you want to help the driver of a disabled vehicle, report it and send help.

Don't rely on a weapon. Your goal is to stop the attack and escape. If you are struggling, go for his eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and hair—he usually protects his groin. Scream "fire" because more people will respond to this than "help."

If you are raped, don't bathe, douche, or even change clothes, but go to a hospital. You may have internal injuries and should get VD protection.

Again, I'm sorry your aunt's grandson chose to commit suicide. We do need prison reform. Many young men are raped in prison by other inmates—maybe that was why he went crazy and killed himself. But I'm glad he was caught, to prevent him from victimizing other women.

The Bible does have something to say about women's clothing, in 1 Timothy 2:9-10 and 1 Peter 3:3-4, the gist of which seems to be that we shouldn't be preoccupied with adorning our bodies, but rather with inward beauty. *Connie Buller, 1458 Butler Street, Blair, Nebraska 68008* October 6

ENERGY STEWARDSHIP

Where is the stringball?

In response to the Bluffton Conference resolution on energy an inter-Mennonite task force worked on ways to implement the resolution. The following article is the second in a series. The first one was "A Modern Cave House" (October 10 issue). Readers' ideas are requested. Direct responses to Melanie Mueller, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. The editor of this series is Thomas Lehman of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

In the drawer of my grandmother's dry sink was a ball of string, added to or taken from according to the fortunes of the day. You might say my grandmother had a stringball orientation, typical of frugal people in her generation. She saved string because it was handy for tying a cloth strip on a cut finger or for fixing a toy. She saved other things, and repaired, recycled, and resisted unnecessary consumption.

Unlike my grandmother our generation's happiness seems to rise and fall with the latest word about the energy supply. Because nonrenewable energy has been cheap, we have developed a style of life dependent on gluttonous consumption.

We have exchanged stringball frugality for the right to be extravagant throwaways—having more, wanting more, discarding more. This momentum feeds our economic system, based on the idea of limitless growth—a false assumption, it seems to me, in the face of finite resources. Unbridled growth cannot continue. Even though we try to forget that, it seems certain that we must change our ways.

Advocating limited growth means that we must assume personal responsibility for adapting to lower levels of energy consumption. I am suggesting three practical things: (1) **Conserve with imagination.** Understand conservation as life-renewing, not life-limiting. Reduce dependence on all nonrenewable energy sources because the best way to produce energy is to save it. Spend your energy dollar for conservation; it will go farther than a dollar spent for exploration. Conservation is safe, dependable, and nonpolluting. It means going forward, remembering that tomorrow's children would also like a future.

(2) **Discover the joy of using human energy, God's miraculous gift renewed every day.** Walk, garden, or bicycle, instead of going to the spa. Politely refuse paper sacks at the store. Be European and carry your own strong bag. Cook from scratch. Let solar energy dry your wash. Bake bread in pound coffee cans—their vertical shape saves oven space (a double batch at one baking). Dress for the weather, open doors and windows, plant trees.

(3) **Encourage the government to invest in soft energy sources** (renewable sun, wind), **instead of hard sources** (especially nuclear). Soft energy offers social, economic, and geopolitical advantages in the effort to eliminate potentially dangerous nuclear proliferation around the world. Nuclear power enthusiasts have yet to answer the most crucial question of how nuclear wastes can be transported and stored to protect human life. Until that question has a satisfying answer we must work to advocate the use of soft energy sources.

Conservation, human energy, and soft energy will not *solve* the energy problem. But, indirectly, they can make a significant contribution if they teach us to loathe extravagance and to celebrate the virtue of stringball frugality. *Evelyn B. Kreider*

Meditation

Transfiguration

August 6 is a date not usually regarded significant for Mennonite pacifism. Yet it marks the date of two transfigurations which continue to affect our lives and bear heavily on an ethic of love and nonviolence.

Church history has celebrated August 6 as the traditional day when our Lord was revealed in splendor to Peter, James, and John. It is also the day in 1945 when the city of Hiroshima revealed to the world the horrors of an atomic holocaust.

This year, at the foot of the national war memorial in Ottawa, both of these events were commemorated in a special memorial and prayer vigil. Organized by a small group of Ottawa Christians, called Nuclear Opposition Nucleaire (NON), it was to be a public witness against the continued production of nuclear weapons and Canada's own growing militarism.

The vigil began with a worship service on Sunday evening as a memorial for the victims of Hiroshima and as a confession of our sin in pursuit of peace through armaments.

A symbolic pouring of blood and ashes over a list of those nations presently capable of waging nuclear war—South Africa, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, France, India, China, and the United States—was to be a sign of suffering and evil caused by nuclear weapons and a sign of prophetic hope that the world might yet turn aside from its measured march in arms escalation.

On Monday morning, following a night of prayer and hourly worship, the vigil concluded with a service that directed the participants' attention from the themes of death and destruction to life and peace and hope as symbolized in the transfiguration of Christ. The gospel of Jesus, they said, did not submit to an inevitable destruction.

The images of transfiguration in Hiroshima and Jesus come together on August 6 in a pattern of strangely similar, yet starkly opposed symbols. The mushroom cloud of Hiroshima unleashed an inferno that destroyed all in its path. It was a transfiguration of death. In the transfiguration of Jesus the words, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him" came. Cloud and bright light surrounded him. It was a transfiguration of life and peace in the presence of God and a call to follow. Where the one continues to claim lives through radiation sickness 33 years later, the other stands as a witness to life forever. Both took place "in the name of peace" and both have proven themselves; one in edging us closer to a global holocaust, the other to the victory of resurrection.

The same faith that compelled the small Ottawa vigil against nuclear weapons also offered a transfigured future beyond the nuclear arms race.

It is discouraging, however, that the small voice of the Ottawa vigil reflects the small voice with which Canadian churches have made their witness against a mentality which increasingly defines its security in terms of ever expanding military budgets and arms acquisition. The prophetic rage that ought to thunder from the churches has been muted to a whisper in a world where a crisp and shiny military machine will this year march past to a tune of $400 billion. We view our own Canadian defense establishment as of little consequence beside the superpowers. Yet it ranks as the world's sixth largest seller of war machinery and has recently embarked on a $13 billion dollar spending spree to increase its own strength. All of this is done in the name of peace and security.

In the midst of such moral outrage the voice of a church, transfigured in the image of Christ, needs to be heard clearly. The gospel demands it.

The words of Urbane Peachey, secretary of the MCC Peace Section (International), are appropriately spoken to us. "The most productive achievement (of the recent United Nations disarmament session) . . . could be alerting the public to the crisis of survival. It would be tragic if the Christian church were silent. There is good reason to believe that (as Jesus suggested in the Gospels) if the church is silent, then the stones themselves will cry out."

August 6, 1978—the names of 2,179 more victims were added to the scroll that already bears the names of 91,416 persons killed by the Hiroshima bomb. The effect of that blast has not yet ended. It was also the day on which Pope Paul VI died—a church and world leader who spoke peace among the peoples of the earth.

August 6, 1978—almost 2,000 years since Jesus was transfigured before his disciples.

Robert Koop

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CONTRIBUTORS

Betty Harms, Box 335, Gretna, Manitoba R0G 0V0, writes of her personal experience. Betty is a member of the Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

LaVernae J. Dick, 588 South West Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338, shares how God helped her son in their family's time of tragedy. LaVernae is secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Helen C. Coon, 1313 North College, Cordell, Oklahoma 73632, is a free-lance writer. She is a member of the Herold Mennonite Church.

Evelyn B. Kreider, 1121 South 8th Street, Goshen, Indiana 46526, is concerned about our abuse of energy resources.

Robert Koop, 803-63 Sparks Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5A6, is a member of the Ottawa Mennonite Church.

Stephen C. Strunk, 700 South 19th Street, Clinton, Oklahoma 73601, is pastor of the Clinton First Mennonite Church.

CREDITS

Cover, Lambert, 2801 West Cheltenham, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19150; 658, Strix Pix, Newville, Pennsylvania 17241; 660, Dick; 663, MCC photo by Carl Smucker; 666, Leon and Nancy Stauffer.

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Understanding the Bible

Stephen C. Strunk

Making decisions about the intended meaning of any verse or passage of Scripture often seems to be the Gordian knot of biblical study. Many theological disagreements are rooted in differences of interpretation. Biblical interpretation has become a topic of increasing discussion. One area of this discussion focuses on literal versus nonliteral interpretation.

Literal versus nonliteral interpretation frequently revolves around the attempt to prove literal interpretation invalid. If, in the discussion of a particular passage, a person refers to an understanding of that passage in a literal way red flags are raised.

Everyone interprets parts of the Bible literally, and other parts nonliterally. (By literal, I mean taking the words at face value; by nonliteral, I mean understanding a different meaning than the face value.) The question is not, "Which of these methods is valid?" but rather, "In which circumstances should one or the other be used?" They are both valid. Those who object to literal interpretation as a hermeneutical method use just such a method on Matthew 5:39 or Exodus 20:13. Conversely, proponents of literal interpretation may not use it in Luke 4:18, 19 or Isaiah 40:3, 4. But these examples only serve to show that literal and nonliteral are not the best categories for describing methods of understanding the meaning of a given text.

We are striving for a hermeneutical method that is consistent in handling all the kinds of literature in the Bible. We want a method of interpretation that takes into account figures of speech, allegories, hyperbole, and statements of fact. We want a normal way of handling these different types of literature so that the intended meaning of the passage is made clear or clearer to us. We desire an understanding of the text that considers the differences in literature and style of language of the author(s).

But there is another point which must be considered in this discussion. That is the step from interpretation (the meaning of the text when it was written or stated) to application (the meaning of the text as it affects me today). We may literally interpret a text, and literally or nonliterally apply a text. Or we may nonliterally interpret a text, and literally or nonliterally apply it. The combinations are many. Some are trying to do away with a valid method of interpretation because they disagree with the way it is applied by others. Deciding on the application of a text can be just as difficult as deciding on the meaning of a text. But in either case, the use of a literal or nonliteral method is valid. Let me try to illustrate my point.

In Matthew 10:5ff., Jesus sent out his disciples with a specific prohibition on where they were to go. He forbade them to go "in the way of the Gentiles" or to "any city of the Samaritans." The interpretation of this passage is that Jesus meant the words at face value—he literally meant that the disciples were not to go to these places. But we do not apply *that* meaning of the passage to us today. However, even if we were to apply this passage literally, it would not affect its interpretation.

The fact that we do not *apply* a text literally today does not affect its meaning. We need to work as diligently to arrive at a proper application as we do to a proper interpretation. We should not hold a method of interpretation as invalid because we disagree with the application made by some.

In our interpretation and application of the Bible, let us aim at a valid use of both literal and nonliteral methods, rather than make an attempt to jettison one or the other as invalid.

The reality of death

John Paul I was pope for only 34 days. Even before we could print a tribute to Paul VI (October 3 issue), John Paul died. Walter and Betty Harms were married less than two years. Walter died. Johnny Dick attended the Bluffton conference, looking hale and hearty. Last winter he died.

There is one appointment that all of us will keep—we shall all die.

Maclean's (Canada's weekly news magazine, October 9 issue) titled its story on John Paul I's death, "The end of a beginning." It strikes me as an ironic title. It conveys the popular image that death is to be feared as the untimate end.

John Paul I's 34 days left a beginning that no one is likely to erase. Betty Harms bears witness to the ongoing impact of one she lived with for less than two years. LaVernae Dick shares how God led their 16-year-old son to "find the way" when his father was taken away.

There is a lesson here. Death and life are irrevocably intertwined. To accept life is to accept death; and in accepting death you also learn to accept life. "What you sow does not come to life unless it dies" (1 Corinthians 15:36). *Bernie Wiebe*

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The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:42 NOVEMBER 21, 1978

Inside this issue: To drink or not to drink
Mennonite witness in Chicago
Our Christian civil responsibility — 1
Jesus

LADISH
MALT
"WHAT YOU SOW
YOU SHALL
ALSO REAP"

To drink or not to drink (is that the question?)

Peter H. Rempel

Trends in alcohol use among Mennonites indicate that for a growing number the oft repeated arguments for total abstinence are no longer convincing. Over half of General Conference members consider moderate drinking to be acceptable. With the shift from closed, rural communities to more open, urban settings, the pressure to conform has receded and the standard of abstinence, by itself, seems unable to restrain

> “The case for abstinence, on biblical grounds, is made by applying Christian ethical principles to the modern use of alcohol.”

Mennonites from adopting society's drinking habits. Is there a flaw in the position of abstinence or in its presentation?

Perhaps General Conference Mennonites were never firm on abstinence as the official conference position. Until the surge of the temperance movement in the late 19th century few questions were raised about drinking. In Russia the main church seemed unable or unwilling to discipline those who drank excessively. James Juhnke in *A People of Two Kingdoms* says that we adopted abstinence because we wanted to keep pace in moral standards with conservative Protestantism. He says that our self-perception, as thorough and committed followers of biblical teaching, was threatened when other Christians affirmed and practiced abstinence.

With growth in self-confidence and self-identity as a denomination, and the general fading of the temperance influence in society, is the acceptance of moderate drinking an inevitable return to our original attitudes on alcohol use?

How can the stance of abstinence again become credible and convincing within our churches? Have there been errors in our previous teaching efforts? What is the authentic biblical message upon which we can base our educational program in the matter of alcohol use? How do we communicate this?

Almost all students of the Bible recognize that the Bible states no explicit and outright teaching against the use of alcohol. Most proponents of total abstinence on biblical grounds is made rather by applying Christian ethical principles to the modern use of alcohol. Howard Charles, in an excellent booklet, *Alcohol and the Bible* (Herald Press), has done this. The difficulty is that these general principles can be and are applied with varying degrees of strength and consistency to specific activities.

Unfortunately, several arguments for abstinence that have been stressed in the past have been weak in their factual basis or logical reasoning. The claim that alcoholism is at least partially genetically determined and that this genetic predisposition to alcoholism is unpredictable just has not been proven scientifically to the satisfaction of those who want to begin drinking. Neither is the potential drinker dissuaded by the statistic of a one in six or seven chance of becoming an alcoholic. The likelihood that one will become alcoholic is not determined by the percentage of the total number of drinkers that become alcoholics but by the reasons for and the attitudes with which one resorts to alcohol.

Furthermore, some supporting arguments for abstinence may well be strong arguments against excessive or abusive use of alcohol but do not rule out use entirely, particularly cautious use. Much awful destruction in family, vocational, and recreational life may well be caused by alcohol abuse, but careful drinkers claim that it was not caused by moderate use. A light drinker may conclude that one person's boycott of an industry which causes so many problems and diverts vast quantities of foodstuffs will make no impact. The personal, psychological, and spiritual damage to the heavy drinker may make it clear that one can drink too much, but not that one should stop drinking completely. These arguments are applicable to social or moderate drinking as well as heavy drinking, but they do not necessarily forbid the cautious use of alcohol according to rules which determine the occasion and amount of drinking.

In the midst of the weaker arguments for abstinence is a crucial concern for the Christian: conscience, one's own and that of fellow believers. Paul stresses the importance of this in his letter to the Romans (14:19-23): "Let us then pursue the things that make for peace and build up the common life. Do not ruin the work of God for the sake of food. Everything is pure in itself, but anything is bad for the man who by his eating causes another to fall. It is a fine thing to abstain from eating meat or drinking wine, or doing anything which causes your brother's downfall. If you have a clear conviction, apply it to yourself in the sight of God. Happy is the man who can make his decision with a clear conscience! But a man who has doubts is guilty if he eats, because his action does not arise from his conviction, and anything which does not arise from conviction is sin."

> “If the use of alcohol, by those with a more mature conscience, disrupts the fellowship or leads others beyond the strength of their conscience, then they should relinquish their freedom to drink.”

Those who use alcohol must examine themselves and the reasons why they drink alcoholic beverages. Is it to receive social acceptance or to deal with emotional difficulties? Even if one "knows" that alcohol is not impure of itself, but has lingering doubts, one should stop drinking. Our conscience is shaped by our faith and to act against it hinders our growth in faith.

Once the Christian's conscience is clear on this matter the conscience of others must also be respected, especially the weaker brother or sister. According to Paul this is a clear and essential principle for the Christian in choosing an ethic. In Romans 14-15 and 1 Corinthians 8-10, Paul elaborates on this with reference to the eating of meat that has been offered to idols. The church is a community of mutual love, accountability, and nurture under the lordship of Jesus Christ. In all our actions our aim should be to build the common life, to strengthen the faith, and to share our burdens. If the use of alcohol by those with a more mature conscience disrupts the fellowship or leads others beyond the strength of their conscience then they should relinquish their freedom to drink.

Unfortunately, the impact of this basic principle in determining drinking behavior has been weakened. Often the recurring admonition in the New Testament (for example, Matthew 7:1-5 and James 4:11-12) to not judge another person has been forgotten in the zeal for promoting abstinence. Though we must admonish and discipline one another we are not to condemn a fellow believer whose conscience permits eating or drinking something which is in and of itself pure. Indeed, in Colossians 2:16-23 and 1 Timothy 4:1-5, Paul tells us to reject the regulations imposed on eating and drinking because they are human instructions and miss the true nature and purpose of God's will for us; which is justice, peace, and joy. A dispute within the church on these issues can easily detract from the church's true mission of bringing people into the kingdom of God.

There is also in our churches a trend toward individualism, which goes against the strong sense of community and interdependence assumed by Paul when he admonishes the stronger person to refrain from actions which might cause the weaker person's downfall. If this central argument for abstinence is to be credible and operative among church members we must regain this commitment to the body of believers and forsake our own individualistic desires. There are so many areas of life in which all of us, abstainers and drinkers alike, act irrespective of fellow disciples, that it is hard to accept concern for the weaker member in the matter of alcohol use. How many Christians restrain their accumulation or consumption of material things because less mature Christians will be led to their downfall by becoming overly attached to material things?

Yet our failures to be convincing and consistent in encouraging one another to refrain from actions such as alcohol use which may harm the fellowship should not stop us. Let us strive anew for greater mutual love as we seek the will of God. •

Mennonite witness in

Vic Reimer

My Chicago day had 240 miles of streets and freeways. My usual day in Kansas has four miles of walking, and several more of running. No car. No freeway.

I spoke to a black pastor and his wife, the first black Mennonites I have encountered person to person. I interviewed a Chicano woman who until she was in her teens thought she was German. I listened to an inner-ciy pastor liken his diverse ministry, which touches hundreds of persons each year, to "evangelizing a parade."

My perceptions of a really huge city were changed. I knew of Daley, of the police action at the Democratic convention, of riots and gangland murders, of O'Hare airport, and of Carl Sandburg's "hog butcher to the world." But I didn't know Dave and Debra, George, Esther, John, and Mamie; nor were terms like "identity," "cross-cultural," "survival," "diversity," or "urban mission" loaded with the same meaning before the 240 miles as after.

This German-ethnic Mennonite with rurally oriented values and understandings encountered Chicagoland without coming away fearful, demoralized, or overwhelmed. The megalopolis, I learned, can be a warm and humanizing place if people want to make it that way.

Chicago's 15 Mennonite congregations are working at that. Fifteen churches may sound like a surprising number. But when one considers that they are as much as 50 miles apart, are affiliated with four different conferences (Mennonite Brethren, Mennonite Church, Evangelical Mennonite Church, and General Conference Mennonite Church), and that three are black, four are Spanish-speaking, and eight are mixed or totally white, the question of what it means to be the church and Mennonite in a cultural mosaic of eight million persons takes on challenging dimensions.

Chicago is a microcosm of the world. Most Mennonites are familiar with towns and cities from 2,000 to 200,000 in population. In Chicago there are neighborhoods of that size—communities of blacks, Chinese, Danes, Greeks, Indians, Irish, Japanese, Pakistanis, Latin Americans, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and more. There are identifiable opportunities for ministries to nearly "every tongue and nation."

Therefore, one of the challenges of the church in the city is urban mission, the outward journey. But this, I was told, requires well-informed persons with knowledge about different cultures and races.

John Burke, pastor of the black First Mennonite Church, said, "It is ironic that well-trained missionaries are sent overseas to foreign cultures when there are so many similar cultural groupings in each of our big cities."

Dave Whitermore, who is the coordinator for various cooperative ministries of the Chicago Mennonites, asserted, "We have put literally millions and millions of dollars overseas. I would like to see some of the fruits of that work and learning put to use for urban ministries. There needs to be preparation for mission in the city just as much as there is for mission overseas."

Another concern, expressed again and again, was that rurally oriented Mennonites (even those who live in cities are still likely to think in terms of rural values) do not have a clear understanding of urban conditions and how the church functions in that setting.

"Churches of Mennonite background expect us to be just like them," observed George Classen. George is the pastor of an inner-city storefront church. And he added, "Some of the easy rules and regulations that conferences pass go well for long-established churches with a firm Christian heritage, but they are neither realistic nor practical for many city congregations."

He shared an example. Long-established congregations are concerned that inner-city churches not baptize without such persons knowing what the Christian faith is all about. How is this to be measured? "In typical Mennonite churches," George noted, "we are used to 25 years of loyal attendance, but the people I work with have not been taught to show loyalty in this way. 'Do you really expect me to be there every Sunday?' they ask."

"Factors like this," concluded Dave, "are part of the tension we continually face with our traditional Mennonite teaching about responsibility, tithing, and discipleship. Many Chicago folks do not come from these teachings. And since Mennonite teachings don't necessarily conform to their culturally accepted norms of virtue and responsibility, there is a gap between the expectations of other Mennonites and the reality."

Another pressure point is the meaning of success. George's congregation receives a subsidy. Is a church which has no hope of becoming self-supporting a success? Most Mennonites might say no. One pastor works full-time at a second job, gives sacrificially, and only now, after years of giving, is there a sense of stewardship in the congregation to the extent that his burden is less.

Whitermore sums it up this way. "It is

CHI· CA· GO

Representatives from Chicago area Mennonite churches meet regularly to plan joint programs, and to provide a support system for working out an urban Mennonite identity.

important for the church family to realize that some city churches—particularly those in changing neighborhoods, in foreign culture and language settings, and in poverty areas—are mission outposts. City churches receiving subsidy quickly pick up the criticism from the larger church family that they could be doing more. We do not do this to overseas missions. We speak of endurance, sacrifice, and commitment even though subsidies go on. Each congregation, rural or city, must be evaluated by what is actually taking place in their ministries."

"In my ministry," related George Classen, "I'm always beset with impossible problems. I've quit solving problems. I try to keep individuals from despairing, to adjust despite circumstances."

"That's not kosher in North America," I responded. "Christians are supposed to be part of the solution."

George reflected that success in inner-city neighborhoods is helping persons to hang on. "That is the benchmark," he said.

He spoke of Betty, an alcoholic, diabetic woman who would remain sober only long enough to take the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday of every month. Where was the "new life" in this woman? Her leg had to be amputated, an operation she agreed to only after long and strong resistance. Two years of caring brought appreciation from Betty, and requests for Bible reading. Before her death she was a glowing witness, the nurses commented. The new life had come very slowly.

There are hundreds of others in as many diverse dilemmas. Some are ministered to only once or twice; others, almost daily. But the parade is always changing. Many Chicago neighborhoods are highly mobile. In such a setting it is difficult to build a church which is self-supporting.

At a Chicago workshop for Mennonite church leaders each was asked to name four reasons for wishing death. A shocking request. Blacks and browns named their skin color. It isn't always "cool" to be black or brown. It can be a burden to be nonwhite and non-Mennonite. It can also be an oppressive burden to be nonwhite and Mennonite.

John Burke, black and Mennonite, told me, "I can name you a Mennonite church which is a hotbed of racial prejudice. And it always has been."

When Esther's family arrived in the United States they were helped by the Mennonite Church. Later they associated with it. But it wasn't until she was a teenager that Esther learned she wasn't German. Esther is brown.

These are painful, bitter problems of racial and cultural identity and integrity.

Chicago-area Mennonites have tried to be creative in meeting these hurts. It is a mission—not to others, but to themselves. Can Chicagoland form an accepting, supportive Mennonite fellowship across cultural and racial differences? What is "Mennonite" for nonethnic Mennonites?

In summer 1977 the churches cooperated in a cross-cultural camp to work at identity. Whites weren't there, but blacks and browns were. "It was the first time the kids had opportunity to talk about what they see in themselves as Mennonites, rather than always letting the white man tell them," said Esther. "But," she continued, "there wasn't enough time to even explore their own perceptions of what it means to be black or brown. I guess they wish they could articulate that without being hostile."

The Mennonite churches in Chicago have identified the need for mutual support and cross-cultural fellowship. One of the reasons for this is simply survival. Some of the congregations feel isolated. "From whence cometh our help?" they query.

Rural Mennonites look at the cities and don't want their children to go. We see mission more readily overseas because we don't know how to cope with the big city. City people look at rural churches and conclude they don't care.

A second reason for mutual support is the need for a vision. One goal is an Anabaptist theology adapted to the needs of the city and creatively incorporating the diversities of the city. To this end Chicago Mennonites have organized various educational efforts, including a "seminary without walls."

The last twenty miles of my day were traveled on a freeway to O'Hare. I had heard about problems.

But I also sensed a creative movement of Christ-motivated persons seeking not only to survive, but to live warmly and openly across the barriers of race, culture, and ethnicity. There were good feelings because the problems were being faced.

In diversity there will be joy and strength and peace. *A Meetinghouse article.* •

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News

Managers advised to act as Good Samaritans

Cambridge, Ontario—Business and management people were told that a whole new range of ethical imperatives are theirs when they begin to see employees as neighbors.

During the windup worship service of the joint annual convention of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) and Mennonite Industry and Business Associates (MIBA), held October 26-29, John Redekop challenged his audience to see their employees as neighbors as in the biblical story of the Good Samaritan. "Then the notion of their being subordinate evaporates," he said.

Redekop, who is a political science teacher at Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo, called the story of the Good Samaritan "one of the most compelling examples for management/labor relations. . . . You have no more right than the least-paid employee of yours to exploit anyone, because all are made in the image of God," he said.

In the first address at the concluding session Sunday morning, Calvin Redekop, co-executive secretary of MIBA, told participants that Mennonite business is still largely antiunion, against minimum wage guarantees and often falls short of full disclosure to employees as to the financial state of the company and the take-home pay of management.

"And our open-door policies, under the guise of treating employees on an individual basis, are too often a paternalistic divide-and-conquer tactic," he said.

A very serious problem, said Redekop, is that employees tend to be treated as mere commodities rather than as persons of equal worth.

The Jesus way, said Redekop, who has been a teacher of sociology and religion and is now in business in Hesston, Kansas, means sharing with employees the goals and objectives of the company and the profit/loss picture. "Withholding relevant information from employees is lying," he said.

Business sessions

Combined with inspirational sessions and workshops on various topics related to the convention theme of management/labor relations from a Christian perspective were annual business meetings of MEDA and MIBA.

The MIBA board decided to expand and upgrade its quarterly newsletter into a journal to be called *Christians in Economics.* The MEDA board consequently agreed to become cosponsor of the new journal, edited by Cal Redekop.

Other MIBA decisions included the approval of a full-time executive secretary by next July 1 and the launching of a concerted membership drive in 1979 (hoping to push membership from the present 702 to 3,000). Budget for 1979 is $30,000.

One of MIBA's main thrusts in the next year will be a study of management/labor relations from an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective. A committee headed by Paul G. Tschetter, retired hospital administrator from Denver, Colorado, has been commissioned to bring a guidelines statement to the 1979 convention for discussion and adoption.

The MEDA organization is active in assistance programs to persons and organizations in developing countries. It released a book during this convention detailing its 25-year history. Author of the book, titled *The MEDA Experiment,* is J. Winfield Fretz of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario.

The MEDA meeting, with a record attendance, was told that income was up 20 percent and membership growth was over 10 percent last year to a total of 290.

Milo Shantz of St. Jacobs, Ontario, outgoing chairman of both MEDA-US and MEDA-Canada, reported on involvements around the world and particularly on potential involvement in an Inca Indian resettlement program in Bolivia. MEDA, with a $109,000 grant from Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), has approved a three-year revolving credit program for members of six Indian cooperatives.

Elvin Byler, Lancaster, Pennsylvania attorney, is the new chairman of MEDA-US and Roy Snyder of Waterloo of MEDA-Canada. The Canadian organization does not meet separately or work at separate projects.

Next year's convention will be in Lincoln, Nebraska, October 18-21. *Dave Kroeker*

High level consultation reaches no conclusions on homosexuality

Chicago—A task force of Mennonite health care professionals and theologians believe a large conference on homosexuality is not appropriate at this juncture. The group of 26 met here September 29-30 for a consultation on human sexuality.

A year ago the Mennonite Medical Association (MMA) set up a task force to study the issue of homosexuality. This task force presented a report to the 1978 MMA convention and called for a special consultation to study the facets of homosexuality and to determine future direction.

Twenty-one persons from the Mennonite Church (OM), three from the General Conference (GC), and two from the Mennonite Brethren (MB), heard an introductory paper by Ross Bender, "The Christian View of Sexuality." Bender presented three biblical categories against which human sexuality, in any form, needs to be tested: (1) How does it relate to the teaching, "In the image of God he created him; male and female he created them"? (2) Any constructive long-term interpersonal commitments must express the "covenant" image of the Bible. (3) The Bible clearly teaches that the kingdom of God is our prior commitment, and sexual expression must follow that idea, particularly as it affects the solidarity of the family.

Three papers explored the etiology of homosexuality. Verle Headings, medical school professor of pediatrics and human genetics, declared the constitutional makeup to be multifactoral. Carl Rutt, child psychiatrist, reported research indicating that homosexuality is not learned from homosexual parents or other adults, but the research is not definitive. Vernon Kratz, clinical psychiatrist, said that there is little evidence that homosexuality might be a sickness. All three papers pointed out that while homosexuality is commonly regarded as one simple category such a definition is inadequate.

Ruth Krall, professor in the Goshen College School of Nursing, challenged the consultation to be more concerned about the persons, and put the problem beside people. Maybe in future consultations there needs to be a spokeperson for the people being studied. Ruth stated that research indicates 4 percent of our population to be male homosexuals and 1½ percent are female homosexuals.

John Howard Yoder, on the topic "Is Homosexuality Sin?", without attempting to answer the question, made four suggestions for further discussion of this issue: (1) Affirm the place of sexuality in the knitting together and nurturing of the family within the people of God. (2) Agree that for all of us the fundamental meaning of sexuality is that God wants extended families to be knitted together in linkages where erotic relations do not dominate at the expense of other kinds of affection. (3) Examine the commonalities advocated by homosexuals and heterosexuals. (4) Deal fairly with the proscribed sins listed in Leviticus and other passages, and not focus too much on one sin.

Another series of papers, on how homosexuals are treated by health care professionals, by the law, by media and society, and by congregations, agreed that there is much ambivalence.

The final reports, how psychiatrists can help, how the church can help, and a progress report on "attitude research" towards homosexuals, agreed that much can be done, but it is not clear what the "cure" is. Psychoanalysis has been able to change homosexuals to heterosexuals with a success rate of over 50 percent, following 350 hours of analysis. The church has been instrumental in changing some through charismatic and other conversion experiences.

Attitudes among Mennonite pastors and therapists vary greatly about which is the best way to treat homosexuals. The Mennonite gays, who responded to the research, see their orientation as a healthful variant but are open to dialogue with the church. The research indicates tentatively (the project is not complete nor scientifically controlled for validity) that 50 percent of Mennonite gays remain in the closet, a third withdraw from the church, and the 15 percent who go public report they have not found acceptance. Pastors generally see homosexuality as symptomatic of personality disorders. Mennonite therapists are divided in their attitudes about homosexuality as a disorder or an acceptable variant. The research also suggests that the homosexual population among Mennonites is the same as in the general population (about 5 percent).

The participants concluded that while the issues had been more clearly spelled out there is much need for greater discernment of God's Spirit before stating a position.

. The Mennonite Medical Association task force was urged to implement further steps in the future and to convene the same consulting group when appropriate. *Bernie Wiebe*

GC giving up from 1977

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—For the 10-month period ending October 31 donations to General Conference ministries increased about $280,000 in comparison to the same period in 1977. Nevertheless, observes conference treasurer Ted Stuckey, donations in November and December will need to increase by $56,000 over 1977 receipts if the 1978 budget is to be met.

The 1978 budget for the General Conference is $3,179,883. Receipts for the January-October period totaled $2,082,978 (65.5 percent) as compared to $1,798,845 (56.6 percent) in 1977. Hence donations for November and December will have to be about $1,097,000 to meet the budget. Actual receipts for the same two months in 1977 were $1,041,000.

The 1978 budget is the same as the 1977 budget. Last year receipts fell approximately $340,000 short of budget. The budget represents receipts for COM, CHM, COE, and the seminary.

Women in Mission, whose budget is separate from the General Conference budget, report donations of $150,538 (84.6 percent) to the end of October towards a 1978 budget of $178,000.

BOOKS-the gifts that keep on giving

Full Circle: Stories of Mennonite Women **Mary Lou Cummings, editor**

"I never thought much about what a 'woman' should do. My main concern was to know what God wanted me to do, and I knew he would help me to do it," says Dr. Ella Garber Bauman. Through the simplicity of these words, a great power is unleashed. This power, this focus, is an unspoken theme in many of these biographies. These women were focused on God's will and this set them free to be themselves.

ISBN 0-87303-014-1 * Paper * 214 pages * 1978 .... $5.25
Introductory offer until December 31, 1978 .... $4.95

Toward Understanding the Bible **Perry Yoder**

This study is intended as an introduction to hermeneutics for the lay person. In a chapter titled "Games People Play With the Bible," the author describes some of the approaches to the Bible that are common among lay people. He then shows how the correct meaning of the text can be found only by taking the author and his context seriously. The book treats crucial issues in biblical interpretation in a nontechnical way.

Perry Yoder graduated from Goshen College with a BA in sociology and received his PhD in Old Testament from the University of Pennsylvania. He is a professor of religion at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

ISBN 0-87303-006-0/20 * Paper * 96 pages * 1978 .... $2.45

A Vietnamese Pilgrimage **Max Ediger**

The war is now over in Viet Nam, but the struggle continues. As people work in their fields, some are still maimed and others killed by munitions lying unexploded in their fields. To shape and create a new society—to reconstruct a new nation—requires an intense struggle. The cost is high. "When and how will we live as one happy family?" asks the author in this poetic recreation of his Vietnamese experience. The drama of what happened in Viet Nam pulsates in the pages of this book.

Max Ediger, served as a voluntary service worker with Mennonite Central Committee in Burundi, Africa. After graduation from Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, he served a five-year term (1971-1976) as a voluntary service worker in Viet Nam. His third assignment with MCC is working for the Christian Church in Thailand.

ISBN 0-87303-007-9 * Paper * 88 pages * October 1978 .... $5.25

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FULL CIRCLE
Hermeneutics for lay People
Toward Understanding the Bible
A Vietnamese Pilgrimage Max Ediger

Destroyed homes rebuilt with scraps

◀ **War in Nicaragua and a hurricane in Honduras** require emergency aid and social and spiritual assistance, says Art Driedger, associate director for overseas services of MCC (Canada), after a two-week visit to the area in October. The civil war in Nicaragua has left thousands homeless and destitute. On the northeast coast of Honduras Hurricane Greta left more than 1,500 families homeless after it struck in September. Local church leadership in Honduras, reports Driedger, is enthusiastic about challenging their members to donate to rehabilitation projects.

The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) has called upon President Carter to publicly denounce the terrorist activities of the Patriotic Front in Rhodesia. In a letter addressed to the president, NAE President Carl H. Lundquist warned that the United States' official policy toward Rhodesia is being misunderstood so that it is encouraging the guerrillas in their destruction of life and property. "We hope new ways and means will be considered by which you (the president) could assist in halting this reign of terrorism and promote a peaceful transition to a black majority rule in Rhodesia," Lundquist wrote.

Vignettes of church work in Thailand

Garbage workers organize

With patience and daring one can maneuver through the heavy traffic of Sukhumvit Road South to reach Lane 71.

City blocks are slowly replaced by rice paddies, banana gardens, and clusters of palm trees. However, the pastoral scene suddenly changes, for rising out of the flat rice paddies is Garbage Mountain, 40 feet high and covering six acres.

It is a special mountain because it provides a living for 4,000 people who live around its base. All day long the slum dwellers scurry over the mountain seeking anything which can be recycled. Garbage trucks from greater Bangkok dump their loads here daily. Plastic bags, cans, and bottles are collected for marketing. The earnings are slim, the work dirty and tedious, but it provides the money to keep alive.

Though life is grim there are signs of hope. In this slum the Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT), through its community action branch called Urban Industrial Life Division (UILD), is making a unique witness to Thai society.

UILD is not trying to solve the problems of the slum, but several workers are helping the slum dwellers organize themselves so they can define their problems and seek solutions. They are beginning to learn that as an organized group they have power and can control their lives.

With some financial help from UILD and volunteer efforts a local committee is constructing a school for 120 children, four to six years old. A medical clinic will also be operated from the same building.

The residents next want to deal with vocational training for their young people to improve their job opportunities. Future projects may include better sanitation facilities and utilities in addition to a program to rehabilitate the large number of drug users in the community.

Editor's note: These two glimpses of the work of the church in Thailand are written by Max Ediger, the only Mennonite Central Committee worker in Thailand. Ediger's own work centers about the rehabilitation of drug addicts at the Thanyarak Drug Treatment Hospital in Bangkok.

Drugs show social problems

The use of drugs has been steadily increasing in Thailand during recent years.

A major problem is that the social aspects of drug addiction are not being dealt with properly.

As a purely medical problem addicts are being treated effectively. They are treated for three weeks during which they are "cleaned out" and show no more physical addiction to heroin. However, upon leaving the hospital or monastery, they return to the same filthy slums, the same jobless existence, the same family or community problems which drove them to drugs in the first place. Thus it comes as no surprise to meet a patient in the hospital who is going through the treatment for the 20th time.

There are an estimated 600,000 addicts in Thailand, the majority of whom live in slums in or near the city of Bangkok.

Steps are being taken to fight this problem. Since much opium is grown in the mountains of the northern part of Thailand, a program has been started to encourage the mountain tribal people to grow coffee or tea instead.

Even if this crop substituting program were to be a success, the amount of opium (from which heroin is manufactured) would not decrease substantially since Burma and Laos also produce large quantities.

Four thousand people eke out a living from t

Treatment facilities such as the Thanyarak Drug Treatment Hospital have been established to offer medical treatment to addicts. Several Buddhist monks have also begun treating addicts with a mixture of herbal medicine and religion.

Thai history first records the use of opium as a socioeconomic problem in the year 1387. Since that time various steps have been taken to control opium use. By 1955 the selling and use of opium and other addicting drugs was outlawed for all people.

However, in a country such as Thailand, which is experiencing the rapid influx of Western technology, industrialization, and consequent social upheaval, drug use and drug trade cannot be stopped simply by the passing of laws.

In 1958 there were 70,985 registered

During "Terror in the Promised Land," an ABC television documentary broadcast October 30, Ranaan Weitz, head of the Jewish National Fund, which controls much of the land and Jewish settlement activities in Israel, said, "We cannot escape from a historic fact . . . that Israel, among other things, . . . also created land out of marshes and so on . . . but we used Arab land for our survival. The problem and the issue is a clash between two justices. We had to live, . . . and they (the Palestinians) had to regain their dignity and their national self-expression, and the answer for such a situation is a painful compromise."

Existing military weapons could destroy the earth. That is a growing awareness among European churches, who are coming to the peace churches and asking, "How can your message of Christian peace reach the world?" according to Wilfried Warneck of Germany, a longtime Christian advocate for peace. Dialogue between North American and European Mennonites will be crucial, Warneck believes, if they are to widely and "authentically express the theological concept of Anabaptism which, up until now, has not been integrated into worldwide Christianity."

brought to Garbage Mountain.

opium smokers in Thailand. Few other drugs were being abused at this time. In 1960 the first incidence of heroin use was reported.

The average Thai addict uses 1,200 milligrams of pure heroin each day at a cost of about $6 (US). Some of the patients at Thanyarak Hospital are young and some have received treatment from two to 18 times previously.

There has been a move toward halfway houses. Several patients in the hospital have suggested such an idea. In this way they could be helped to trace their addiction to its source and thereby find some way to bring about change. Drug addiction is a social problem which not only affects Thai society economically, but also weakens the stability of communities and families. •

Special interests oppose SALT II talks

Opposition to the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT II) between the US and the USSR is "well organized, well funded, and seriously and dangerously mistaken," Paul C. Warnke told more than 175 religious leaders on October 18 in Washington, DC.

The purpose of the daylong briefing at the State Department was to inform religious leaders on the content and progress of the SALT II talks.

Warnke, recently resigned head of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) and chief negotiator to SALT II, described the talks as "tough." "If we do not succeed in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, all of the other problems with which you are concerned (such as world hunger, unemployment, inflation) fade into triviality." Warnke said that special interests are making their case in Washington for arms production, but the voice that is missing is one which would speak for the best interests of the total society.

Victor Alessi, deputy chief of the ACDA Strategic Arms Division, using charts, statistics, and technical language dramatically demonstrated the consequences of the Senate's failure to ratify a SALT II agreement when that time comes. It could cost more than $100 billion dollars, he said, just trying to keep ahead of the Russians, during what would be the life of the treaty, through 1985.

SALT has been in process since 1969. SALT I accords limited antiballistic missile sites and established an interim accord on offensive carriers which expired in 1977.

Ambassador Marshall D. Shulman, special adviser on Soviet Affairs to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, pointed out that a SALT II agreement would not be dependent on trust. In fact, he said, it would be based on mutual distrust. He and other speakers at the daylong briefing emphasized the importance of verification.

Shulman also said the Russians probably "fear war more than any other people on earth," due to the living memories they already have of war.

Fear was a dominant motif of the day's discussions.

Preceding the daylong briefing at the State Department more than 50 of the religious leaders met in the Dirksen Senate Office Building on October 17 to assess their religion's historic and current response to arms and war. This was at the invitation of the National Council of Churches. Even at this assembly the right of armed self-defense was not questioned.

Nevertheless a religious support group for SALT II was formed. Alan Geyer, executive director of the Center for Theology and Public Policy, summarized the status of the group. "The new 'Religious Committee on SALT' is a coalition-in-process-of-formation by representatives of more than a dozen Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish organizations. The religious leaders resolve to work together in support of SALT II and to make clear their commitment to more extensive nuclear arms control."

Among participants in the Conference on SALT for Religious Leaders, organized by ACDA and convened by Warnke at the State Department, were six Mennonites: Glendon Blosser, Elmer Neufeld, John Stoner, Delton Franz, Betsy Beyler, and Dave Hostetler. A Mennonite luncheon caucus on October 18 did not surface clear ideas of what the peace churches' response might be other than to insist that a great deal more public education should take place. *David E. Hostetler*

Intergenerational classes are no snap, but a first-time effort by the Ebenfeld Mennonite Church in Hershel, Saskatchewan, last July has convinced some church members to do it again. The class used material from *Generations Learning Together* and attracted attendance from preschoolers to grandparents (participation from older youth was sparse). Children liked the class as a break from regular Sunday school, although the kindergarten children felt left out at times. Coordinator Ruby Sawatzky said it is important to provide an alternative for adults who don't want to come. First Mennonite Church in Edmonton, Alberta, also experimented this past summer with an intergenerational class. Writing about this experience Margaret Hunsberger notes, "A real benefit of intergenerational classes is the opportunity for all ages to share their thinking and to get to know each other better outside the usual family and social groupings. . . . However, I did miss the opportunity for the reasoned, probing discussion which can and should (whether or not it does!) occur in an adult class as topics are pursued in some depth. For that reason I would not like to be in an intergenerational class all year."

Record

Workers

Kristine Fransen, Grace Church, St. Catharines, Ontario, began a one-year stint with Mennonite Voluntary Service on September 25 in Kansas City, Kansas. She is a teacher's assistant at Sherwood Center for Exceptional Children. Kristine attended the University of Waterloo (Ontario) for two years, 1976-78. Among her work experience is being a historical researcher responsible for interviewing people and compiling information. Henry and Otheila Fransen of St Catharines are her parents.

Oswald H. Goering, chairperson of the faculty of outdoor teacher education at the Lorado Taft Field Campus of Northern Illinois University, received the Julian W. Smith award October 20. The award is regarded as the highest award in the field of outdoor education. Goering is a graduate of Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas), and holds both master's and doctoral degrees from Indiana University. He served two years as a field representative for Mennonite Central Committee in Paraguay.

Timothy Graber, First Church, Moundridge, Kansas, began two years of voluntary service with the General Conference on October 23. His assignment is working in home repair in Portland, Oregon. Timothy is a 1978 graduate of Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas) with a BS in mathematics. He worked as an assistant in the mathematics department at the college, and he also has farm experience. His parents are Richard and Marjorie Graber of Moundridge.

Tig Intagliata, Bel Air Presbyterian Church, Los Angeles, California, is a teacher who began one year with Mennonite Voluntary Service on September 1. He is working in Denver, Colorado, at La Academia de la Gente, an alternative school. In 1978 Tig graduated from the University of California in Los Angeles with a teaching certificate and a BA in psychology. Salvatore and Melina Intagliata of Palos Verdes, California, are his parents.

Sharon Irish, Valley Presbyterian Church, Chagrin Falls, Ohio, began one year of voluntary service with the General Conference on October 9 working as a day-care worker in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Sharon earned a BS in elementary education from Bluffton (Ohio) College in 1978. Her parents are Charles and Margaret Irish of Aurora, Ohio.

Fransen

Graber

Intagliata

Irish

Angelika Jantz, Fort Garry Mennonite Brethren Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, began one year with Mennonite Voluntary Service on September 9 as a day-care worker in Markham, Illinois. Angelika is a 1978 graduate of Westgate Mennonite Collegiate in Winnipeg. Her parents are Hugo and Katherine Jantz of Winnipeg.

Don Kauffman, The Assembly, Goshen, Indiana, is working as a volunteer in a halfway house in Hutchinson, Kansas, in a program sponsored by Mennonite Voluntary Service. Don began his service August 28. In 1977 he graduated from Goshen (Indiana) College with a BA in religion and

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR

The Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Altona is looking for an individual to direct its Christian education program on a full-time basis. Responsibilities are to include administration of the Sunday school program, as well as assistance with some pastoral duties.

Potential candidates should have a sincere interest in people of all ages, enthusiasm for the work of the church, and a commitment to spiritual growth.

If you are interested, direct inquiries to:
Levi Reimer,
Chairman, Search Committee
Box 612,
Altona, Manitoba R0G 0B0

Phone: (204) 324-5366 (home);
(204) 324-6622 (business)

Constituents are in the driver's seat of Mennonite Central Committee, says Peter J. Dyck, director of MCC in Europe and North Africa. Speaking to a West Coast MCC meeting in Seattle October 14, Dyck said MCC is not a static organization. "We are moving through four main phases," he explained. These are material aid in emergency situations, service, development, and justice. Development is the main thrust at present, but the fourth and future phase, justice, is the most complicated of all because it involves exploring exploitative economics, relating to institutions, and human rights, he said.

A parable of privilege: One Sunday two bus loads of United Church people from Winnipeg, Manitoba, drove out to Fisher River to fellowship with the Indian church there. The travelers had packed sack lunches, but when they arrived on the reserve they were treated to a fine lunch in the church. They were not aware that the Indians, who were last in line, received none. Apparently the visitors forgot to share, and the Indians, too polite to cause a stir, were left without.

Applications are now being taken for the 1979 Intermenno Trainee Program in Europe. The program is a cultural exchange with the purpose of promoting better understanding through person-to-person contact. Single people between the ages of 19 and 30 who are willing to participate in family, work, and church life in Europe may request application forms from MCC, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501, or MCC (Canada), 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8.

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communication. Previous to coming to MVS Don worked with disabled persons. His parents are Earnest and Lois Kauffman of West Point, Nebraska.

Tamara Lattin, Community Bible Church, Fort Benton, Montana, is a social work major who began a two-year term of voluntary service with the General Conference on September 5. She is working in Washington, DC, in a program aimed at producing a moratorium on prison construction. Tamara attended Tabor College (Hillsboro, Kansas) from 1976-78. Her parents are Peggy and Forrest Lattin of Fort Benton.

Diane Lechner, Episcopal Church, Seward, Alaska, began one year with Mennonite Voluntary Service on August 30 as a day-care worker in Kansas City, Kansas. Diane graduated in 1978 with an AA in child care from Hesston (Kansas) College. Charles and Mary Lechner of Seward are her parents.

Jantz

Kauffman

Lattin

Lechner

Rosalie Penner, Bethel Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, is working with disabled persons in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in a program sponsored by Mennonite Voluntary Service. Her one-year term began September 5. Rosalie graduated from the Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute (Winnipeg, Manitoba) in June. James and Margo Penner of Winnipeg are her parents.

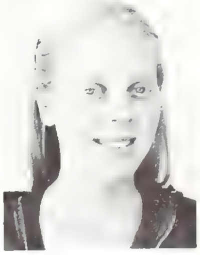
Marjorie Pickering, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Ashville, Ohio, began a two-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service on September 1 as a teacher at Hopi Mission School in Oraibi, Arizona. Marj graduated in 1968 with a BA from Capitol University (Columbus, Ohio). She has worked as a teacher since 1958.

Barbara Plett, College Community Mennonite Brethren Church, Fresno, California, is working as a child-care worker with Mennonite Voluntary Service in Hutchinson, Kansas. Her one-year assignment began September 11. Barbara, a 1976 high school graduate, has attended Stanislaus State College (Turlock, California) and Fresno (California) City College. Her parents are Theodore and Delores Plett of Atwater, California.

Wayne Shirk, Pine Grove Church, Bowmansville, Pennsylvania, began a one-year term with Mennonite Voluntary Service on September 18 working as a tutor and a craft leader at the Crossroads Community Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Wayne is a 1977 high school graduate. For one year he was head counselor at Camp Men-o-Lan near Quakertown, Pennsylvania. His parents are Raymond and Grace Shirk of Navron, Pennsylvania.

Calvin Redekop, Hesston, Kansas, has been appointed professor of sociology at Conrad Grebel College, University of Waterloo, Ontario, effective August 1, 1979 (conditional upon receiving an immigration permit). Redekop, who has taught at various colleges, including Hesston (Kansas), Goshen (Indiana), and Tabor (Hillsboro, Kansas), will replace *J. Winfield Fretz,* president of Conrad Grebel from 1963-73, who is retiring.

Penner


Plett

Shirk

Published

A study packet on Vietnam and Laos has been compiled by MCC Peace Section. The official report of the 1978 MCC delegation's visit to Vietnam, a policy statement on reasons for aid to Vietnam, and a copy of the March/April 1978 issue of the *Southeast Asia Chronicle* containing articles by Murray and Linda Hiebert on Laos are samples of the resources contained in the packet. The packet is available for $2.00 from MCC Peace Section, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

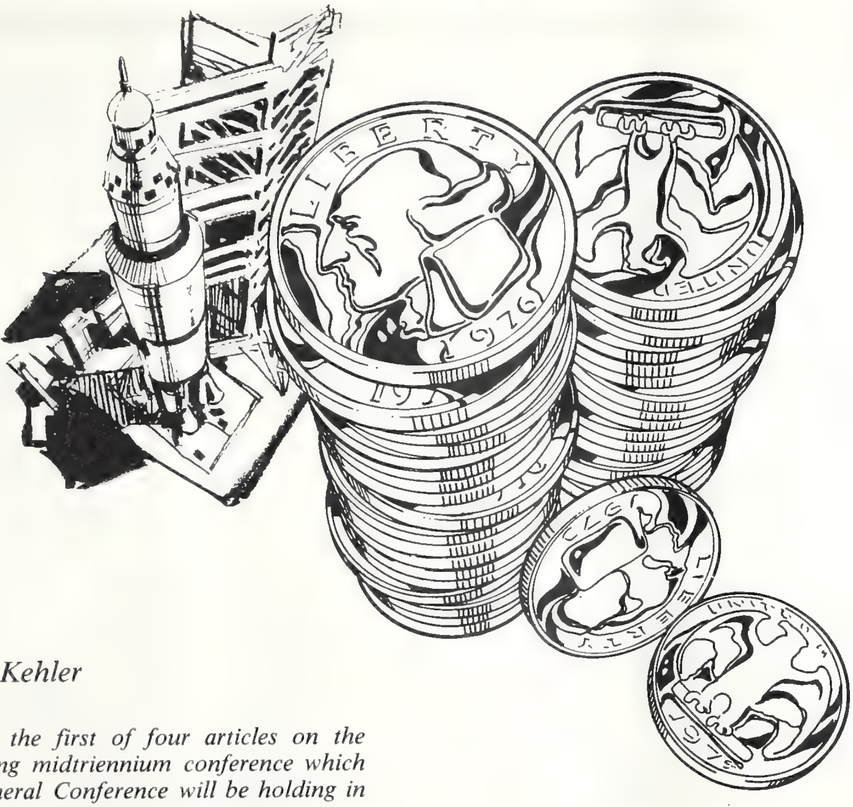
but joy cometh in the morning.
Ps. 30:5 KJV
For this woman and for many families the cyclone that swept India a year ago brought a time for weeping. Contributions to MCC meant there were volunteers to mourn with her, to bring food and clothing, hope for a new home and seeds for a new season.

Now, as MCC anticipates bringing hope to Ethiopia, where drought and war have created severe famine, your support is needed. Sorrow may linger many nights, but through God's love there is returning joy.

Mennonite Central Committee
21 South 12th Street
Akron, PA 17501
or
201-1483 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8

Weeping may endure for a night . . .

Our Christian civil responsibility-1



Larry Kehler

This is the first of four articles on the upcoming midtriennium conference which the General Conference will be holding in Minneapolis, February 9-10, 1979. Larry Kehler attended the Consultation on Civil Responsibility, Elkhart, Indiana, June 1-4, 1978, and he was asked to compile and edit a study guide covering the biblical, theological, and historical material concerning the tax issue.

That guide, called The Rule of the Lamb, *is described somewhat in this first of four articles. Larry says that he claims no special experience on this subject, but he is concerned that the General Conference work through this issue in a way which will result in maturity rather than destructiveness.*

Are we going to learn something from the war-tax issue, or are we going to dig our trenches deeper and deeper and stretch them farther and farther out into left and right fields, trying to outflank each other in a running, destructive debate?

General Conference churches have the opportunity of either growing through the process of working on the war-tax question or of stagnating and splintering. I am somewhat more confident now than I was even six months ago that we will mature through this experience, and in the process perhaps reassert some of our Conference's flagging leadership in the field of peace.

The foregoing paragraph will sound to some of you as though I already know what the answer to our problem is and that all we have to do is affirm it. Not so! The way out of this blind alley we have entered is not clear to me. A satisfactory solution will require our united efforts.

Why then my confidence that the situation seems more hopeful now than half a year ago? Perhaps it is only because I have been talking to more optimistic persons. But I do have the impression that General Conference people are more ready now to participate in the struggle for an answer than they were even as late as last winter. The easy answer of letting this debate be the occasion for some congregations to sever their ties with the General Conference seems to be more of a "cop-out" than a reasonable response to a difficult question.

Persons who are proposing that the radicalness of our Christian commitment should show itself more clearly in our response to the buildup of the world's stockpile of death materials are showing sensitivity and openness as they listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit coming through the brothers and sisters in the General Conference. Are they to understand that the Conference is not concerned about the military buildup? Or is the concern based only on the type of strategy being used?

Will your congregation have delegates at the midtriennium sessions in Minneapolis? If it won't, both the conference and the congregation will be the poorer for it. You see, the question is not only how we will respond to the issue of tax-withholding as a witness against war, but how we go about dealing with questions on which we have not yet achieved clarity or unanimity. The process we go through may well be much more vital to us than the answer we finally come up with, and that is not to diminish the seriousness of the problem of militarism.

Coming to Minneapolis without advance preparation, however, could be almost as destructive as not coming at all. Each congregation should do some serious struggling within its own setting on the various dimensions which this issue is raising for us.

The General Conference has prepared a set of two study guides to assist congregations in the search for handles. Both these books have been advertised in various ways. They can be ordered in bulk or single copies from the Newton office.

Congregations may devote up to thirteen weeks to the study; less if they feel they cannot devote an entire quarter to it. The study books take a close look at modern-day militarism and at the biblical, theological, and historical material which can help us deal with this problem.

The war-tax issue offers the General Conference one of its best opportunities in many years to work seriously at Bible interpretation on a question about which we have widely differing views. How do we make decisions when we disagree? One lesson in the study guides is devoted to that query. Learning how we can better become a "hermeneutic community," a church which takes the Word seriously, is an important spiritual benefit which could grow out of the process in which we are now engaged.

Next week: The Tax Texts—Are They as Clear as We Think?

Review

Jesus

Jesus, by Eduard Schweizer, translated by David E. Green (John Knox Press, 1971, second printing 1976, 200 pages) is reviewed by Clarence Bauman, professor of theology and ethics, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana.

This is not a "Jesus book" in the historical tradition—as the abbreviated English title implies—but a New Testament theology in a nutshell, originally drafted during a teaching mission in Japan (1966), then developed into a lecture series for nontheological students at Zurich University in Switzerland, and subsequently published at Siebenstern Verlag, Munchen (1968).

Schweizer, for many years distinguished professor of New Testament at Zurich, assumes the two-source theory of gospel origin, giving priority to Mark and Q (for Quelle: a lost collection of Jesus sayings) within the synoptic formation. Rather than force consistency in historical detail he emphasizes the witness character of the primary documents. He minimizes variation of nonessential factual data in parallel accounts on the assumption that historical reconstruction cannot of itself convey the mystery of the real Jesus. As a case in point, according to Mark 15, Jesus is crucified on the third hour, whereas according to John 19, Pilate did not condemn him until the sixth hour. Schweizer, while conceding that both chronologies cannot be correct, nevertheless insists they are both right interpretations of different intentions embodied in different traditions. Within the early Christian community the event of Christ was variously redescribed and reinterpreted in the course of proclaiming its significance in the diverse language and imagery most familiar to those individual believers whose legacy now comprises our canonized New Testament.

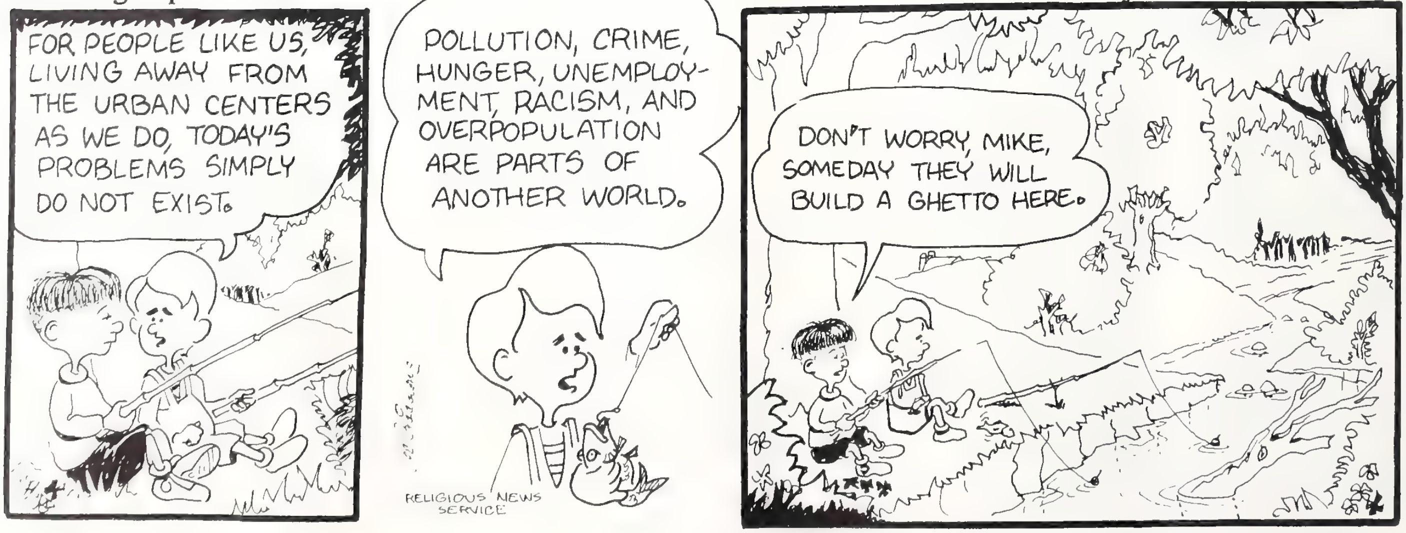
In a most intriguing and superbly discerning way Schweizer proceeds to examine in detail the unfathomable mystery of *who* Jesus really was, concluding that he was "the man who fits no formula." Was he Messiah? Without conquering Israel's enemies, establishing world dominion, or effecting the restoration of nature? Schweizer cannot find a single "genuine" saying of Jesus in which he refers to himself as either "Messiah" or "Son of God." It appears as if Jesus considered the title "Messiah" unsuitable for public acknowledgment though, according to Mark 14:61, when the question was put to him directly by the High Priest, Jesus' reply is clearly affirmative. And with respect to his "Sonship" it is noteworthy that Jesus' references to God as Father are unprecedented. In what sense did Jesus understand himself as the prophetic "Servant of God"? To what extent did he identify with the "Son of Man" title of Ezekiel and Daniel? Schweizer sees positive theological significance in all christological affirmation but finds no one formula to be really adequate. Therefore, he concludes that Jesus, by evading the limitation of all preconceived titles and labels, "keeps free the heart of the man who encounters him," whether through his mighty miracles, his profound parables, or his demanding call to discipleship.

In subsequent chapters Schweizer unravels from each strand of New Testament literature its unique focus. The shift in emphasis from the cosmic Jewish Jesus "who will soon return" to the "heavenly Jesus" of Hellenistic christology, whose lordly presence is existentially realized at Pentecost, is explained as the result of fading Jewish apocalyptic expectation. The Pauline emphasis on "Jesus crucified for the world" is complemented by the synoptic recovery of the "earthy Jesus" depicted as interpreter and fulfiller of the law. Even though some dimensions of the transition from Jesus to Paul appear a little strained, Schweizer tends to see continuity and unity underlying all diversity, a vision inspired by his perspective of faith as a theologian rather than as an historian.

The book is filled with provocative and suggestive insights as well as with controversial assumptions not every discerning reader would be expected to share, even though the underlying endeavor to synthesize the diverse strands of New Testament theology is obviously "conservative." The book lucidly distills decades of detailed scholarship and inspires love and respect for the integrity and relevance of the New Testament's mystery and message.

Looking Up

By Joe Giacalone


FOR PEOPLE LIKE US, LIVING AWAY FROM THE URBAN CENTERS AS WE DO, TODAY'S PROBLEMS SIMPLY DO NOT EXIST.
POLLUTION, CRIME, HUNGER, UNEMPLOYMENT, RACISM, AND OVERPOPULATION ARE PARTS OF ANOTHER WORLD.
DON'T WORRY, MIKE, SOMEDAY THEY WILL BUILD A GHETTO HERE.
RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE

Meditation

Rejoice in family worship

Supper has become the focal point of our day. It's the time when we come together to share our main meal and our key experiences. It's a central event in our family, like taking communion is a central experience in the church. In a combination of frolic, seriousness, and worship, we seek to find strength in each other and in our relationship with God.

Mealtime conversation centers around our experiences of the day. Each in turn shares a "high" or "low," and sometimes both. The ritual gives each person a chance to share what has been important. Each is heard, lest an important or embarrassing experience be overlooked.

"Highs" such as special accomplishments are often kept secret until the family is gathered around the table; then they are announced with great emphasis and relish.

Sharing of highs and lows at a typical meal often resembles the following:

Eleven-year-old Sharla begins by saying, "My high for the day was getting invited to Becky's house after school. We had a lot of fun playing together."

"I hit a homerun at recess today!" nine-year-old Steve proudly shares.

"I'm not sure I had a high today," admits Ardys (Mom) when her turn comes. "I felt pretty 'low' when I heard that Teresa lost her job after missing work for three days. We worked hard to help her get the job and had high hopes that she would do well."

So we go around the table until each joy or disappointment has been heard and processed.

The meal is finished. Basic dishes are cleared away. Sharla hands out six *Good News Bibles* stacked on the shelves behind her. Inside each is a single typed leaflet of 15 favorite songs called *The Becker Family Songbook*. Since it is Wednesday night it's Byron's turn to pick a song and do the reading. "Let's sing number 12, 'Song of Good News,'" he suggests. After the singing, which is more joyful noise than good music at our house, Byron reports that we are up to John 6:51. "I'll read through verse 59," he says. After everyone finds the passage he reads, "Jesus said to them, 'I am telling you the truth; if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in yourselves.'"

"Why did Jesus say that?" someone asks. "What did he mean, 'Eat my flesh?' That sounds 'yucky.'" A short discussion evolves and ideas are shared.

After the Bible reading Ardys reaches for a Christmas card from the stack received last December, and Palmer (Dad) reaches for *Rejoice* (our family worship magazine). "Today we pray for the John Arn family," Ardys reports. "Do you remember when Christal came to our home in Clinton, Oklahoma? They lived nearby in Cordell. Now they are serving a church near Bloomfield, Montana. JoLynn, would you like to pray for them?"

Palmer finds the date under "Suggestions for Daily Prayers and Activities" in *Rejoice*. The suggestion for today is "Pray for the teaching ministry of LaVerne and Harriet Rutschman at Latin American Biblical Seminary in San Jose, Costa Rica." "I know the Rutschmans; I'll pray for them," offers Palmer.

"I'll pray for Teresa," Ardys continues.

Sentence prayers begin. With this the evening meal is concluded.

Other families have other patterns of family interaction and devotions. This one has served us well. It provides for sharing the joys and hurts of life and for remembering each other in prayer. It gives opportunity for discussion and singing, Bible study, and worship. The ritual comes from a long tradition as well as from the annual suggestions of the current family. Much of it gets pretty provincial, but the prayer suggestions and Christmas cards help broaden our worlds as we bring them together at the family communion table. *Palmer and Ardys Becker*

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CONTRIBUTORS

Peter H. Rempel, 96 Barber Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2W 3J7 participated in the MCC (Canada) research project on alcohol use among Canadian Mennonites. Peter is a member of the Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church.

Vic Reimer, associate editor of *The Mennonite*, went to Chicago at the request of Meetinghouse, the inter-Mennonite editors' council, for a story on the Mennonite witness in Chicago.

Larry Kehler, former editor of *The Mennonite*, is pastor of the Charleswood Mennonite Church, 699 Haney Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3R 0Y7.

Palmer and Ardys Becker reside at 313 Southeast Fifth Street, Newton, Kansas 67114. Palmer is executive secretary for the Commission on Home Ministries. Ardys is a homemaker. They are members of the Grace Hill Mennonite Church.

CREDITS

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

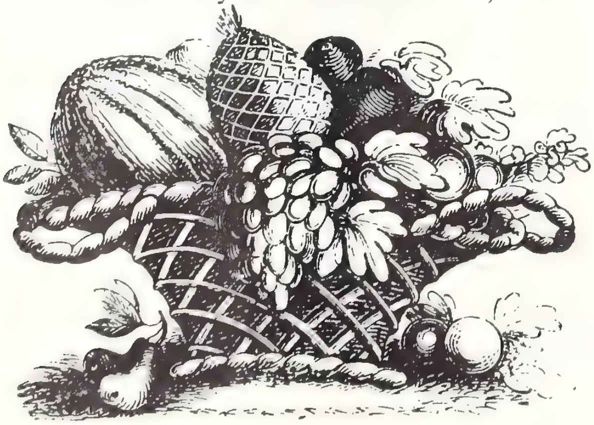
Thanks a lot

Just the two basic Hebrew roots *yadah* and *barak,* translated thanks (64 times), praise (55 times), confess (18 times) and bless (370 times), tell us that Old Testament Israel considered thanks-giving as one of the mainsprings for kingdom living. History tells us that at every Jewish meal, private or religious, the head or host began by taking bread and giving thanks ("Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, king of the world, who bringest forth bread from the earth"). The emphasis was not just on physical bread for the physical body, but on the total relationship between God and persons. This emphasis also prevails in the New Testament, where the Lord's Supper (symbolic of the deepest intimacy between Jesus Christ and the church) is shown as a celebration. The early church (Ignatius, circa 115 AD) applied the word *eucharist* (thanksgiving) to the communion supper.

When we think about the prevalence and all-encompassing nature of thanksgiving the words of Paul, "Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances. . ." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18), take on deep significance for each of us.

Our public days of thanksgiving (legally the second Monday of October in Canada since 1957, and the last Thursday of November in the US since 1863) were initiated mainly to give thanks for the harvest and for victory in war. It is important to give God "thanks" for what we receive at his hand. But what about the factory worker who notices no dependence on nature in his work? And what about us in today's North America, who can afford to eat turkey on any day of the year? How do we see God's hand in our lives?

In thinking, studying, and praying about this editorial page, I was repeatedly impressed that most Thanksgiving sermons and commentaries refer almost exclusively to being "grateful" in a rather narrow sense. They could be summarized, "Count your blessings and you will find reason to be thankful, even though that may sometimes boil down to nothing more than the fact that you are alive."



I am convinced that Paul refers to something deeper than a superficial balancing of our accounts with God. Thanksgiving has to do with our being.

Jesus healed 10 lepers; only one returned to thank him. Jesus was astonished and disappointed.

It is not likely that the other nine were ungrateful; but somehow their gratitude was not focused and personalized. They had not yet discovered the depth of a thanksgiving relationship.

When we give of ourselves *to* somebody we have a profound need to be received or acknowledged. It is generally demonstrated in our society by our quick "you're welcome" when somebody thanks us. We are affirmed. Even when we feel uncomfortable at receiving thanks we say, "Don't mention it," but gladly accept the intention.

In every act of giving or receiving thanks we accept or reject the person (and a relationship with that person), while we also are either accepted or rejected. It's not always noticed. But all of us have felt the hurt when our being rejected was suddenly recognized in our consciousness.

That helps me to understand the Psalms. They are a reminder of how intimately the writers saw themselves involved with God. To "bless, praise, thank, confess" God was to accept their relatedness.

That helps me to understand the human preoccupation with being thankful for "things." It is easier for us to accept God in "things" than to accept the profound implications of our personal relatedness to God (Isaiah 6 is a good illustration of the latter).

That helps me to understand Paul's teaching us to "rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances." It is not a reminder to repeat certain words or to audibly pray 24 hours each day; nor is it an urge for us never to feel sorrow. Paul does remind us that our relationship to God is to be a creatively growing awareness in all of life. For every situation a Christian can get into, God is there. (Isn't Psalm 23 a beautiful testimony to that fact?)

Paul's call to thank a lot is not a call to say "thanks a lot," but it is a reminder to continue growing in our awareness of "God with us" at all times. A good practice could be for us to substitute "God with you" for "thank-you." It would again remind us about the total relatedness of God, ourselves, and others. And *things* then also get their proper place . . . *secondary* to persons. *Bernie Wiebe*

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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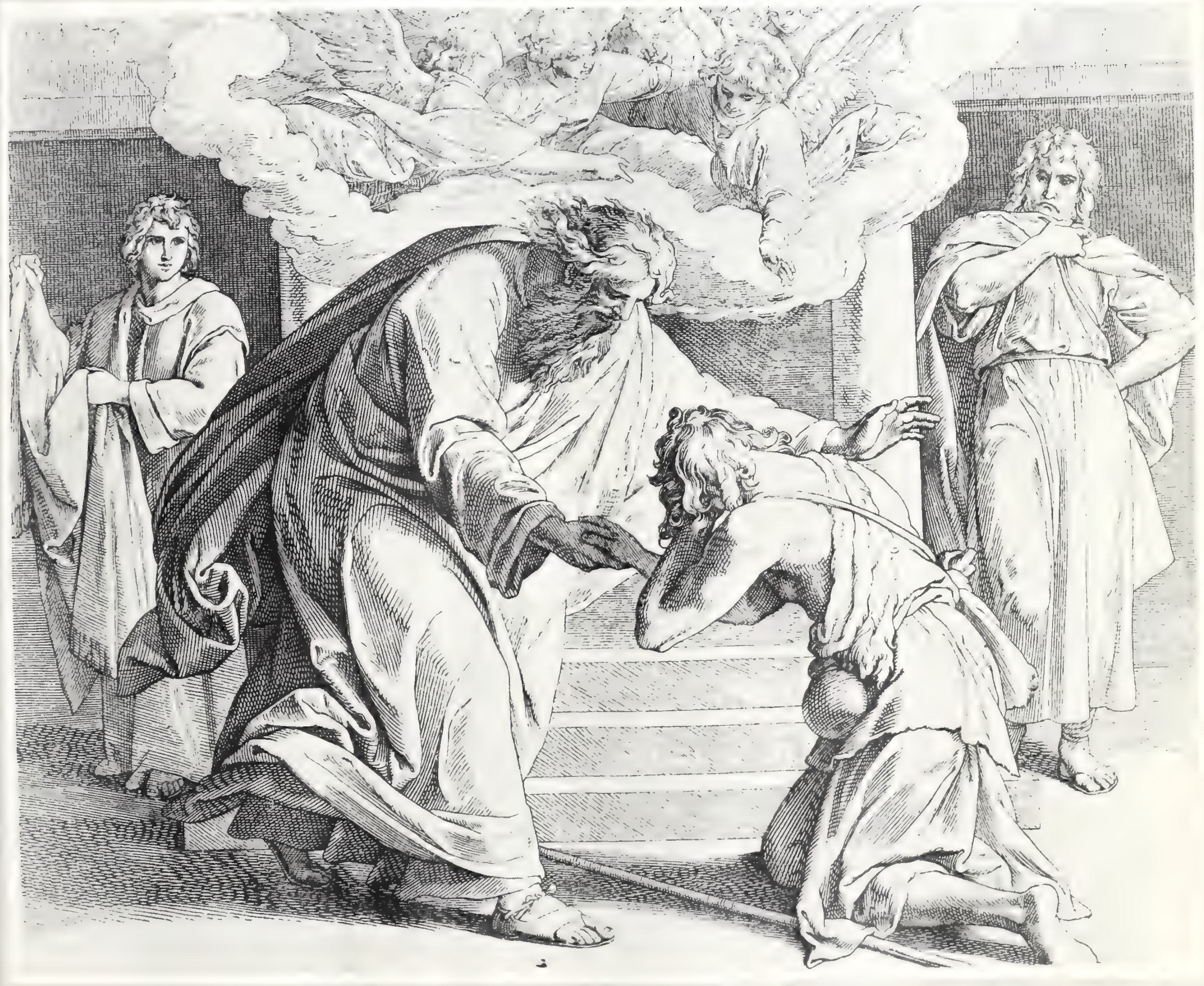

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"Most of us have chosen, with our heads, to follow the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and known in Jesus Christ. But this choice must flow through our hands and our feet. Don't straddle it!"

D

Doug Reichenbach

My grandpa and I had been asked to go back to the house and pick up an empty wagon to haul more tomatoes from the field. I hoped he would drive, because I knew if I drove I would have to back the tractor to the wagon for hitching up. I always jerked a lot when I let up on the clutch, and I didn't back up straight, and I *never* did it quite right. Grandpa had let it be known that he appreciated boys who were gung ho on farming. But I wasn't such a person and I didn't want to look foolish again in his presence.

Grandpa climbed on the back and left me no choice but the driver's seat. To make the best of a bad situation I decided to compensate for a poor hookup by driving faster than usual. Speed always impresses, doesn't it?

The dirt path was marked by several mudholes. I missed them all nicely until we came to the big bend. Oops, I'd forgotten about that big one just around the curve.

My grandfather shouted at the last possible moment, "Straddle it! Straddle it!" That was terrific advice, but at that time . . . I didn't know what straddle meant. I decided that "straddle it" must mean to keep at least one side out of the mud. So I swerved and hit the hole with the left wheels . . . and hit it hard! Grandpa nearly fell off and muddy water splashed everywhere. Subsequently I heard him mutter something I wasn't used to hearing, so I concluded that I had made the wrong decision.

Once I got in the house that evening, I looked for "straddle" in the dictionary. It said "to avoid committing oneself." In retrospect I now realized that "straddling"—trying to head through the middle of the mudhole so the wheels might have touched the sides—would have softened the impact and caused less splash.

And yet that choice not to straddle, though done in ignorance, had a positive effect. No need to pretend anymore; I couldn't endear myself to Grandpa and maybe—who knows—he gave up on me that day about becoming a farmer, and thereby helped free me to do something else. Not straddling was painful but it brought us closer to the truth.

There is too much straddling in the church; and it's not in ignorance. We straddle critical issues in our choices between the way of Christ or the way of the world.

Most church attenders have made a decision to follow Christ and have no intention of defecting. But there is the feeling in some that our faith can also embrace the various Baals of our day. They worship at the altars of prosperity, racial pride, patriotism, relational power, pleasure, personal growth; while at the same time confessing Jesus Christ as Lord.

Into the midst of such accommodation between Yahweh and Baal come the words of Elijah, "How long will you go limping with two different opinions?" (1 Kings 18:20). How long will you straddle your choices? How long will you sit on the fence? This is a pertinent and prophetic question which needs to be repeatedly addressed to those who lose sight of crucial differences between Yahweh and Baal, between Christ and culture, between the creator God and created gods. Jesus didn't say, "You *should not* serve two gods," nor did he say, "It would be better if you didn't." Jesus said, "You *cannot* serve two masters." Yet we try to make that *cannot* into an *ought not* and consider those words an ideal rather than our model. And God's voice says to us, "How long . . . ?"

Such a tendency to develop hybrids is apparent to us when we consciously examine our lives. The Word of God is transmuted through adaptation to Baal—from self-giving to self-indulging, from peace to prosperity.

I consider the bright, gentle man whose eyes light up as he talks intelligently about the new military technology. And I share the empathy of Jesus, "If you in your turn had only understood on this day the message of peace." I express my concern to him that he has been seduced by the Baal of violence and military deterrence . . . but I wonder if he understands. And I muse . . . if that enthusiasm could be channeled into Christ's purposes. Are you straddling the alternatives of war and peace?

I think of the serious young student trying to choose a college. Her comparisons are nicer dormitories, better food, impressive facilities, more social appeal. I ask her to choose deeper . . . with her heart, soul, and mind. She is afraid. And I wonder . . . what messages do we give our children about priorities? Are you straddling between pleasing people and pleasing God?

Elijah understood that the altars of Yahweh and Baal are incompatible; they cannot stand in the same sanctuary with any integrity. When we fly our national flag in the church, is it possible that this signifies, to a degree, the union of Yahweh and Baal or of Christ and culture in our midst? Do we assume that *our* country is God's country? Are we straddling between God and nation?

I think of my own flirtations with the Baal of sports. No matter that both teams have equal numbers of God's children, or that both have practiced hard; I still want the Yankees to win the World Series, I still want Ohio State to roll over Iowa and everybody else, I still want to beat Bethel Mennonite for the softball championship. Or I consider my lifestyle—we lack nothing essential, we use air conditioning, we pay war taxes, we eat too much junk food—and I can still hear Grandpa's voice, "Straddle it! Straddle it!" After all, we ministers earn less than most, our children deserve the niceties too, the government will get your money anyhow, you're not fat at all, "Pass Doug another doughnut." But as I hear "Straddle it! Straddle it!" there is another voice, "*How long* will you straddle the issue?"

The power of Baal is so pervasive—in the media, in government, in business, even in the religious establishment. Sometimes we feel as alone for Yahweh as Elijah felt. But

’t straddle it!

we know deep within us that all the media manipulation, the sexual exploitation, political power, military superiority, and economic leverage—all that *stuff* of Baal—comes up empty in the end. Dave Napier, *Word of God, Word of Earth* (page 49) says, “Out of Baal . . . with all his desperate, violent prophets screaming around his altar . . . we really know, don’t we, that there will be no sound, no response; no voice, no answer, nor even any sign of attention. The fire that lights the sacrifice and kindles worship, and the Word that creates, judges, and redeems, is not there.”

Napier suggests that we need to hear also the taunts of Elijah upon our lives. Sure, Baal is God—“a meditating, trip-taking, sleeping-waking, and even a toilet-going God”—a human creation, an extension of ourselves. We must face such idolatries of self, wealth, and nation for what they are—expressions of the human death-wish—because only in seeing our true selves will we begin to discover life.

Elijah calls upon Yahweh to speak, “that this people *may know that thou,* O Lord, art God . . .” (1 Kings 18:37). The fire struck the altar and Israel cried out, “The Lord, he is God!” (18:39). The bloody death of Baal’s prophets does not appeal to us lovers of peace. Far from offering support for violence and slaughter, this conclusion fits the story. God brings life but Baal brings death. Elijah called each one to choose—Yahweh *or* Baal, life or death—and each person chose. Elijah said, “Don’t straddle it! Don’t straddle it! Break with Baal completely—*now*!” God ultimately does not tolerate compromisers and we are *dying* when we do it.

Straddling is no safe option; it is a choice against Yahweh. Elizabeth O’Conner in *Our Many Selves* says that was the problem of Ananias and Sapphira. They tried to have the best of both worlds—God and mammon, Christ and culture, community and independence, sharing and self-indulgence, God and Baal—and it tore them apart and killed them. They wanted to give all to God but were afraid to. They wanted to be a part of the body of Christ but couldn’t yield to its sovereignty. They tried to straddle it.

Elizabeth O’Connor says that Ananias and Sapphira could not believe that the Christian community would accept them if they discovered that their commitment was not yet total. Therefore they felt a need to “fake it.”

There is some Ananias and Sapphira in each of us. We long to get others’ acceptance and “fake it,” somehow assuming that if we can fool people, we can also deceive God. It is like being dead; we experience spiritual paralysis. When we sit on the fence between God and the world we are playing a very dangerous game.

God wills life, full and freeing, for each of us. How long will you straddle? If Yahweh is God, follow him. Most of us have chosen with our heads to follow the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and known in Jesus Christ. But this choice must flow through our hands and our feet. Don’t straddle it! Join the struggle of being a true disciple of Christ in every word and deed, so that others may look at us and know that *our Lord is God.* •

My cynical self
responded: "He wants to be
treated like a king.
Spoiled,
that's all he is."

Ann Johnson

In step with my stepson

As pastor Ellis droned on with his sermon I fought to keep my mind on his subject instead of last night's humiliation, but I failed.

"Get out! Get out! And never come back!" I had screamed to the empty house as I watched my 18-year-old stepson Mike screech out the driveway and roar down the street in his old jalopy. I had come home to find the garage cluttered with wood scraps of the canoe he was building, and blocked by his bike and motorcycle, in spite of strict orders from his father to have my half of the garage clear when I came home from work. How could he be so rude and disobedient?

So angry I could scarcely mutter "hello," I rushed past him into the house, tripping over dirty gym shoes and tennis shoes dumped in the doorway. And I found the refrigerator ajar, counters cluttered with a pop bottle, an opener, a top, spilled pop, a glass of melting ice cubes, and cake crumbs. The cut cake sat uncovered. The TV blared over the shriek of rock music from the garage radio, the evening paper was strewn over the kitchen and dining area, cookies were spilled from the package to the table and floor, and his jacket was tossed over schoolbooks on the counter.

And then I saw him drive away. Now I would have to clean up the mess myself before his father got home. What a selfish, inconsiderate brat for expecting me to be his maid service! Why had I remarried? And *why* a man with custody of a child? I'd worn myself out raising my three children without help; and now to have another when I was so tired. I should have known better—and I *had* known better. But Harold was so gentle, protecting, kind, and sweet. I adored him. And I thought I could tolerate a stepson for a year until he finished high school, went off to college, and left me my peace again. But I hadn't expected the selfishness, the insolence of this, this spoiled brat.

The pastor was saying, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," and my bitter mind responded, *"I'd like to do unto Mike."* Put cookie crumbs into his bed, block his doorway with his mountain of wet towels, dump his leftover ice cubes into his warm tub. If ony he'd treat *me* as *I* wanted to be treated.

And then—somehow—I was moved. A warming touch flooded me with understanding, much as I tried to resist it. I understood what the minister was saying. I must see, or try to see, how Mike wanted to be treated. My cynical self responded: *"He wants to be treated like a king. Spoiled, that's all he is."*

"No," my new kind thoughts responded, *"he is unaware. He doesn't know that he makes a mess. He's doing what he wants to, and doesn't think about what he has left behind him."* I knew that his mother had always picked up after him; competing to show him he'd be happier living with her. If he's always had maid service, of course he'd take it for granted.

Cynically I responded, *"But I keep telling him that I won't pick up."*

"No, you said it once. His mother nags perpetually, so he doesn't even hear occasional comments. Tell him again and be sure he hears. Look him in the eye, say it plainly, and no sarcastic cracks, either."

"What've I got to lose? Help me God . . ." And I did try. Monday I came from work and found the usual mess, blaring TV, and slouching Mike. "Could you turn down the television now, and help clean up and get supper ready for your dad? Okay, Mike?

He blinked at me in surprise. "Huh? Oh, yeah, the TV is sorta loud, isn't it?" He turned it down and looked around. "I did leave some things out, didn't I?" He began to clear up pop bottles and cookie crumbs.

And when his father came home a few minutes later, Mike was setting the table, I was pouring sauce onto a platter of spaghetti and both of us were laughing at a story of Mike's day. •

THE MENNONITE (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate, and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published weekly except biweekly during July and August and the last two weeks in December at Newton, Kansas 67114, by the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Second class postage paid at Newton, Kansas 67114, and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions in United States and Canada: $9.00 one year; $17.00 two years; $24.00 three years; foreign: $9.50 per year. Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Canada R3P 0M4 Business office 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114 Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

Church planting

THE ASSEMBLY

The Assembly, a four-year-old congregation in Goshen, Indiana, has much in common with the house-church movement. We meet in small groups, worship more informally than most congregations, and share leadership responsibilities.

Yet Assembly is not a house church. We are 100 members and Sunday morning attendance is usually around 150. Beyond mere numbers though, Assembly seeks to combine and hold in tension the strengths of house churches *and* traditional congregations.

As a result Assembly's organization is distinctive. All Assembly members participate in congregational life at three levels: a small group, a cluster of small groups, and the entire congregation. Each level has its own responsibilities, although there is much overlap.

Members of the Assembly, related indirectly to Goshen College, share a smile during children's church.

For most of us the weekly small group meetings are the most eagerly anticipated part of Assembly life. Each group has its own blend of activities. But the intimate atmosphere of the small group (groups are rarely larger than 12) makes it the best place to give and receive admonition and counsel, share personal concerns, and discover spiritual gifts. To these matters the small groups give as much time as possible.

Clusters of small groups meet Sunday mornings for worship and in bimonthly business meetings. We are divided into clusters so that meetings are small enough for all to participate; a new one forms when Sunday morning attendance reaches 80-100 people.

We are currently two clusters, each with a distinct mission emphasis. Kratz cluster, named for its meeting place in Goshen College's Kratz dormitory lounge, gives special attention to the needs of college students. Community cluster serves the town of Goshen. To date, most of our outreach has been by way of various service programs. A mission task force is developing helpful ways of broadening our community involvement, but so far we have not brought many new community people into Assembly life.

Representatives from each small group meet biweekly to coordinate their cluster's activities. The representatives do not make decisions for the cluster, but share concerns between groups, report small group decisions, and channel information. They provide some leadership by attending to the spiritual health of small groups, making sure the cluster receives adequate biblical instruction, and formulating proposals for cluster consideration.

On every sixth Sunday morning the entire congregation meets together for worship, communion, and a potluck meal. Since we usually meet as fragments of the whole congregation, the "sabbatical Sundays" are much needed, much valued reminders of our essential unity. These meetings remind one of nothing so much as a family reunion.

A group of coordinators, usually about six in number, provides congregational leadership. Most of the coodinators' tasks are similar to the representatives' work, but on the congregational rather than the cluster level. In addition, coordinators oversee Assembly's relationships with other Christian groups.

Assembly belongs to two conferences, the Indiana-Michigan Conference of the Old Mennonites and the Central District Conference of the General Conference Mennonites. This is a gentle hint that perhaps current differences between those conferences are not sufficient to justify two organizations.

One could also take Assembly's dual affiliation as an indication that we need twice the usual amount of counsel and guidance from older, more experienced churches. Often our strengths are attended by related weaknesses. For instance, Assembly cares deeply about operating by consensus; we do not move until we have a common mind. Yet the process of coming to consensus often makes us painfully aware that most of us are far more skilled at debate and argument than at submitting to our brothers and sisters.

Assembly has successfully avoided heavy-handed leadership. Responsibility is spread around, and important decisions are made by the congregation as a whole. But sometimes diffused leadership means little leadership. Also, having no designated leaders can mean that we simply fail to acknowledge people who do in fact have the God-given gift of leadership. We have made a start at correcting this situation by recognizing several "pastoral counselors" whom Assembly members frequently seek out for guidance.

Assembly members are extremely mobile. Many of us are students, a group for whom transience is an assumed way of life. But there are other Assembly members who also move around a great deal. The constant coming and going brings a freshness we would be loathe to give up. Yet one does not need to be in Assembly very long to learn that certain issues arise again and again. Questions carefully and prayerfully answered need to be reconsidered as a new "generation" of Assembly members raises them once again. *Joe Liechty*

News

Controversy continues on who killed missionaries

Cherry Hill, New Jersey (EPS)—An Africa specialist just back from the border areas around Rhodesia declared here recently that black nationalist leaders told him they captured three Rhodesian government troops who admitted killing missionaries while masquerading as guerrillas.

George Houser, executive director of the American Committee on Africa, New York City, reported his finding to the US Conference meeting of the World Council of Churches (WCC). The church council has been under fire for fund grants to the guerrilla groups.

Houser said he had met with Robert Mugabe, head of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), in Mozambique early in October.

Mugabe, said Houser, was extremely upset over the killing of Roman Catholic priests and nuns, which the Ian Smith government of Rhodesia has blamed on Mugabe's guerrillas.

The guerrilla leader ordered his troops to find out what actually happened, he told Houser, and the troops captured three members of Ian Smith's Selous Scouts, whose task is to discredit the guerrillas. One of the Scouts confessed, according to Houser.

Houser said it wouldn't make sense for the guerrillas to have killed the missionaries because those same missionaries had been feeding the guerrillas and providing them with medicine.

Houser, whose American Committee is a 25-year-old non-profit group aimed at supporting independence movements in Africa, offered comments on his recent trip during a discussion of the controversial $85,000 August grant from the WCCs' Programme to Combat Racism to the Patriotic Front of Mugabe.

The World Council's grant was earmarked for education, health, and other humanitarian services to the more than 100,000 blacks who have fled into Mozambique, Zambia, and Botswana from Rhodesia.

Interchurch group analyzes Nicaragua unrest

Washington, DC (AFSC)—A top-level ecumenical delegation just back from Nicaragua declared November 10 that "all the people we met were unanimous that the chief obstacles to peace are General Anastasio Somoza and the National Guard which is his base of power." The group called for withdrawal of US military and economic support.

Representatives of the National Council of Churches, the Roman Catholic Church, the American Friends Service Committee, and the interchurch committee on human rights in Latin America were in Nicaragua early in November, meeting with a wide range of groups and individuals.

The group said that "only rapid and decisive actions have any chance of realizing hope for a nonviolent solution. We do hold out hope that justice can be accomplished without violence—because of our Christian faith and because of our love and admiration for the people."

Extensive talks were held with religious, political, and business leaders as well as experts in economics, sociology, and anthropology. Meetings were held later with Nicaraguan exiles based in Costa Rica.

"The fervent desire of all we talked with is for a democratic government based on justice and liberty," the delegation said in a statement. "The claim by Somoza that a communist takeover is the only alternative to his regime is clearly ruled out by all of the opposition parties including the Sandinista Front.

"All desire a government under which free expression is possible and which would allow for informed self-determination. The US should respect this right of the Nicaraguan people to self-determination and should not intervene in any way to counter the will of the people."

The delegation members said that while they recognized that some steps have been taken to withdraw US support of Somoza, additional steps should be taken, including withdrawal of the US military support group in Nicaragua, cessation of all military and support shipments to the Somoza government, revoking licenses for private export of weapons, and insisting that Argentina, Israel, and other countries stop their supply of arms to Somoza.

The ecumenical visitors said the US Government should reevaluate its role and participation in Nicaragua "in light of the widespread lack of trust in the current mediation." The delegation said the three-nation (US, Guatemala, Dominican Republic) mediation team has not dealt effectively with the overriding problems of Somoza's power and the National Guard.

Peace Section meetings to hear Barnet and to discuss new US-Canada structure

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—Richard J. Barnet, codirector of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, DC, will discuss "Myths of National Security" at Hesston (Kansas) College Mennonite Church at 7:30 p.m., December 1.

Barnet serves as president of World Peacemakers and is a member of the Church of the Savior, Washington, DC. He has authored the books *Roots of War, The Economy of War,* and *The Giants: Russia and America.*

That public meeting is part of a three-day meeting of the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section, November 30 to December 2. Peace Section (US) will meet on November 30, Peace Section (International) on December 1, and the Peace and Social Concerns Committee of MCC (Canada) simultaneously with the Women's Task Force on December 2.

Among the major items for Peace Section (US) will be a resolution on militarism, the future of New Call to Peacemaking, and the question of alternatives to the payment of taxes for military purposes.

Peace Section (International) will be reviewing the United States-Canadian Peace Section structure and considering the possibility of forming an international division which will specialize entirely on international peace and justice issues and cooperate closely with the two national committees. Racial conflicts and violence in southern Africa, and injustice and political oppression in Latin America will also be discussed.

The Peace and Social Concerns Committee of MCC (Canada) will deal with the issue of Canada's participation in the arms race. They will discuss how to approach politicians who will campaign in the 1979 election on issues such as uranium mining and nuclear development. These are continuing concerns particularly in Saskatchewan, where there are uranium deposits.

Child care par excellence

Rifton, New York—A member of the Hutterite Society of Brothers pilots an oversized baby-buggy around town.

We can avoid this tax, but should we?

Elgin, Illinois (CBNS)—A program to help make Americans more conscious of their affluent lifestyle through a self-imposed tax on luxury items was approved by the Church of the Brethren General Board during its fall meetings here October 22-25.

The idea for the project was initiated at the grassroots level by women of the denomination attending a national women's gathering for the Church of the Brethren women in July. Inspired by a major speech which called for the involvement of US women in the liberation of women around the world, the participants sketched the outlines of the program and brought it to the denomination's executive staff for incorporation into denominational programming.

As approved by the board the project will raise money by encouraging Brethren to examine their own overconsumption and wasteful lifestyles and contribute a self-imposed luxury tax to be used for programs which will help Third World women.

In its first year the program will provide financial support for at least two projects. The primary goal, however, of the Global Women's Project, as it is entitled, is to sensitize the church to the injustices imposed upon Third World women and how American lifestyles contribute to that oppression.

Canada-US needs bypassed by MCC, says board

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—The US Ministries board of Mennonite Central Committee approved a statement November 3-4 asking MCC to comply with Acts 1:8.

"We are concerned that our responses to needs in our nearby Samaria not be neglected in our attention to the calls for help in faraway places," read part of a statement approved by the board. The guideline statement, prepared by board member Wilmer Heisey, was based on Jesus' commandment (Acts 1:8) to witness to neighboring communities as well as to the larger world. It will be presented to the MCC Executive Committee at its December meeting.

In major action, the board approved a statement giving direction to the development of MCC programs with native Americans in the United States.

Consider how these courses could strengthen your effectiveness in mission . . .

Jan 2-5 and 8-12, 1979	**Christian Witness on Modern Frontiers.** Seminars for theological students, co-sponsored by 15 seminaries. Each week is a separate unit, but together they give a comprehensive survey of the contemporary world mission. Academic credit may be arranged.
Jan. 15-18	**New Directions in the Christian Mission.** Eugene L. Stockwell, Division of Overseas Ministries, National Council of Churches.
Jan. 22-26	**Power and Powerlessness in the Americas: Issues in Mission.** Catherine Gunsalus González, Columbia Theological Seminary; and Justo L. González, Cuban-born theologian, lecturer, author.
Feb. 5-8	**The Church Faces New Religious Movements in America.** Robert Wuthnow, Ann Patrick Ware, S. L., Mark Albrecht, Julius Poppinga, Cain Felder, and Gerald Anderson. Joint seminar with the Continuing Education Center of Princeton Theological Seminary, at Princeton.
Feb. 20-23	**Current Issues in Catholic Missions.** Simon E. Smith, S. J., Executive Secretary, Jesuit Missions, Inc.
Feb. 26-March 2	**Reshaping Christianity: African Models of Church Life.** Donald R. Jacobs, Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions.
March 12-16	**Structures and Strategies for Mission Today: Patterns and Problems.** Hans-Werner Gensichen, University of Heidelberg, Germany.
March 19-23	**Christian Theology in the Context of Human Cultures.** Harvie M. Conn, Westminster Theological Seminary.
March 27-30	**Christian Mission Where It Began: Today's Churches in a Muslim World.** Norman A. Horner, Associate Director, OMSC.
April 2-6	**Interaction Between Christian Faith and African Religion.** John Mbiti, Ecumenical Institute, Bossey/Celigny, Switzerland.
April 17-20	**Salvation, Survival, and Social Justice.** Samuel Escobar, President of the Latin American Theological Fraternity, Cordoba, Argentina.

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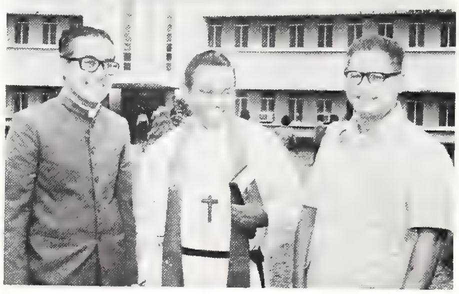
A check for $112,500 has been received by the General Conference from the estate of David M. Harder in Mountain Lake, Minnesota. No restrictions were stated in the will on the use of the money. Ted Stuckey, business manager and treasurer for the General Conference, indicated that the money will be distributed over a 10-year period to the commissions on education, home ministries, and overseas mission, and to the seminary, in proportion to their budget share.

For many years Phoenix has been a favorite spot for those from colder climates to winter. With temperatures in the low 80s and absolutely no snow, the greater Phoenix area has much to offer the winter visitor. First Mennonite Church, 1612 West Northern Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85021, would like to be your host this winter. Given proper notice, they could find an apartment or trailer park to suit your needs in the Phoenix, Glendale, or Sun City areas. As a church they would enjoy sharing fellowship with the larger Mennonite constituency. Write for information.

On eve of relocation India seminary celebrates silver jubilee



From left: Seminary principal Saphir Athyal, Methodist bishop Tandy, and I. Ben Wati during the celebrations.

Union Biblical Seminary (UBS), Yavatmal, India, celebrated its 25th anniversary from August 20-28.

What was begun as an orphanage in the famine years 1896-7, and then as a Bible training school in 1917 by the Free Methodist Mission, has since grown into one of the largest and most influential theological colleges in India.

In 1954 ten organizations were actively cooperating in the post-graduate college, including the General Conference Mennonite Mission. Today there are more than 20 cooperating Protestant groups.

Among the first six students to graduate from the fully accredited school in 1956, and one who was present for the jubilee celebration, was S. B. Kumar, now a pastor in the Bharatiya General Conference Mennonite Church.

Also present were Kenneth and Mary Bauman of Berne, Indiana. Kenneth and Mary served on the faculty of UBS for several years, and Kenneth served as principal from 1967 to 1972. Of the previous principals—F. Kline, the founder of UBS and his successor, R. Hess—only Kenneth was able to come. He was the principal speaker.

The week of celebration about the theme, "To God be the Glory," began fittingly with the planting of 25 saplings, one sapling for each year of growth. I. Ben Wati, present chairman of the Board of Governors, planted the first little tree, a jacaranda brought from Coonoor, South India.

Each morning throughout the week the faculty presented lectures on present church trends in India. Ben Wati, Bauman, and Sam Hamelesen shared the inspirational meetings in the evenings. These meetings were enriched by the different student choirs that rendered special numbers in their respective languages: Gujarati, Telegu, Tamil, Marathi, Kannada, Malayali, Hindi, Mizo, and English.

The climax came on Sunday. Saphir Athyal, the present principal of UBS, aptly described the importance of the moment since the college is on the threshold of the move to Pune (Poona, near Bombay). Several speakers reviewed the early struggles and subsequent growth of the seminary. Kenneth Bauman paid tribute to the men of vision and commitment, the architects God had called to bring birth, growth, and further development to the seminary, particularly Kline and Athyal. Athyal envisioned from the beginning the training of national faculty from among the graduates of UBS. Today the faculty includes men who have studied abroad and in India, and who are assuming responsibilities in teaching and administration.

The final service, the seal to the total celebration, was the groundbreaking service in Pune on August 28. It was also the step into the future. Plans are underway to shift the seminary to Pune by 1981. S. Paul Miller, director of relocation, and Mrs. Miller have obtained a house in Pune from which operations can be facilitated. The building program will commence soon.

The total cost of the project is estimated at $1,086,000 (US). The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference has committed itself to contributing $100,000 over a five-year period. The Mennonite Church (OM) is contributing a like amount, and the Mennonite Brethren are raising $50,000. Recently the seminary received grants totaling $400,000 from two German church organizations. The various cooperating churches within India have a goal of $50,000.

This year there are nine Bharatiya General Conference Mennonite Church students at the seminary in a total enrollment of 206 students from 19 states of India and nine countries. They represent 33 denominations.
Helen Kornelsen

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Today is an anti-leader age, says Peter J. Dyck, Europe and North Africa director for Mennonite Central Committee, because people fear the domination of strong leaders. Dyck spoke October 12 to the Mennonite Christian Leadership Foundation (MCLF) at a meeting in Paradise, Pennsylvania. He said fear of domination can be overcome if leaders are servants, in the pattern of Christ, who affirm team leadership, are conceptualizers, good listeners, can empathize, are not showmen or greedy for money, and are models of flexibility. Based in Landisville, Pennsylvania, MCLF gives in-service training to church leaders.

"Without doubt the most critical health problem with women today is the indiscriminate over-prescription and overuse of legal and prescription drugs," declares Muriel Nellis, principal author of the report and national director of a yearlong National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) study for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. "There are about 20 million women in the US with a drug-abuse and alcohol problem—more than twice the number of men."

The Mennonite Hour is being phased out by the end of February 1979. It will be replaced by a 2½-minute program which will move the Mennonite "voice" out of the Sunday morning religious time block into weekday time slots to reach a larger, more pluralistic audience. On the new Monday-through-Friday program, speaker Arthur McPhee, pastor of the Lindale (Virginia) Mennonite Church, will examine a current issue or event and show how Christian faith relates to it.

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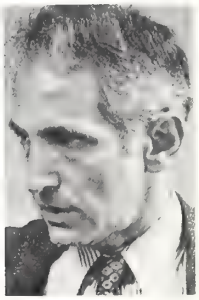
Mennonites are fortunate says Ellsberg


Ellsberg

The nuclear menace is the issue of conscience and practice which is central to human existence, says Daniel Ellsberg.

Speaking November 6 to an audience of 400 in North Newton, Kansas, Ellsberg declared, "In all of the Second World War 2 million tons of explosives were dropped; in all of the Vietnam War 7½ million tons were used. But today, one 25-megaton bomb has the destructive power of 12 World War IIs or 3 Vietnams."

Ellsberg was in North Newton at the invitation of Bethel College and the Western District peace and social concerns committee. He told his largely Mennonite audience that they were fortunate to be raised with an alternate view of the state and of what constitutes peace. "The attitude of not taking life is not an option for most people who are raised Christian," he observed. "Although nearly every ethical position in the world has a clearly defined doctrine of nonviolence only a tiny minority see it." Later, in talking to a small group, he asked, "Do Mennonites proselytize?"

Ellsberg, who released to the press the secret Pentagon study tracing the history of American involvement in the Vietnam war, said the roots of American violence go back to the Second World War. "We learned that unlimited violence, such as the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, is all right if the president says so.

"Imitate Hitler," he continued, "and you will become like him. A 25-megaton bomb is an Auschwitz in one weapon. You don't have to be like Hitler at home to be like Hitler abroad. Nothing was worse in Nazi Germany than what the people in Guatemala, Iran, Brazil, Chile, and Nicaragua are protesting."

The regimes in these and other countries, said Ellsberg, are there because of American CIA operations. The bottom line in American diplomacy is to oppose any independence or nationalist movements which limit free access to natural resources by American corporations, he maintained.

It is a myth, asserted Ellsberg, that American military thinking is defensive in nature. "The neutron bomb is a first-strike weapon. It is no good against Soviet tanks in Europe because the crews of these tanks would continue to live for days and even weeks after an explosion of a neutron bomb. The tanks would still be operational. Obviously the neutron bomb is for situations in which you want to kill people and keep the real estate. This means you have to hit the enemy first."

Ellsberg also talked about the Pentagon papers. What motivated him to release them? "I began to ask myself where I got the right to keep that information in a safe." How did he justify stealing the papers? "There are other ethical demands: 'Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not bear false witness; The truth shall make you free.' " He said he had expected to spend the rest of his life in jail, but the experience taught him that it is not against the law to tell the truth in the United States. He challenged his audience to find ways to practice the truth.

During the 1960s Ellsberg was a member of the "military-intellectual complex" responsible for American military policy in Southeast Asia. *Vic Reimer*

A Pentecostal revivalist tests his faith by ▶ handling a venomous snake during a revival meeting at Holiness Church of God in Jesus' Name in Kingston, Georgia. Confidently moving the reptile into various positions the handler firmly repeats Mark 16:8—"They shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them."

Needed for January 1979

Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) requires a business manager for Food Bank/assistant in Overseas Services at its offices in Winnipeg.

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201 - 1483 Pembina Highway
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Record

Workers

Leonard Doell, Warman, Saskatchewan, has consented to undertake a four-month study of the history of Mennonite and Indian settlement in Manitoba. His particular focus will be the Mennonites of the "West Reserve" and the nature of their contacts with the native people in and around the area.

Bruce and Mary Dyck, First Church, Newton, Kansas, have begun a two-year term of voluntary service with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana. The Dycks are serving as a nurse and community housing repairman at Whitesburg, Kentucky. Bruce is the son of Helen and Ralph Dyck, Newton, Kansas. Prior to his term of service he worked as a carpenter/mechanic in Wichita, Kansas. Mary is the daughter of Helen and Don Bachman, Hesston, Kansas. She formerly worked as a staff nurse at Halstead Hospital in Halstead, Kansas.

Joe and Stephanie Guhr, Faith Church, Newton, Kansas, have begun a one-year term of voluntary service with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana. The Guhrs have joined the Discipleship and Service unit in Phoenix, Arizona. Joe is the son of Linda and Sam Guhr, North Newton, Kansas. Prior to his term of service he worked as a farm fleet tire serviceman in North Newton, Kansas. Stephanie is the daughter of Jeanine and Robert Stahly, Newton, Kansas. She formerly worked as an assistant manager of a dress shop in Newton, Kansas.

Ruth Janzen, First Church, Beatrice, Nebraska, and Assembly, Goshen, Indiana, has begun a one-year term of voluntary service with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana. She has joined the Discipleship and Service unit in Phoenix, Arizona. Ruth is the daughter of Laura (Barnard) and Theodore Janzen of Holmesville, Nebraska. She graduated from Goshen (Indiana) College and worked at Elkhart General Hospital, Elkhart, Indiana, as a registered nurse in the newborn nursery.

Cheryl Neudorf, Rosthern Church, Rosthern, Saskatchewan, has begun a one-year term of voluntary service with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana. She is working as a teacher's aide at William Spencer Elementary School, Downey, California. Cheryl is the daughter of Irma and Bill Neudorf of Rosthern. Before entering service she worked at Rosthern Mennonite Nursing Home in Rosthern as a nurse's aide.

Ernie Sawatsky, Rosemary, Alberta, accepted the position of native ministries resource person with the Mennonite Conference of Alberta, effective September 1. His task is that of building bridges of understanding between the Mennonite and native communities and isolating the areas of strong native concern. He and his wife Gert come to these responsibilities with 16 years of pastoral experience.

Robin K. Tahara, Pleasant Oaks Church, Middlebury, Indiana, has begun a one-year term of voluntary service with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana. She is working at the Fellowship House, Washington, DC, which is involved in one-to-one discipling and outreach. Robin is the daughter of Sandra and Tom Tahara of Middlebury. She attended Indiana University four years.

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Full Circle: Stories of Mennonite Women **Mary Lou Cummings, editor**

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Toward Understanding the Bible **Perry Yoder**

This study is intended as an introduction to hermeneutics for the lay person. In a chapter titled "Games People Play With the Bible," the author describes some of the approaches to the Bible that are common among lay people. He then shows how the correct meaning of the text can be found only by taking the author and his context seriously. The book treats crucial issues in biblical interpretation in a nontechnical wav.

Perry Yoder graduated from Goshen College with a BA in sociology and received his PhD in Old Testament from the University of Pennsylvania. He is a professor of religion at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

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The war is now over in Viet Nam, but the struggle continues. As people work in their fields, some are still maimed and others killed by munitions lying unexploded in their fields. To shape and create a new society—to reconstruct a new nation—requires an intense struggle. The cost is high. "When and how will we live as one happy family?" asks the author in this poetic recreation of his Vietnamese experience. The drama of what happened in Viet Nam pulsates in the pages of this book.

Max Ediger, served as a voluntary service worker with Mennonite Central Committee in Burundi, Africa. After graduation from Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, he served a five-year term (1971-1976) as a voluntary service worker in Viet Nam. His third assignment with MCC is working for the Christian Church in Thailand.

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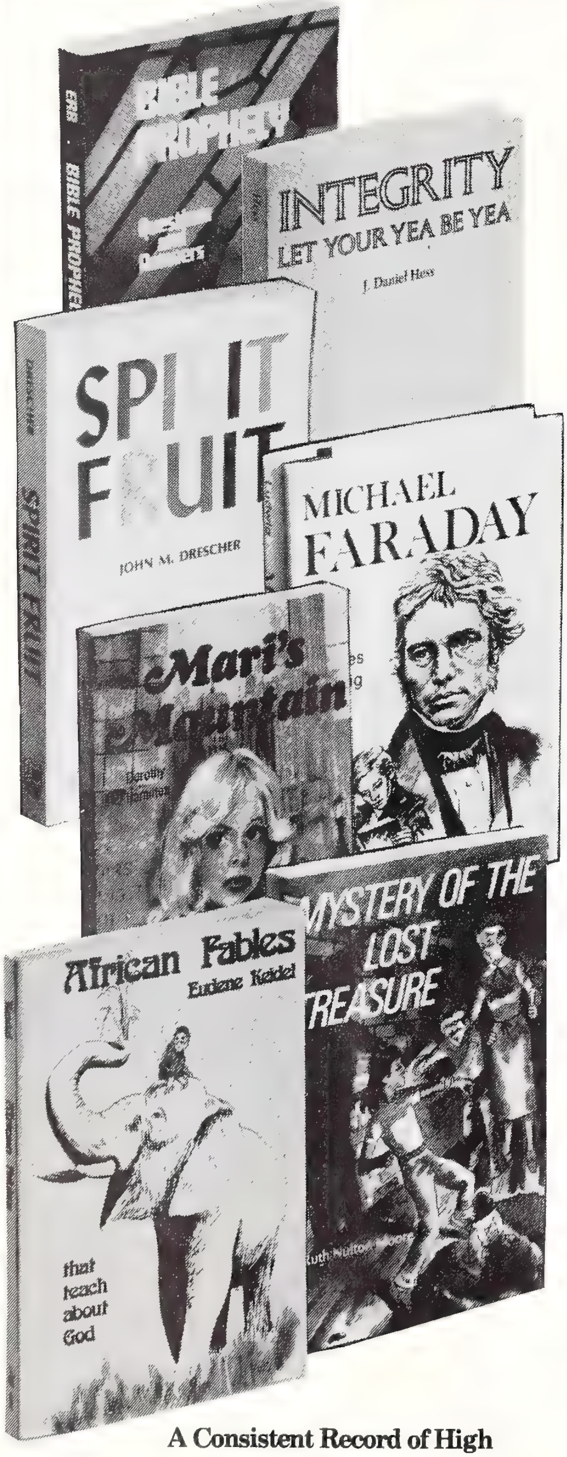

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The tax texts

Larry Kehler

What does the New Testament say about taxes?

Here are the four primary passages: *Mark 12:13-17* is a description of the Pharisees and Herodians trying to entrap Jesus with the question: "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" Jesus responds by taking a coin and showing them Caesar's image on it and saying, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's."

Luke 23:1-5 recalls the accusations made against Jesus before Pilate. Among them is the charge that he has forbidden his people "to give tribute to Caesar." In response to Pilate's question about his kingship over the Jews, Jesus replies ambiguously, "You have said so."

Matthew 17:24-27 talks about the temple tax. Some Bible interpreters feel that the tax question is a secondary issue in this passage. The writer's main purpose in telling this incident, some scholars say, is to underscore Jesus' sonship.

Romans 13:6-7 urges followers of Christ to be subject to the governing authorities and to pay taxes where they are due.

A straightforward reading of these passages has led many persons to conclude that taxes are to be paid regardless of the use to which they might be put. "How can you argue against such clear, simple statements?" they ask people who suggest that there may be more to these comments than can be seen on the surface.

It is the tension between these two approaches to the Bible which lies at the heart of the problem which the General Conference is now facing in its attempt to come up with a biblical response to the "war tax issue." How do we interpret and understand the Bible? Is the easiest reading of a biblical passage always to be taken as the most likely intention of the writer? Some Bible scholars say that it is sometimes quite deceiving to accept the easiest reading. Others wonder if that sort of remark doesn't simply underscore the Bible's assertion that some truths will confound the wise and yet be very clear to more down-to-earth and average persons. Well, maybe. But doesn't it cheapen the Bible if we think that a book which has come to us from another millennium and a decidedly different culture can be read on the surface—much like one reads a twentieth-century pop-psychology book—and applied to situations in our day without adaptation?

Can any statement in the Bible be taken by itself without first testing it against the background from which it came and against related statements elsewhere in the Bible?

Modern, easy-to-read paraphrases of the Scriptures and our general attitude toward the Bible have led us to believe that "hermeneutics" (the interpretation of the Bible's message) is not a difficult task. In some cases it isn't, but in others it is. In places the Bible is so inscrutable that we can seemingly never be quite sure about its full intention. So we have to launch out in faith on some questions, hoping that more clarity will come as we proceed. We may discover as we go that we have started off in the wrong direction. Then we need the humility to admit our error and change our direction.

The major agenda item at the midtriennium sessions in Minneapolis may turn out not to be "war taxes" at all. This issue may be God's way of prodding us into becoming more of a "hermeneutic community," a church that is struggling seriously and sincerely to understand the Bible's message for our day and leaving itself open to be motivated by it.

The tax texts need to be studied intensely at the congregational level, each participant bringing an open mind and heart to the discussion. If clarity and unanimity do not come immediately let us not be discouraged. Other groups have had similar difficulties before us. That is all the more reason why we should continue to struggle with this question.

The summary statement prepared by the people who attended the 1975 war tax conference contained this paragraph: "After considering the New Testament texts which speak about the Christian's payment of taxes, most of us are agreed that we do not have a clear word on the subject of paying taxes used for war. The New Testament statements on paying taxes (Mark 12:17 and Romans 13:6-7) contain either ambiguity in meaning or qualifications on the texts that call the discerning community to decide in light of the life and teachings of Jesus."

Let the General Conference know where your congregation or group comes out in discussing the tax texts. *Second in a series of four.*

Next week: Is This an Issue for Canadians Too?

Notes on church growth

Setting goals for churches

About a year ago many church leaders agonized, analyzed, and formulated local church goals for 1978. In some cases entire congregations became involved. God's committed children were at work. These were well-meaning sessions. The people spent days, weekends, evenings, and hours in study, prayer, communication, and seeking to understand themselves, the church, and their mission within the community. Finally, after much struggle in determining goals and purposes the task of getting them recorded properly was before them.

This was no easy task. Words are so often ambiguous. Will the people understand? Often the committee was divided and then rejoined in determining structure of vocabulary and grammar. But eventually all was ready for the printer. The committee felt good. The task was complete, so they felt. They had worked diligently and it was a good exercise.

Now the committee and the pastor looked forward to the day when the congregation would receive the goals set for them in 1978. The printout was in good form. They (the congregation) were handed the goals one Sunday morning as they entered the worship service. The committee had a great deal of pride because their efforts would be rewarded, they felt. The pastor spent one entire worship service directing the people to these excellent established goals. Now they were in print. All should understand their task. Certainly this would get the church on fire for God; now they would be on the move toward the path God intended them to walk. It would add new zest and oneness to the life of the church. God would honor the time and effort of his people.

Two months went by; nothing dynamic happened. The committees conversed informally about what was happening; "little" or "nothing" was the reply. Goals were reprinted and brought before the congregation in a limited way. Six months later little had developed from the goals that were so diligently created. Few, if any, could name one goal unless the paper was in reach. The committee lost its enthusiasm for its goals and partly for the church. What happened? Weren't they dedicated enough? Weren't their goals noble? Weren't these God's goals for the church? An emphatic "yes" breaks forth.

Wherein lies the problem? Weren't the goals printed properly and distributed correctly? Didn't the congregation understand them? Everything was done decently and in order. Wherein lies the nonachievement?

Goal-setting without machinery is worthless. Goals and purposes for congregations are excellent. Resolutions at conferences are beautiful. But unless people are set into motion and action the goals and resolutions are a heap of rubbish. They will last for a season, if that long, and die.

Christ instructed his disciples to stop "gazing into heaven" and go make disciples. A noble goal lies before them. They were asked to wait on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, after which action would take place. Upon receiving the Holy Spirit they personally set forth to accomplish the goal. They really had but one goal, to live committed lives for Jesus Christ in total obedience. When Jesus was here on earth he set before himself one goal, to do the will of God—"I must be about my Father's business"—not how many he would heal in a day or year; not how many he could feed in a day; not how many harlots could be spoken to. He simply wanted to do the will of God as he knew him through prayer, fellowship, and searching God's Word.

If the church is going to survive it will need to return to prayer, fellowship, and God's Word. The Holy Spirit must saturate us with his Word and his love, thus we become dynamic believers. Then we will witness of his grace and proclaim his peace and love. Action and motivation will take place when we become committed to Jesus Christ.

The church need not take a great deal of time setting goals. They are set for us in God's Word. Let us read and study them and respond to God's message. More time and energy need to be spent here than in committee meetings discussing vocabulary and grammar. *Ben Friesen, pastor, Inman Mennonite Church, Inman, Kansas.*

Editor's note: *This is one person's response to a "heavy" emphasis on goal-setting for church growth. He believes that we should consider his observations in the context of "our society of busy activity with little accomplishment." What has been your congregation's experience? We'd like to hear from you.*

Poems by Ruth Naylor

Transformation

Flesh drops away
And in that awesome moment
of separation
A joyous new body
full of light
Lifts its lovely head
to celebrate
the coming
of a new
Forever.
(Inspired by devotions:
1 Corinthians 15:53)

The wayward way

Why has the way become
So diversified?
We invest ourselves
In so many directions
Trying to build
Our own little kingdoms
Where we can hold forth
In power, collecting praise
—Duty that the world
Requires and owes.
What happened to The Way
Where all men were to build
And serve in a singular Kingdom
—One of simple power
That inspires praise
Of its Christ-man king?

Phys ed of faith

Just as the body should be kept elastic,
Stretching in healthy tension
Between carrying the daily load
And exercising recreative rest,
The spirit, too, should be stretched,
Knowing the pull of faith, trusting
In both creative action
And prayer-filled peace.

In remembrance

Humbly we share the bread;
Gratefully we drink new wine
In living communion
With Him.

Meditation

No need to be ashamed

Carrie grimaced as her foot again touched the wrong pedal, producing an unmistakable discord in her beautiful offertory. She had so wanted her last Sunday at the organ to be perfect. She had selected her favorite music, and the pastor had allowed her to choose the hymns.

For 26 years her long, slender fingers had moved over the manuals of the church organ. In all that time she had missed only two services. The Sunday after Will died she had put on her navy blue linen suit and her little white hat, knowing that Will would have wanted her to go on with her duties. But at the last minute, she had called one of her students to take her place at the organ that day, and Carrie had stayed home to weep alone.

Then there was the time she had pneumonia and listened to another of her students play for her. It was the first time she realized what a blessing the radio broadcasts are to those who cannot attend services in the lovely sanctuary with its stained glass and deep, soft carpeting.

Tears formed and threatened to fall as she played the last congregational hymn, again touching another wrong pedal.

Her feet and legs had been the first to let her down. She had begun to realize quite a while ago that she could no longer play the difficult pedal passages in the music she loved. Gradually she played less of the baroque style, which was her favorite, and more of the less difficult pieces in her repertoire.

Soon her fingers, one by one, began to stiffen. No amount of exercising or heat treatments would limber them enough to do what she wanted them to do. Many times she sat there at the organ, frustrated by her hands and feet. She knew the music. Why wouldn't those hands and feet move as the music indicated? She doubled her practice time, but it was no use.

"I'm not so old!" she seethed inwardly.

But in reflective moments she knew she would soon have to give up that to which she had devoted her whole life. Yet, she had been hurt when the pastor and young choir director had come to visit. They had talked quite a while before she had realized what they were saying.

They had wanted someone else to sit in her place; someone else to produce the beautiful moving sounds of the worship service. Had she been that bad after all? Had her ability deteriorated so greatly?

She had sat alone in her high-backed rocker, staring out the front window as they left. She knew it was true. She was old and she could no longer perform acceptably on her instrument.

Then why that terrible ache in the pit of her stomach? And why did she feel so lost—so alone? They had been most kind, really.

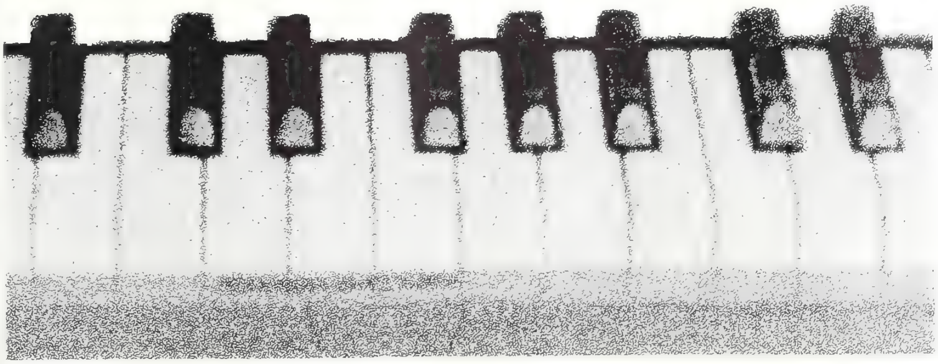
"Now, what do I do?" she had asked herself aloud, the tears falling gently down her soft, wrinkled cheeks.

But no one heard. The only answer was the steady ticking of Will's grandfather clock in the hall.

The pastor pronounced the benediction and she lifted her hands to the manuals in preparation for the postlude. The registration was set. Full organ.

She took a deep breath and smiled at no one in particular. She was not, and never would be again, what she once had been; but she was "a workman who has no need to be ashamed." Deep inside she knew that she had given her best. It would be appropriate to let someone else play in her place.

Elizabeth Silance Ballard



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CONTRIBUTORS

Doug Reichenbach, Box 143, Wayland, Iowa 52654, is pastor of the Wayland Mennonite Church. His article is from a sermon preached on August 13.

Ann Johnson is a fictitious name used by the writer in sharing a personal experience. Her address is 4016 Phoenix, Ames, Iowa 50010.

Joe Liechty, 105 Cottage Avenue, Goshen, Indiana 46526, is a member of *The Assembly*. He wrote his article to be "representative" of their group's pilgrimage.

Helen Kornelsen, Yavatmal, India, COM missionary, is on the faculty of Union Biblical Seminary.

Larry Kehler, 699 Haney St., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3R 0Y7, is the author of *The Rule of the Lamb*, one of two study guides available as preparation for the Minneapolis midtriennium conference.

Ruth Naylor, 123 Villanova Drive, Route 2, Bluffton, Ohio 45817, is a high school English teacher.

Elizabeth Silance Ballard, 1014 Schall Place, Jacksonville, North Carolina 28540, is a free-lance writer who calls attention to the struggles of an aged saint when she can no longer serve the Lord as she would like to.

CREDITS

Cover, 695, 698, RNS; 691, Rohn Engh; 692, John Hiebert; 696, Peter Kehler; 697, Vic Reimer; 703, Paul M. Schrock, Box 200, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman.

An order for faith expression

For the first time since 1958 weekly churchgoing increased in 1976 (*Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches,* Abingdon, 1978, page 256). According to Gallup this increase was reflected in all population groups. The report continues, "a surprising number of Americans have developed an interest in the inner or spiritual life" (pages 256-57).

As we again enter the Advent season this should be cause for joy.

From the years 1967-1975, polls repeatedly showed that over half of our population felt that religion was losing influence. In 1970, 75 percent of people interviewed held that opinion. In 1976, for the first time in a decade, less than half (45 percent) felt that way (page 257). Some religious leaders openly speak of religious revival.

Before we become too excited, however, I note that this latest report also indicates that in 1976 about six million persons were involved with Transcendental Meditation, five million in Yoga, three million in mysticism, and two million in Eastern religions (page 257).

There seems to be a religious renewal about, but much of it is happening outside the institutional church. Somehow we have been unable to provide the kind of congregational models which keep the Holy Spirit renewal fires burning from within.

Robert K. Greenleaf, lifelong devotee to management and development, has written a 335-page book (Paulist Press, 1977) on *Servant Leadership.* Afteı reading his assessment of business, education, and churches, I believe that we could learn much from him.

The concept of the church as a servant order for faith expression is not new; the Bible teaches us that all the time. Jesus commissioned us to share his redemption with all humankind (Matthew 28:19-20) and promised us his and the Holy Spirit's enabling presence to do so (Matthew 28:20; Acts 1:8).

Greenleaf says that churches have tended to view the problems of society as "out there," and assumed that service to the "out there" was the sole justification for their existence (page 239).

Greenleaf adds that a new view is emerging that life begins "in here," inside the serving institution, and makes *it* into a model order for faith expression.

Martin Marty, in a talk to church editors, 5 May 1976, told us that churches have come through two inadequate models. The early intercongregational structures consisted of "big clusters of ecclesiastical Cosa Nostras bound together by the papal (clergy/bishops?) mafia." In a time when Christians no longer fear to dissent, this model fails.

Marty said we then invented denominations, in what he calls a "military model." Denominations are set up to protect themselves and fight other denominations.

What I sense emerging from the concerns of both Greenleaf and Marty is a reminder to be and to become servant congregations. Our goal needs to be clearer. An order for faith expression must first of all be a moral and spiritual order. All who become part of it must accept its discipline because together we become an enabling community. We minister to each other as needed and receive ministry where needed. Both leadership and followership are gifts from God.

As we join together in moral and spiritual commitment we become equipped (through the various gifts among us) to be the "salt" and "light" of the world. This outreach begins from our inreach of *being* groups where justice, love, healing, trust, forgiveness, repentance, and celebration are modeled. Our power proceeds from the presence of Christ in our midst.

In Mennonite churches the local congregation is regarded as the focal point of our faith expression. Rightly so. But when that faith expression is not expressed—outwardly beyond ourselves *or* inwardly to each other—we need to examine our basic servant commitment. It is an urgent need for us as we seek to share in today's renewed religious interest.

For "starters" in checking our own congregation's servant leadership, here are two challenges from Greenleaf: "The real enemy is fuzzy thinking on the part of good, intelligent, vital people, and their failure to lead and to follow servants as leaders. Too many settle for being critics and experts. There is too much intellectual wheel spinning, too much retreating into 'research', too little preparation for and willingness to undertake the hard and high risk tasks of building better institutions in an imperfect world" (page 45).

". . . many persons, including faithful church attenders, now seek their values in their own experience. As a consequence, the alienated and purposeless have multiplied to devastating proportions for want of sufficient value-shaping influence that once was the churches' major role. And the large human (and material) resources of churches seem to be groping for a way to serve" (page 54).

First in a series of three. Bernie Wiebe

The Mennonite, WM Edition

WM

DECEMBER 1978 -
JANUARY 1979

Window to Mission

the open window

The Wise Men came to Bethlehem but "returned home another way." Their contact with the Christ Child made a difference in their lives.

They came seeking the goal of all their learning—but found Truth.

They came the way of prophecy—and found the fulfillment of all past preparation.

They came with promises—and received affirmation that God keeps His Word, even in minute details.

They came the way of history—but found the One in whom history reveals its focus.

They came led by a star, following the light they had—and found the Light of the World.

They came to worship, bringing costly gifts—and found God's unspeakable Gift to men.

They came with wistful, seeking faith—but their spirits were satisfied and their faith fulfilled.

The Wise Men did not linger indefinitely around the Baby Jesus, but returned home with love rekindled. In their hearts was goodwill. A measure of sacrifice was shown as they returned home empty-handed, no longer carrying material gifts, but with deep devotion in their hearts and a pledge of love to walk in His way.

Now, how will I feel after the Christmas glow is over? Will I return to the daily routine "another way"—with stronger faith, brighter hope, and more tender love toward others? Will my contact with the Christ Child of Christmas have made a difference?

—Mary Elizabeth Good

WM

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EXCUSE ME, I HAVEN'T TIME

Michel Quoist

I went out, Lord.
Men were coming and going,
Walking and running.

Everything was rushing:
  cars, trucks,
  the street
  the whole town.
Men were rushing not to waste time.
They were rushing after time,
To catch up with time,
To gain time.

Good-bye, Sir, excuse me,
  I haven't time.
I'll come back,
  I can't wait,
  I haven't time.
I must end this letter—
  I haven't time.
I'd love to help you,
  but I haven't time.
I can't accept, having no time.
I can't think, I can't read,
  I'm swamped,
  I haven't time.
I'd like to pray,
  but I haven't time.

You understand, Lord,
  they simply haven't the time.
The child is playing,
  he hasn't time right now. . . .
  Later on. . . .
The schoolboy has his homework to do,
  he hasn't time. . . .
  Later on. . . .
The student has his courses,
  and so much work. . . .
  Later on. . . .
The young man is at his sports,
  he hasn't time. . . .
  Later on. . . .
The young married man
  has his new house;
  he has to fix it up.
  He hasn't time. . . .
Later on. . . .
The grandparents have their
  grandchildren.
  They haven't time. . . .
  Later on. . . .
They are ill, they have their treatments,
  they haven't time. . . .
  Later on. . . .
They are dying, they have no. . . .
Too late! . . . .
They have no more time!

And so all men run after time, Lord.
They pass through life running—
  hurried, jostled, over-burdened,
  frantic, and they never get there.
  They haven't time.
In spite of all their efforts
  they're still short of time.
Of a great deal of time.
Lord, You must have made a mistake
  in Your calculations.
There is a big mistake somewhere.
The hours are too short,
The days are too short,
Our lives are too short.

You who are beyond time, Lord,
  You smile to see us fighting it.
And You know what You are doing.
You make no mistake in Your
  distribution of time to men.
You give each one time to do
  what You want him to do.
But we must not lose time,
  waste time,
  kill time,
For time is a gift that You give us,
But a perishable gift,
A gift that does not keep.

Lord, I have time,
I have plenty of time,
All the time that You give me,
The years of my life,
The days of my years,
The hours of my days,
They are all mine.
Mine to fill, quietly, calmly,
But to fill completely,
  up to the brim,
To offer them to You,
  that of their insipid water
  You may make rich wine
  such as You made once
  in Cana of Galilee.
I am not asking You tonight, Lord,
  for time to do this
  and then that,
But Your grace to do conscientiously,
  in the time that You give me,
  what You want me to do.

"From PRAYERS by Michel Quoist. Copyright, 1963, Sheed & Ward, Inc., New York."

GOD PREPARES IN MANY WAYS

The Kim Friesen Story....

Helen Friesen

BORN IN NORTH VIETNAM, Kim came to America in October 1967. Her parents, Vu Doc Chang and Ton Nu Thi Hoa, had nine children. Prior to the Communist takeover Kim's father worked in the Ministry of Education as deputy director general of Public Education in Vietnam.

The Christian Missionary Alliance Church brought Protestant mission work to North Vietnam. Earlier Catholic workers suffered imprisonment—some were even beheaded—before the French came to power. Becoming a Christian often resulted in persecution.

Kim's great-grandparents knelt on the deck of a boat going from Hanoi to Haiphong and accepted Christ under the preaching of the CMA missionaries on board. Kim makes the fourth generation of Christians in her family, which is a unique thing for a North Vietnamese family.

When Communism came and Protestants and Catholics lost freedom of worship, Kim's family moved to South Vietnam. Kim was six. As a young man her father belonged to the Nationalistic movement which later became Communist. He knew their ideologies were contrary to the Bible.

When she was ten, an uncle and his family, serving with the Vietnamese diplomatic corps in the Philippines,

Kim and Phil Friesen with their children Michelle and Josiah.

invited her to live with them. Being a year ahead in her class, she was too young to enter junior high in Vietnam. Her parents let her go with her uncle to help care for the children when her aunt and uncle attended diplomatic functions. She learned English in the English-speaking school system.

When Kim was twelve, her Sunday school teacher told the story of the Philippian jailer and asked if anyone wanted to accept Christ. She began to feel Christ wooing her. Also instrumental in her conversion were the examples of her parents and grandparents in their love for God and His word. Seeing them in prayer and Bible study several times daily made a profound impact on her.

During her high school days in Vietnam, Kim served as president of the Inter-School Christian Fellowship, a branch of Inter-Varsity. During her two years in the university in Saigon, studying for her teaching degree, she continued participating in Inter-Varsity. After completing her exams at eighteen years of age she began teaching English courses to sixth and ninth graders.

Because of her English she often helped interpret for missionaries at meetings and in the Inter-Varsity group. She also worked as interpreter and secretary for Asian Christian Service, a relief organization whose offices were near those of MCC—her first exposure to Mennonites. She became aware of the Mennonite reading room, and found Mennonites had a simple life-style, and a real identification with the people, even in their use of a motorcycle. The radiance and joy in their faces did something for her. Usually Vietnamese equate Americans with wealth, power, and prosperity. These Mennonite missionaries lived modestly and with what she thought was mature holiness.

Although Kim had always wanted to come to America, her father counseled her to wait until her college years. Earlier her father had come to the U.S. for three months with educators from Vietnam to study the educational system. He found the people at Kearney, Nebraska, very friendly and recommended she go there. There she earned her B.A. in English. Upon graduation she became a junior high librarian at Minden, Nebraska, and took night courses to earn her master's degree in counseling and guidance.

While teaching in Minden she accompanied foreign students to an Inter-Varsity international Christmas party at Colorado Springs. Phil Friesen brought three Vietnamese students from Iowa to this meeting. The romance that began that Christmas between Phil and Kim ultimately led to their marriage in 1973.

One of the courses Kim took while in Saigon was a course in Chinese characters, simply because she thought it might be exciting. Little did she realize how important her future use of the characters might prove. Inter-Varsity missionary conventions showed her the imperative of missions. The mandate to "go" became meaningful. She felt called to return to Vietnam, so when Phil entered the picture she wondered what this could mean. Learning that he, too, had an interest in serving the Lord some place in the Orient had confirmed her feeling about marrying him.

Vietnam fell three years after their marriage. Miraculously her parents and grandparents got out and came to America in May 1975. Now Kim has left them again as she and Phil and their two children accepted God's call to serve in Taiwan under the Commission on Overseas Missions. As Kim left for Taiwan in August she felt it was hard to imagine herself a missionary, having placed them on pedestals in the past because of their shining life and the holiness they radiated. Kim commented, "I think of the positive image I had of missionaries and I want to follow that kind of example. Sometimes I feel I fall far short, but I think with God's grace it's possible. It is really interesting how the Lord puts different influences in your life."

PROGRAM 3

What's New in Overseas Mission Work?

Sandra Liechty

WHILE RIDING a crowded commuter train in the heart of Tokyo, my head is swimming. After an absence of four years, we have just returned to begin a third term of service in Japan. How does one begin to put together the past year of seminary studies with the reality of the culture before us? We were prepared for some changes, but the shock is nonetheless awesome.

Tokyo—the largest city in the world. As far as the eye can see, tall buildings cover the landscape with concrete and steel. Our dollars seem to disappear as we change them into yen and battle the high rate of inflation. Japanese people are well educated and modern. I recall that only 1 percent of the population is Christian. In contrast to previous terms, our presence attracts less attention. We no longer receive the same preferential treatment missionaries enjoyed in the past.

Upon seeing a picture of Jesus in our apartment, an elderly neighbor woman informs us that Christianity is dying out, and that we should join her new Buddhist sect called *Nichiren* because it is gaining strength and popularity.

Such encounters overseas bring into sharp focus the fact that we live in a changed world. The question of new trends in missions is not a theoretical one. For many years we heard warnings that missions faced a crossroads at the end of the colonial era. That juncture in history has now passed, resulting in major adjustments. When newly independent nations broke loose from the shackles of Western rule, the missionary's presence was also challenged and sometimes rejected. He was readily identified with Western government and more often than not regarded with suspicion. By examining the growth of the church historically, we can better understand how missions came to be entangled in this awkward position.

Church and mission the same

During the first century, church and mission were one and the same. There was no formal provision made for evangelism committees. There were no mission boards. The new Christian communities witnessed to society around them through the common "chatter" of daily interaction. In time they turned the Roman world upside down. Though greatly outnumbered by pagan peoples and besieged by repeated persecutions, Christianity spread rapidly. As the church grew in number and strength, it became more and more organized. Bishops in major cities held powerful positions.

Union of church and state

By the end of the third century, even the Roman emperor, Constantine, had become a Christian, resulting in the union of church and state. He required all citizens of the empire to become Christians. This event was to influence the direction of the church's thought and activities for centuries to come. Christianity became a strong political power as well as a religion. It is not difficult to understnd how a two-world view came into being. Other nations were seen as either Christian or pagan. Nonbelievers were regarded as enemies of the church as well as the state, and were vigorously subdued and "converted."

This mentality permeated the Vasco da Gama period of conquering and claiming sovereignty over other lands right up until World War II. Western missionaries zealously entered foreign cultures on the coattails of European explorers or close behind armies and traders. Convinced of their divine duty to civilize and save the heathen, missionaries felt justified in making use of power politics, economic ploys and other forms of persuasion to propagate the faith. The end of colonialism also brought an abrupt end to these methods. Though reluctant to give up the old ways, missions were forced to find new channels through which to carry the gospel to foreign lands.

Many schools, hospitals, and other projects formerly administered by Western missions were turned over to the new governments or forced to close. With the surge of independence came a rise in national pride and the revival of ancient customs and religions. Missionaries found it increasingly difficult to receive permission to enter former fields of service.

Today we continue to witness an explosion of new nations and political regimes. Africa alone has given birth to some forty new nations since 1960. In Asia old and new religious sects are growing in strength, many being equated with patriotism. To be a good citizen in Thailand is to be a Buddhist; in India, it is Hindu; in Pakistan, Muslim, and so on. In Latin America the rise and fall of new political regimes is commonplace. Then there are the supposedly "free" societies like our own with their own particular forces which press us from within. We are continually tempted to turn to the gods of materialism, self-sufficiency and secularism.

There are those who claim that our world can now be divided into at least seven categories depending upon a nation's economic, political or social conditions. But leaders in the new nations react against being referred to as "third" or "fourth" world powers.

Spirit moved through missions

In spite of this complex global situation in which we live, and the many mistakes made by missions in the past, the church has taken root throughout the world. All who attended the Tenth Mennonite World Conference in Wichita, were impressed by the evidences of the Spirit's movement through Mennonite missions. Visible in our fellowship of over eight thousand Mennonites from all over the world were fruits of the promise made to Abraham. "Come out into the open and unknown with me and I will make of you a great nation." God has kept his promise. Because of Christ, people from a vast variety of cultures, races, ethnic backgrounds and dress, can experience unity. Within the kingdom of God we saw how freely Christian love allows for forms of expression through personalities as diverse as the stars. By crossing over all sorts of boundaries, not only geographical, but of language, race, culture, etc., Christianity offers to the world an alternative community. This is the good news which missions continue to preach. It is the way this message is presented and the way in which it is responded to which takes new forms in the context of today's world.

Changes in missions

As we examine some of these new trends in world missions we find the following changes:

(1) A shift from a "crusading" outlook to acceptance that we go as servants in weakness. We live in a pluralistic world and must reckon with the powerful presence of Communism and other ideologies. We must find ways to witness indirectly.

Some experiments are being tried with a quiet form of witness such as in Communist countries, in hopes that channels for dialogue and witness will open up. We must remember that Jesus referred to the kingdom of God in symbolic terms such as light, seed, yeast, and salt.

(2) Mission board policies and procedures are continually updated. It is not simple to send willing candidates. Delicate political climates call for caution and careful analysis of much information before placing missionaries. This must be done in close cooperation with Christian representatives of the churches in host countries. Thorough screening and better orientation help prepare workers to utilize their gifts effectively and to cope with a great variety of difficult situations.

Economic advisers help mission boards to handle complex budgets and to adjust missionary salaries to the various economies. Channels of communication between boards and the sending churches, missionaries and nationals, need to be improved. Emergency procedures must be thought through as potential dangers, where there are unstable governments, increase.

(3) Westerners are recognizing a growing need to listen to and learn from churches overseas. Our own knowledge of God and His ways can be enlarged by a proper spirit of openness.

(4) A spirit of interdependence is rapidly replacing the former pattern of Western dominance, both in decision making and theological interpretation. Efforts are being made to work together fully as partners. There is no room for spiritual competitiveness nor self-interest groups. Interdependence will require much prayer and mutual trust.

(5) There is an urgent need to be peacemakers. In a world of conflict which is increasingly being forced to work together for survival, Mennonites offer a unique aspect of the Christian message through our peace emphasis. We offer the world an alternative way of life.

On the final day of World Conference, Ugandan Archbishop, Festo Kivengere told of how he trembled with fear before a firing squad, risking his life to comfort and pray with three Christian men about to be executed for their "subversive" beliefs. None of us will readily forget how he bared his soul, sharing his prayer for God's miraculous love to intercede for him, enabling him to love the enemies of his beloved Uganda, including Idi Amin.

In a day when some voices within Christendom are considering the use of violence to confront secular powers and bring about justice, we need people who are willing to risk a discipleship which may lead to death.

(6) The world is looking for more than words about the love of God.

Convincing demonstrations of the reality of God's love and power are needed. Missions must base all activities upon its theology of Christianity—upon the way it understands faith in Christ and how it expresses this in human language and action. Since theology is formulated by experience, revelation through history and the Scriptures, and through tradition, culture and reason, it is only natural that it will, and indeed must change. The basic theology of missions is changing in our day.

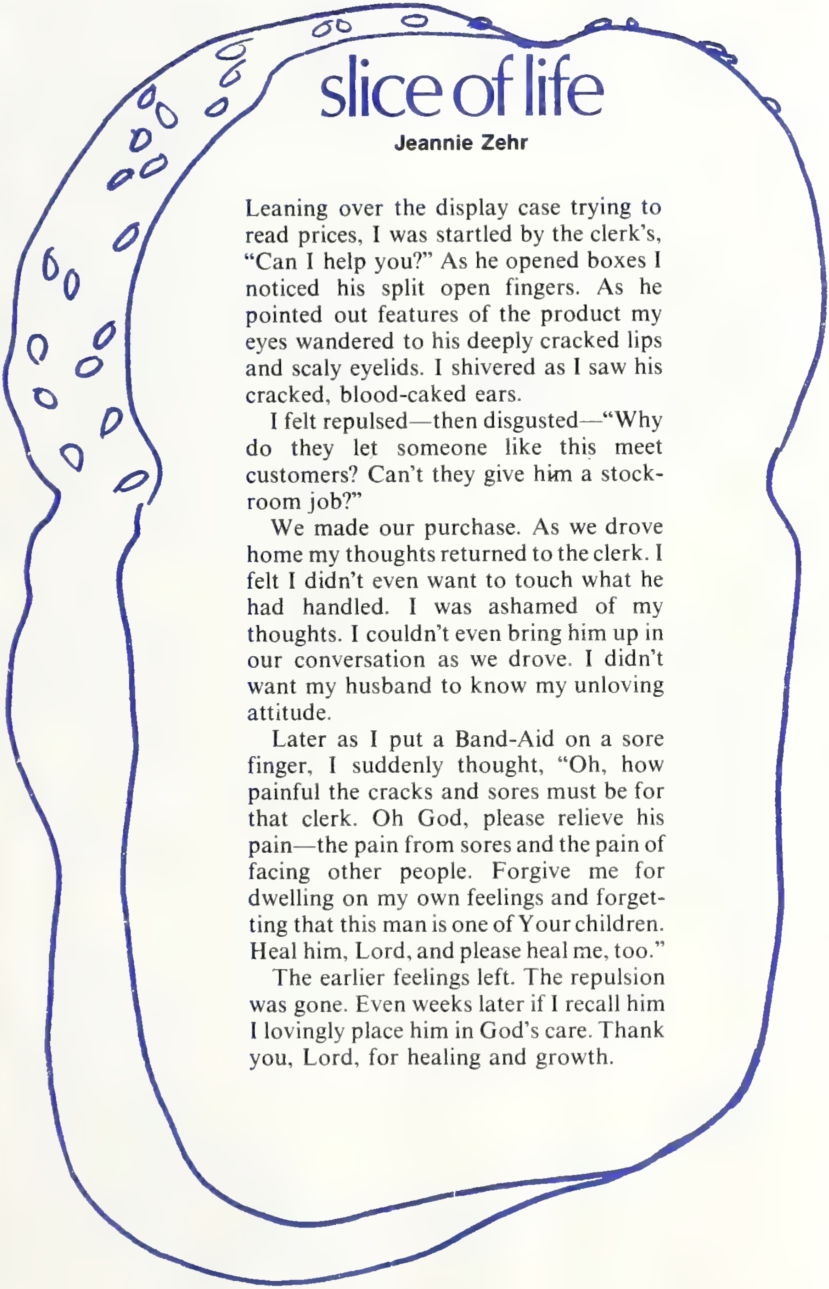
Each generation has the right to stand directly before the biblical message and let the Spirit interpret it within the context of the age in which it lives. The results will always be of a revolutionary nature. God meets us where we are and brings about major changes in our condition. This is what occurred when our Anabaptist forefathers dared to question the interpretations and traditions of the church in their day. They brought their questions directly before God and the Scriptures in prayerful expectation.

In the same way we are responsible to bring the present needs of our day before God, and to expect some fundamental changes to take place in our theology. These will result in more new trends in world missions.

Our God is faithful in fulfilling His promises. He has led us through specific events in the past and is in control of the future as well. With this hope I ride the crowded trains and subways of Tokyo. I am reassured that God is with us and moving ahead of us each day as we pioneer with Him here. I expect to see the Spirit at work in new ways, both among my Japanese brothers and sisters, and within myself.

Program "How-To" Ideas

1. Review the story of Abraham. Discuss what the meaning of this historical event is for us today. Suggested resource reading: "The Church Representing the Kingdom" as presented at Mennonite World Conference by David Schroeder. Read particularly the first section as found on page 70 of the blue program and guidebook.
2. Have the group or one person read pages 1-83 of *I Believe In the Great Commission* by Max Warren. What meaningful facts did you learn about the early church that were new to you?
3. Read and discuss Acts 15:8-11. What were the reactions of the Jewish Christians to the Samaritan Christians? What does this say about our attitude towards Christians in other cultures?
4. Have someone read and tell about Kosuke Koyama's book, *No Handle On the Cross.* What is this Oriental theologian telling those of us in the West?
5. Invite someone who attended the Mennonite World Conference to share those aspects of the experience which were most significant to them.
6. Have each person list on paper in chronological order their own spiritual pilgrimage in which God's presence has been especially significant. Do not rush through this exercise. After reflecting alone, divide into groups of two and share. Spend time in prayer and praise for the ways God has led, and ask Him for a new vision of who He is and what He would have you do next.
7. For devotions, check the 1978 Devotional Packet for "The Lord, Your Life" by Mrs. Erland Waltner to use with this program.
8. Have one or two persons read the lesson published here and come prepared to share it with the group.



slice of life

Jeannie Zehr

Leaning over the display case trying to read prices, I was startled by the clerk's, "Can I help you?" As he opened boxes I noticed his split open fingers. As he pointed out features of the product my eyes wandered to his deeply cracked lips and scaly eyelids. I shivered as I saw his cracked, blood-caked ears.

I felt repulsed—then disgusted—"Why do they let someone like this meet customers? Can't they give him a stockroom job?"

We made our purchase. As we drove home my thoughts returned to the clerk. I felt I didn't even want to touch what he had handled. I was ashamed of my thoughts. I couldn't even bring him up in our conversation as we drove. I didn't want my husband to know my unloving attitude.

Later as I put a Band-Aid on a sore finger, I suddenly thought, "Oh, how painful the cracks and sores must be for that clerk. Oh God, please relieve his pain—the pain from sores and the pain of facing other people. Forgive me for dwelling on my own feelings and forgetting that this man is one of Your children. Heal him, Lord, and please heal me, too."

The earlier feelings left. The repulsion was gone. Even weeks later if I recall him I lovingly place him in God's care. Thank you, Lord, for healing and growth.

Called to be A Stew

Caren Beach

SOME OF US are long, some short.

Some of us are slim, some chubby.

Some of us have beautiful faces, some are beautiful persons.

Some of us like to have parties, some like to debate.

Some of us like to do garden work, to sew, to cook.

Some are leaders, some followers.

Some are creative, some sensitive,

Some hide their feelings, some cry easily, some get angry.

Some of us are intelligent, some like to "get involved."

Some of us talk easily, some are shy,

Some are outspoken, some open-minded.

Some of us are potatoes, some carrots, some turnips, some onions, some celery.

We are each unique and loved by God for being just who we are! And that's great!

But there is much more to life—God wants us to return love to Him by loving one another . . . that's what Jesus said—love God and they neighbor as thyself—and even thy enemy! What is this love Jesus is speaking of? There are some people who are hard to love.

They rob banks! They sell heroin to innocent youths!

They murder! They exploit sex! They blackmail! They do not allow people their freedom! They want something for nothing! They drink away too much of what income they get and the kids go without!

But more personally, they hurt my feelings, they don't accept me as a person of value. They show anger to me, and I want to withdraw. They ignore me. They are narrow-minded—my views don't count. They withdraw from me.

Those very close to me are often lovable . . . but even more importantly sometimes I'm unlovable!

How then do we love as Jesus taught? I often feel hurt turn into anger within me . . . when this happens, a wall is being built between persons, and until we break down the wall—we cannot love!

Jesus was saying to share feelings of hurt, anger, joy, sorrow with each other. Don't let the aggressive person get away with outspokenness without letting her know how she made you feel. Don't let the shy person withdraw from you without letting her know you want to know what she's thinking. Don't let the outspoken one speak without sharing with her how she makes you feel when she speaks with such authority. These feelings can be shared in love!

We are called as vegetables to be a stew—a supportive community where each unique member of the "stew community" gives of her *real* self to enhance the flavor of the whole group. Let's be honest with each other by sharing our thoughts and feelings, and say we're sorry when we know our flavoring has "come on a little strong!" Let's become supportive communities—groups in which we can show honest support to each other, looking always for the ultimate best for each of us!

Thank you, God, for loving us and giving us each other to love. So be it.

A Revolution of Praise

Helen Coon

Lots of talk of resolutions
this time of year.
Lots of talk of revolutions
both far and near.
Why not something bright
to guide our days—
a year round revolution
of praise!

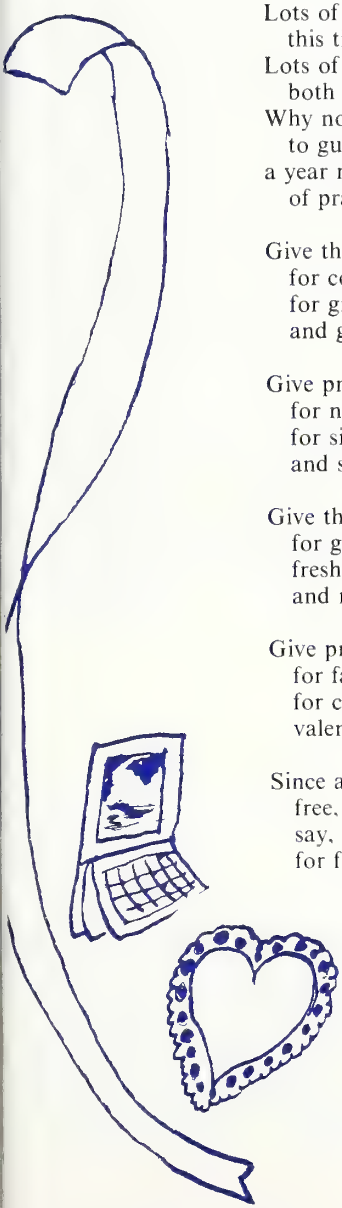
Give thanks to God
for cool things
for green things
and growing things.

Give praise to God
for newlyweds
for single folks
and snow white heads.

Give thanks to God
for growing pains
fresh fruit to eat
and no weight gains!

Give praise to God
for family lines
for celebrations
valentines!

Since all good revolutions
free,
say, "Thank you God
for freeing me!"



WM office jottings from Joan

One needs only to read the reports of WM provincial and district conferences and look through the potpourri of program booklets to know that this indeed has been a fruitful and enriching year. Looking into the kaleidoscope of activities, I see the following: women growing spiritually; praying, studying and learning about others and themselves; "retreating" on weekends; being supportive to afraid and lonely people; caring in crisis situations; crying, laughing, playing; sewing, making quilts; serving soup suppers; washing the hair of residents in health care units, and showing an interest in all our mission programs by faithfully supporting these with contributions.

We encourage families, mission groups and individuals to use the new *Overseas Prayer Directory* which is a tool to help persons pray more specifically for our missionaries and their families. The pictures in the book will also assist you in becoming better acquainted with our commissioned overseas workers. Addresses and birthday lists are included. (Check with your pastor to see if your church has ordered a shipment.)

A new slide set about our COM workers entitled "Signs of the Kingdom" is available upon request from the COM office.

We remind all WM groups to send their year-end reports to the provincial presidents or district advisers no later than January 1. The results of these reports and other important items of business will be discussed at the WM Advisory Council meetings in Minneapolis, Minnesota, February 4 to 6, 1979. The Council of Commissions' meetings will be held at the same place, February 6-8. Your prayers for God's guidance will be appreciated.

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to help you serve

* Personally, some of our most enriching holiday celebrations in the past have been spent in sharing these days with international persons. People far away from home appreciate being included in our family gatherings. Hospitality is a good gift to share at Christmastime or anytime.

* Be sure to check on the latest foreign postal rates before mailing your letters to overseas people. Also, if you feel that you procrastinated too long for a "Christmas letter," remember, tidings are as welcome in January as in December.

* Undesignated money sent to the WM office toward the end of the year can be used in budget areas where we might be falling short. With continued contributions till the end of December, we have good prospects of meeting our 1978 budget of $178,000. We thank each of you for your generous continued support. Send contributions to Women in Mission, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114

response

"Just wanted to tell you that I feel your *Window to Mission* really serves a great purpose. I've appreciated it for a long time but I discovered as a minister's wife that one really has to call attention to it many times before some societies will use it. It was music to my ears when someone said, 'Say that *Window to Mission* is a great help in programs.' "

Jean M. Yoder, Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

contributors

Helen Friesen (God Prepares In Many Ways) and husband, Willard, have three married sons. Helen serves as WM advisor in the Northern District. She also keeps busy with freelance writing, teaching piano and organ, playing the organ for church, singing in the choir, and teaching a young married couples Sunday school class. Helen's address is Box 256, Butterfield, Minnesota.

Sandra Liechty (Program 3: What's New In Overseas Mission Work?) and husband, Carl, returned to Japan in August as third-term missionaries. They have a daughter and son. The family spent the past year in Elkhart where Carl and Sandra studied at the seminary. Sandra has interests in leadership training and "discipling" and enjoys hobbies of music, plants, birds, and international relations.

Jeannie Zehr (Slice of Life) edits *Window to Mission* from her home at 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana. She keeps busy chauffeuring her two children, doing volunteer work, teaching a fifth-sixth grade Sunday school class, singing in the church choir, and being a homemaker. Her present hobby is making needlepoint baby blocks as gifts and for charity sales.

Carrie Hughes (artist, p. 12) is serving as director of alumni affairs at Bluffton College on a voluntary service basis. She makes her home at 2840 Breese Road, Lima, Ohio, where she enjoys outdoor work. She does art work for some religious publications, plus enjoys making posters for various college events and projects.

Helen Coon (A Revolution of Praise) and her minister husband, Bob, live at 1313 North College, Cordell, Oklahoma. They have three children, including Cathy who did the art work for Helen's poem. Helen is a substitute teacher and freelance writer.

Cathy Coon (artist, p. 13) is a senior at Okalhoma Bible Academy, Meno, Oklahoma. She enjoys art, music and working on the school yearbook. She is the daughter of Bob and Helen Coon, Cordell, Oklahoma.

Joan Wiebe (WM Office Jottings) works at 722 Main, Newton, Kansas, as coordinator for the General Conference Women in Mission organization. Her husband, Leonard, is pastor of the Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, Kansas. Joan is deeply involved in the work of the church and is a gifted musician.

credits

COVER PHOTO: Religious News Service; photo: p. 3, Willard Claassen.

ARTWORK: p. 12, Carrie Hughes; p. 13, Cathy Coon.

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Helen
Friesen

Sandra
Liechty

Jeannie
Zehr

Helen
Coon

Cathy
Coon

forecast

Coming in the February-March issue of *Window to Mission* will be a program-lesson by Kay Ann Fransen titled "Imparting Christian Values in a Confused World." Three mothers will also share something about how their families have worked at developing Christian attitudes making for peace in personal relationships. We think you'll also enjoy and appreciate a review of some good peace books for children.

Printed in U.S.A.

bright ideas

HAVE YOU EVER baked the bread for your congregation's communion service? Or, have each family bring a loaf to share? Maybe you could incorporate this into your district conference by inviting each congregation to bring a loaf to share.

A couple in Kansas sent $100 to MCC. They explained that they had stayed in a private home during a church conference. Upon leaving, they offered to pay for the hospitality they had received, but the host refused. After talking it over, the parties mutually agreed that a contribution to MCC for famine relief would be a most excellent way to resolve the problem.

This may be a way that many of us could give after experiencing warm hospitality at conferences.

Do you know how useful clip clothespins are? Try them, you'll like them, and your ideas for usage will multiply. A few ways are: to close opened packages of potato chips, nuts, chocolate chips, etc; to fasten cloth napkins to a rod near the table (use marking pens to make each pin a different color for each family member); fasten mittens in pairs; fasten boots in pairs; clip one somewhere to remind you of something you need to do. What ways can you dream up?

Understanding the role of women in developing countries is the theme of a 125-slide set and taped script produced by Lavonne Platt for the Commission on Education.

What are the dimensions of life in what we call developing countries? Where do our boundaries overlap with theirs? Can we find ways to relate to citizens of these countries?

The script raises these questions and provides commentary. Women are seen doing household tasks and contributing to their families under difficult conditions. In many countries the typical woman thinks of herself as a cultivator or trader, as well as wife and mother. Opportunities for women are often limited by cultural and social mores. We also see the wide variety of family structures around the world and how in nearly a third of the world women are members of the paid labor force.

Rental for the slide set is $3.00. Requests for "Women in Developing Countries" may be mailed to Audio Visual Library, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Send your "Bright Ideas" about programs, fund raising, ecology, personal growth, etc. to Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Rd., Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

The Mennonite
OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:44 DECEMBER 5, 1978

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an innkeeper's dilemma

Evelyn Minshull

How was I to know—
with clients clamoring
for food and wine,
and new tired travelers arriving
beat by beat—
that there was something different about those two—
the sweet-faced girl,
so obviously swollen with a child,
bursting toward birth,
and,
guiding her,
the man,
still young, though not as young as she,
expression travel-darkened,
tension-drawn,
feet heavy on the doorstep of my inn?
How could I know,
just then,
when there had been
too many men, soliciting a room,
so many women, pleading with their eyes—
all drooping with their weariness,
their need
for all those services my inn provides?

All evening long—
all weary evening long—
I'd had to shunt them to competitors
(my inn was full)
full knowing that in any week
of any other year,
such trade would fill rooms often left
to dust and web.

But now,
this once,
my inn was bursting full
(webs swept away,
floors glistening)
and I—ebullient host
(expanding as my purse expanded with
infusion of new coins)—
had greeted, bowed, smiled, served
and—
time and time again—
answered such summons at my door,
my ministries suspended.

And how was I to know
(wine pitcher still in hand,
a joke half-heard)
that there was something awesome in
this interruption? . . .
that—
for that moment as I saw them there;
took in the wan condition of the girl;
interpreted the tension in his eyes—
that prophecy projected my response;
all future history,
suspended,
hinged on me?

Perhaps,
subconsciously,
I knew
(or knowledge was beginning)
for as I
drew on cultivated art
(solicitude in voice and eyes;
a helpfulness in redirection)
a subtle sympathy occurred,
shaking facades.

I left my guests
and led these silent two
(tension reduced to tenderness)
toward a stall
where week-old hay
still lay,
unfreshened.

"We've been so busy," I apologized
(facade forsaken);
"This will be fine," he said.
"We thank you."
Her smile was loving,
warm.

I felt the difference then, perhaps.
Reluctantly, I left that simple scene,
returning
to my inn,
to wine and laughter
and to a ribaldry I'd known
and often sought.

Soon,
I was swept into my role again,
the stable warmth returning to my thoughts
but fleetingly.
That night, when all was quiet,
and suddenly
a baby's cry
jolted my soul . . . ;
when,
later,
stargleam wakened me—
its light approximating dawn's—
perhaps I sensed the difference then.
Perhaps. . . .
Or
when I dressed for quick investigation
of a silent group of shepherds
visiting my stall,
and—
following—
caught them in glowing worship
of a child . . .
perhaps it happened then. . . .

One thing I know—
it happened—
whether then,
that night,
or later, in an alchemy
of thought and memory.

I know the difference
now.

Those cards and letters

Marlace Berg Zacharias

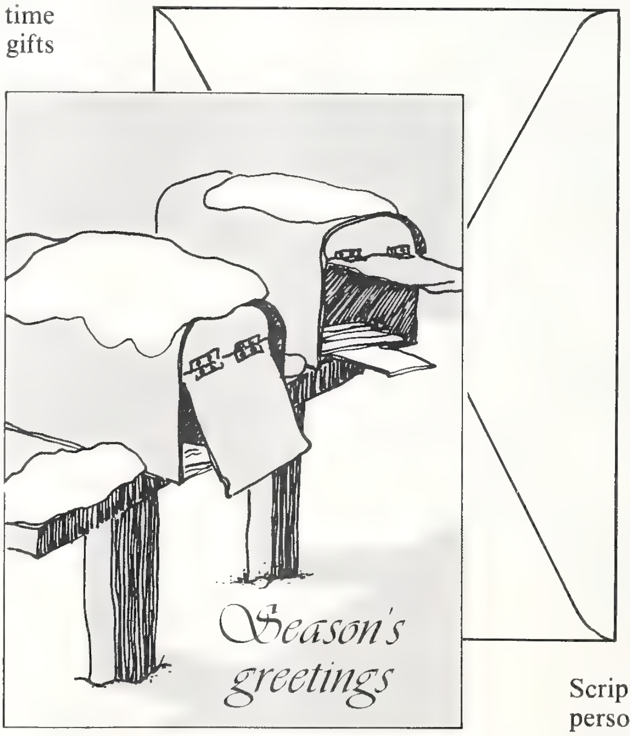
I've been teased, rebuked, and sometimes even thanked by friends and relatives for being the first person to send them Christmas cards. Some ask how I find time. Others lament about how well organized I am and how I spur them on to buy their cards and address them.

I've never considered myself well organized and I don't have a lot of time on my hands. But I do think God's gifts of friendship and kinship are precious. Since most of my friends and relatives live too far away to see often, I feel I'd lose contact with them if I didn't communicate at least once a year.

As a busy farm family we take few vacations. Letters and cards enable me to take armchair trips to South America, Europe, the Bahamas, Australia, the Northwest Territories, and to places all over the United States and Canada. When we're buried in snow I can dream about the sundrenched beaches in the Bahamas, where my friend says it's 20° C (68° F). I see, through friends' eyes, the majestic Alps in France, the steep, rugged Andes in Bolivia, and the endless ocean at Vancouver, British Columbia. When other friends tell me about winter vacations to Hawaii, Bermuda, Spain, and New Zealand, I take armchair trips with them.

When I receive a letter from a friend who is ill or shut in I'm reminded to pray. Some letters prompt me to say a prayer of thanksgiving to God for giving my family good health. The Lord wants us to bear each other's burdens.

A friend or relative may be spending the first Christmas alone after the death of a life's partner. Such a person needs assurance of prayers and a cheery card or letter to help get through such a difficult time. Maybe a friend is going through a period of depression because of losing a job, having an accident, or experiencing financial difficulties. Words of encouragement and prayers are always needed.



My spirits soar when I hear from someone who shares my hopes and dreams. For a long time I thought I was the only one who dreamed of becoming a writer. In recent years I've had letters from several friends who express the same desire. Some have sent samples of their attempts at writing, or requested samples of mine. I take comfort in letters from friends who have problems like I do. It's nice to know I'm not the only one who has trouble sewing, losing weight, or finding enough time to pursue my many, varied hobbies.

It takes little effort on my part to have a box of all occasion cards on hand to send when a friend has a birthday or anniversary, is ill, loses a loved one, or gives birth to a baby; yet the recipient's spirits rise just to know someone remembers these personal events. Think of how happy it makes you to be remembered.

Evangelism is another reason for cards and letters. All of us have friends and relatives who don't believe that God loves them, and don't believe that if they're to have eternal life they must accept him. If they don't attend church and shut radio and television off when anything even bordering religion comes on, from whom will they learn the good news? Sending a Christian Christmas card with a Scripture verse and some words of personal testimony is the very least we can do for them.

If you happen to be my friend or relative or if you know someone who loves writing and receiving letters and sending Christmas cards early don't be too hard on us. We may be meeting someone's need in a different way than you do, but we're trying to be helpful, loving and serving our Lord. Besides, it's a lot of fun. •

Take hold of your star

Maria Van Dyck

In a dream I reached out to a star. And I heard a voice, "Take hold of your star and meet Jesus."

It seemed a strange thing but I couldn't forget it. I was reminded of Jesus' star which had guided the wise men to the stable. "We've seen his star," they said. Could it be, I wondered, that I have a star too, that everyone has a star? But no, there aren't enough stars in the sky for all the people on earth. Or are there?

God showed Abraham the star-studded sky to illustrate how he would multiply his seed, and he spoke about the dust of the earth as an example. To God there seemed to be no quantitative difference. And if there are as many stars as there is dust on the earth then surely there is a star for each one of us.

But why didn't my star herald my birth and descend above my parents' home when I was born? I knew the answer to that immediately: I didn't have a hold on my star as Jesus did. A star shines forth, it is illuminating and inspiring. He was the perfect shining ideal. He and this star were one, so much so that the star followed him to the stable.

"Take hold of your star" now makes more sense to me; I too have an ideal. Once I sat down and wrote it on paper in black and white. My ideal gives my life meaning; it explains why I am here and what my mission is. When I am able to realize my ideal and take hold of my star—if only for hours or even minutes—I am transformed into something far greater than a human being. I become part of the greater plan of God—of the universe—illuminating and inspiring those around me.

What is my ideal, you'd like to ask? It's nothing very spectacular, nothing that will put me into a history book. But no one can fulfill my ideal better than I can because of the circumstances I'm in. And no one can fulfill *your* ideal better than you can.

How do I know that you have an ideal? Because you were created by God, and that gives a definite purpose to your existence. I don't believe God wastes anything, least of all a human lifetime. And the purpose for your existence can only be defined in relation to an ideal.

Perhaps you've never thought about the ideal that gives your life its meaning; but chances are that parts of your life have been an expression of that ideal or of smaller aspects of it. If one of your wishes is to learn to play a musical instrument then that could be part of your ideal. If your intention is to become a doctor or a nurse then your life's ideal could be service or love. Knowledge can be an ideal, as can truth or peace.

The one thing that you must keep in mind if you want to find your ideal is that it must be three-dimensional. We are beings with a soul, a mind, and a body. Our ideal must fulfill our whole being.

Have you tried to take hold of your star? Or have you had some sightings of it and left it at that? Have you reached out to your star? Or do you not have the strength to reach out?

I must remind you of the second part of the sentence I heard in my dream. "Take hold of your star *and meet Jesus,*" it said. Jesus will add his strength to yours and you'll do it together. You'll know he is there when he gently brings the ideal back to your mind; when your eyes are suddenly opened to an opportunity which you were about to miss. If you let him he won't let you lose sight of your star. And the times you actually succeed in taking hold of your star will become the glorious climaxes in this spiritual intercourse with Jesus. Have you ever "met" Jesus in this way?

"But," you say, "why try to take hold, or reach out, or even sight my star? Life is hard enough without that. Just getting through one day at a time takes all the energy I have." Well, then I have some good news for you. As soon as I started to reach out for my star, my life became *not* harder, not easier, but more fulfilling. Things went more smoothly, puzzle pieces fitted together, things clicked. Life made sense and I made sense. And most important of all I was finally on the road to true happiness and peace within. I don't ever want to lose sight of my star again.

The next time you look at a star-filled sky why not try to find your star? It isn't far away. Space is an illusion as is time. You only need to reach out to be able to take hold of your star. ●

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African story cheers persons (women) in ministry

An African farmer had a pet eagle which he raised with his chickens. The eagle, seeing only chickens, accepted their way as his norm. Occasionally he'd flap his wings, but most of the time he scratched in the dirt for worms.

A friend of the farmer marveled at the eagle's passive acceptance of chickenhood. "But he's an eagle," he'd insist. "He should fly." The farmer would laugh. "That eagle will never fly." The friend scratched his head. "May I try to teach him to fly?" The farmer threw some corn to the eagle and chickens. "Go ahead, but it won't work. That eagle thinks it is a chicken."

The farmer's friend worked and worked to teach the eagle how to fly. Day after day he'd climb a tall tree, place the eagle on the end of a limb and push it off. Each time the eagle fluttered its wings so it would float to the ground, but it would not soar into the air. Finally, the farmer's friend took the eagle to a high mountain crag where other eagles swooped and soared. But the eagle, used to seeing itself as a chicken, backed away from the ledge in fear. The man, however, kept the eagle there for many days. One morning he took the eagle to the ledge just as the sun slipped above the horizon. The eagle, seeing the shining rays of sun, opened its wings in joyful response to its overwhelming beauty and soared out toward the rising sun.

This African story, shared by Marion Keeney, opened the third Persons in Ministry Conference, this time held at the Akron (Pennsylvania) Mennonite Church, October 27-29.

"The story, often told in Africa by black liberation leaders to picture what white colonialism has done to the blacks, is also a good one to describe what's happened to women in the church," she pointed out. "Instead of being told we are eagles so we can soar into the sunrise of God's beckoning call to service we continue to scratch in the dirt for worms."

Conferences are strange experiences. The speakers, so vital for the input and expertise they bring, shape the nature of discussions. Yet the success or failure of such gatherings lies more in the extracurricular conversations than in the presentations themselves. These are the times when a shy stranger comes forward and says to another, "Thank you. Never before have I heard a woman dare to say openly, 'My goal is to be ordained.' That gives me hope and support in pursuing my own sense of call."

Although the name "Persons in Ministry" had been chosen, the actual thrust was "women in ministry." Arlene May, psychologist and retired professor at Eastern Mennonite College, reminded us that sex roles are more culturally determined than biologically. Her statements were a rerun of things we already knew and believed, yet her illustrations enabled us to better understand the conflicts facing women as they weave their way through marriage, parenthood, job, singleness, and school.

It must have been a rib tickler! In the foreground are Marion Preheim (left) and Erna Fast.

Dorothy Nyce, a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, presented a careful report on "Women in the Pulpit Ministry in 19th Century United States," which filled us with pride. Hearing that there were more ordained women between 1800 and 1900 than from 1900 to 1978 made us want to laugh and cry at the same time.

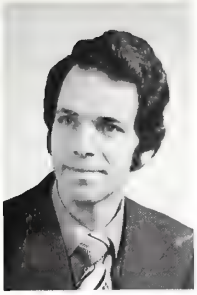
Ruth Brunk Stoltzfus, teacher, counselor, and originator of the "Heart to Heart" radio program, had a gift for words and quotable quotes. Regal in her simple dress, severe hairstyle, and head covering, she spoke with a quiet authority. She said, "In spite of the fact that we have been told that 'a woman's face is her future, and her body her mission' Jesus called for something different for women: Jesus is the true radical. He demonstrated in his teachings and actions that he expected women to use their gifts for God's glory. . . ."

Willard Swartley, scholar, teacher, and minister at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, zeroed in on the language issue. "Words are crucial to our understanding of ourselves and God. They are so crucial that they shape our perspectives on life, power, self-worth, authority, and service. In the Hebrew language, the word 'word' means 'power.' We must keep searching for new ways to translate the biblical phrases and passages which are bisexual and inclusive in the Greek or Hebrew, but come out sounding exclusively masculine in English."

Without a doubt, the most important element of the conference was the emotional, spiritual, and moral support which participants found as they shared personal pilgrimages. As Ruth Brunk Stoltzfus said, "For most of my life I thought I was weird because I wanted to use my mind and loved to preach. In places like this I discover many women who share those dreams and gifts."

Building on Marion Keeney's opening story, God's chicken yard is filled with chickens and eagles, each unique, each gifted, each precious in his own sight. From Emma Richards, copastor at the Lombard (Chicago) Mennonite Church, on down to the shy listeners in the back row, each came away praying, "Lord teach us to fly. Not for the wrong reasons, Lord. Not to feed our egos, but so that we can share the hope and joy which come from experiencing your love and forgiveness." *Joyce Shutt*

Palmer Becker accepts pastorate in Vancouver


Becker

Palmer Becker of Newton, Kansas, executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries since 1969, has accepted a call to pastor a congregation presently being organized in Richmond, British Columbia. Richmond is a suburb of Vancouver.

He will begin his duties in August 1979. Palmer, with his wife Ardys, spent a weekend with the emerging group in September. More recently (October 29) Palmer attended a meeting of people interested in the new church at which time he shared some of his personal experiences and his vision for the church. "The shape and the emphasis of the church in Richmond," he observes, "will need to emerge from the gifts God has given to the members and from the covenant we make with God and with each other. Hopefully our life together will encompass a balanced blend of fellowship, study, service, and celebrative worship."

The new congregation will be a joint effort mainly of the Sherbrooke and Prince of Peace Mennonite Churches. Also invited to participate in planning were the Mountainview and First United Mennonite Churches. Several years ago the Sherbrooke Church purchased a site in Richmond when it became apparent that overcrowding would eventually force a move. The Prince of Peace Church, with some 35 members now, has experienced a declining membership and will be sold.

From 1958-63 Palmer and Ardys served in Taiwan where they directed a mobile clinic, a daily radio program, and assisted in establishing two churches. From 1965-69 Palmer served as pastor of First Mennonite Church in Clinton, Oklahoma. Since 1969, as executive secretary for home ministries, he has provided oversight to General Conference church planting, congregational mission, peace and social concerns, voluntary service, media work, and Indian ministries.

Chinese evangelicals plan church growth

Jin Shan, Taiwan (LCWE)—Over 400 delegates attended the Chinese church growth seminar sponsored by the Chinese Coordination Center of World Evangelization in late October. More than half of the delegates were from Taiwan.

Although the total Chinese world community occupied the attention of seminar participants, mainland China and its spiritual needs were on everyone's minds.

"The Chinese churches have worked very hard for many years without the tools for success and without goals or plans," stated Henry Co of the Philippines. "With what we have learned here, we can return to our churches with clear goals and objectives."

Observers feel that the active evangelical congregations in the worldwide Chinese community are ripe for church growth and ready to play a key role in world evangelization. Speaker Donald McGavran of Fuller Theological Seminary summed up the feeling of all at the seminar when he declared, "The tremendous multitudes around existing Chinese churches and beyond the reach of existing churches must be evangelized."

BOOKS·the gifts that keep on giving

Full Circle: Stories of Mennonite Women **Mary Lou Cummings, editor**

"I never thought much about what a 'woman' should do. My main concern was to know what God wanted me to do, and I knew he would help me to do it," says Dr. Ella Garber Bauman. Through the simplicity of these words, a great power is unleashed. This power, this focus, is an unspoken theme in many of these biographies. These women were focused on God's will and this set them free to be themselves.

ISBN 0-87303-014-1 * Paper * 214 pages * 1978........ $5.25
Introductory offer until December 31, 1978........ $4.95

Toward Understanding the Bible **Perry Yoder**

This study is intended as an introduction to hermeneutics for the lay person. In a chapter titled "Games People Play With the Bible," the author describes some of the approaches to the Bible that are common among lay people. He then shows how the correct meaning of the text can be found only by taking the author and his context seriously. The book treats crucial issues in biblical interpretation in a nontechnical way.

Perry Yoder graduated from Goshen College with a BA in sociology and received his PhD in Old Testament from the University of Pennsylvania. He is a professor of religion at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

ISBN 0-87303-006-0/20 * Paper * 96 pages * 1978........ $2.45

A Vietnamese Pilgrimage **Max Ediger**

The war is now over in Viet Nam, but the struggle continues. As people work in their fields, some are still maimed and others killed by munitions lying unexploded in their fields. To shape and create a new society—to reconstruct a new nation—requires an intense struggle. The cost is high. "When and how will we live as one happy family?" asks the author in this poetic recreation of his Vietnamese experience. The drama of what happened in Viet Nam pulsates in the pages of this book.

Max Ediger, served as a voluntary service worker with Mennonite Central Committee in Burundi, Africa. After graduation from Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, he served a five-year term (1971-1976) as a voluntary service worker in Viet Nam. His third assignment with MCC is working for the Christian Church in Thailand.

ISBN 0-87303-007-9 * Paper * 88 pages * October 1978........ $5.25

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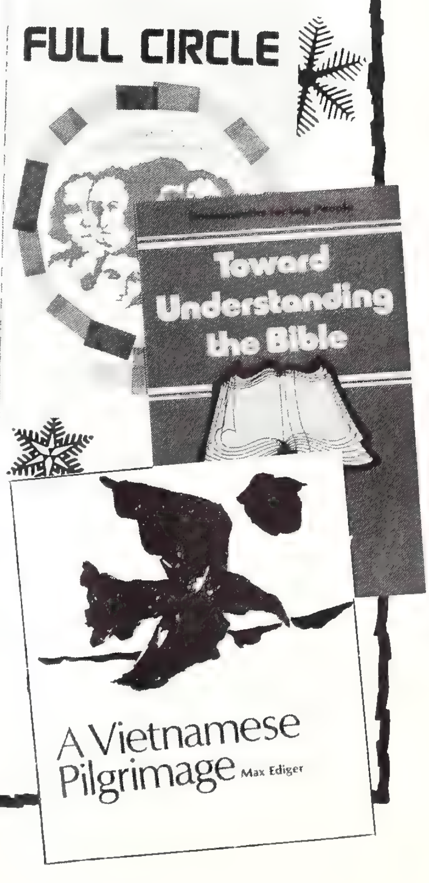


Bihar, India—Paul Kniss, Mennonite Board of Missions (Elkhart, Indiana) worker here, reports having spent considerable time last year assisting Trans World Radio (TWR) and a local broadcast committee to arrange for radio programs in Indian languages. Studios are now being built throughout India to produce programs for release on a strong new station in neighboring Sri Lanka. A central broadcast office has been set up in New Delhi, and programming is now underway in five Indian languages.

Evangelist Billy Graham preached 10 sermons to almost 25,000 people in six cities in Poland, mostly in Catholic churches. During his stay he was most moved by his visit to Auschwitz. "Auschwitz," he said, "stands as a warning for all humanity—a warning that man is still capable of repeating, and even multiplying, the barbarism of Auschwitz. . . . For the first time in human history, humanity has the staggering capacity to destroy entire populations at the touch of a nuclear button. Tomorrow it may not be four million, but 400 million."

A major conference on the situation of refugees in Africa is to be held in Arusha, Tanzania, in May 1979. The conference aims to review and evaluate the present refugee situation in Africa with a view to proposing solutions and finding ways to tackle the problems in the years to come. In addition, national legislations concerning refugees will be studied in order to propose improvements which will lead to a more committed stance on implementing the Organization of African Unity convention governing refugees in Africa.

North American hosts visit Poland

Akron, Pennsylvania (MCC)—Forty-two former and present North American hosts and employers of Polish agriculturists visited Poland on an exchange tour in September. This was the first reunion of Polish agriculturists with their North American hosts since the program began in 1971.

Since 1971 Mennonite Central Committee has cooperated with the Scientific Association of Agricultural Technicians in Poland (SITR) to sponsor Polish agriculturists for a year's stay in North America.

Coming from as far west as British Columbia, and from seven states, the tour group represented Mennonite Brethren, Mennonite Church, and General Conference members. Among the participants were Jay and Lois Garber of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, who described some aspects of their tour.

"Danuta, a 20-year-old Polish girl, was guide for our tour. We traveled from Gdansk on the Baltic Sea in the north to Kracow in southern Poland. SITR had scheduled three meetings at different locations during our 10-day visit to talk about the program and also to hear our evaluation as hosts. At these meetings our former Polish agriculturists greeted us with flowers, smiles, hugs, and warm welcomes. Some traveled with our group for several days."

Farming methods varied sharply, the Garbers report. "In a single area we observed wheat being harvested by a cradle, a tractor-drawn binder, and a self-propelled combine.

"Ninety percent of Poland's population is Catholic. We visited several well-preserved cathedrals and became better acquainted with their worship experiences. Mennonites and Mennonite churches are no longer evident in Poland. However, in Gdansk we visited a one-time Mennonite church which is now used by the Pentecostals on ul. Mennonitow (Mennonite Street)."

Examining the first tractor owned by the Slvsarski family are Remigivsz Slvsarski, his father (on the right), and Lois Garber.

Mennos visit arms bazaar to sell peace

Every year American manufacturers display their wares in trade shows held in various locations around the country.

However, not all these trade shows peddle consumer or industrial products. Some display weapons to US and foreign military officials. These strange affairs are called "arms bazaars." One such arms bazaar was held in Washington, DC, during October.

Most major army contractors had displays of their weapons. Their sales techniques included flashing neon lights, prizes, cartoons with humorous captions for weapons, and Madison Avenue slogans such as "Fire and Forget," "Launch and Leave." In addition most of the displays described the "kill effectiveness" of the weapon.

Because we knew these weapons are being used today to kill people seeking human rights, and because weapons cause an enormous waste of natural resources, we spoke to the salespersons.

We sought to understand their reasons for being there and questioned their belief that military might will bring peace and security.

Some of their responses were: "We need a strong defense to keep peace and maintain our security." "This is just a job that I have to do." "Our products can be used for civilian use." "All these weapons are used for purposes of defense." "If we didn't sell these someone else would."

We left the arms bazaar frustrated but also with a firmer conviction that love is the ultimate weapon and that spiritual power is greater than military power. *Ruth Hunsberger and Don Baergen, Mennonite volunteers working in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.*

The common struggle to walk beside young adults moving from dependence to independence, and eventually onward to interdependence was the focus for Mennonite student and young adult workers when they came together to exchange ideas at their annual workers meeting September 28-30 in Washington, DC. Student and young adult services are a pastoral ministry. But how does one pastor a flock of 100 to 300 young adults scattered across a large city, half a province, or a bustling university campus? Maintaining contacts, doing simple acts of charity, and staying with individuals through times of searching were emphasized.

Recent passage of the Middle-Income Student Assistance Bill could almost double the number of college students receiving federal aid, according to Walter Schmucker, director of student finances at Goshen (Indiana) College. The bill is specifically aimed at the provision of grants for an additional 1.5 million students from middle-income families that bring home $15,000 to $25,000 a year.

Leichty appointed editor of *forum*

Beginning 1 September 1979 Bruce Leichty of Newton, Kansas, staff writer of the *Mennonite Weekly Review,* will assume the editorship of *forum.*

forum is the monthly magazine for young adults, particularly in urban and academic settings, published by the student services committees of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church.

Leichty, who is a 1977 graduate of the University of Chicago with an MA degree in divinity, says the magazine symbolizes many of his interests. "I want to be inter-Mennonite," he notes. "I enjoy frank discussion of hard issues. I think we as Mennonites need to hear and see and taste the urban world, the academic world, and the professional world, but not without maintaining respect for our pasts.

"I have a concern," continues Leichty, "for the young adults of the church who, like me, are developing academic and social awareness which the established structures of the church aren't always ready to deal with. I want *forum* to be the periodical which shows that the church does in fact struggle with those who, for one reason or another, are on the fringes." Bruce said that conflict and activism are genuinely Christian things to be involved in because they "disturb the complacency towards which we are all inclined."

Leichty believes *forum* is already doing these things. But two areas he expects to emphasize are thoughtful, logically forceful articles which deal internally with opposing positions, and a critical treatment of denominational news which has relevance to young adults. The latter, he suggests, will not only help *forum* readers to identify with church institutions, but will create a position of give-and-take.

Leichty

Since June 1977 he has been working for the *Mennonite Weekly Review* as a writer and reporter. During the past year he wrote a 13-lesson youth Bible study series on basic Christian beliefs. This series will be used by Mennonite churches during the December 1978-February 1979 quarter.

He has a special interest in alternative churches, and is currently a member of the Jubilee Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kansas, a house church which has affiliation with both the Mennonite Church and the General Conference.

During his undergraduate years Leichty worked with the Goshen (Indiana) College newspaper, did field work with Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and was program director for the Goshen College FM radio station. In 1976 he earned the BA degree from Goshen in Bible and communications.

His parents are Clarence and Wilma Leichty of Elkhart, Indiana. Bruce, a single person, is 24 years old. He will replace Stuart Schowalter of Elkhart, Indiana, who will complete a three-year term next summer.

Published monthy from October through April, *forum* has a circulation near 5,000. *Vic Reimer*

Drama troupes to do conscience raising

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—How does a comfortable middle class relate to questions of poverty and affluence?

The answers are not easy. But the Commission on Education intends to use traveling drama troupes to help congregations focus on issues related to poverty and affluence.

Two troupes are planned. Each would perform within one region of the United States and Canada. A director with six or seven players would compose each troupe. One troupe would tour for two months throughout Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and the Northern District, beginning in June 1979. The other troupe would organize and tour during a four-week interterm during January 1980. Its region would include the northern part of the Pacific District, and the Vancouver, British Columbia area.

In addition to currently available dramas and readings new scripts will be solicited. Lois Bergen, director of youth education, says original material will be paid for. Writers are encouraged to submit scripts to the Commission on Education by spring 1979.

What results are expected? By the end of a performance an audience should be able to dialogue constructively with poverty and affluence issues. From that stimulation there could be an application to daily living. Further, the resources and ideas collected will be useful to other congregations as they relate to poverty and affluence. Another possibility is a performance, and a sharing of experiences by one of the troupes at the 1980 General Conference sessions in Estes Park, Colorado.

Ten thousand dollars has been granted by the poverty/affluence reference council of the Commission on Home Ministries and the Commission on Education to run the project.

"You can't answer violence with counterviolence—that only leads to more violence. The answer is love. The best sabotage is love," says internationally acclaimed South African playwright Athol Fugard. "Apartheid is designed to create insensitivities between groups. People stop seeing, just stop seeing, something parallel to the way Germans under Hitler did not know about the concentration camps. . . . I'm certain before hating, you get frightened. Hatred is the flower of fear."

A desire to decrease population is common to permissive attitudes toward abortion, artificial birth control, euthanasia, and homosexuality, claims psychologist Paul Cameron of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. He says these permissive attitudes have formed a "lethal" complex in Western society. Supporting his study, presented to the American Psychological Association meeting in Toronto, is a survey he conducted of 1,520 persons aged 12-93 in four areas on the east and west coasts of the United States.

MCC (Saskatchewan) emphasizes the overseas look

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan—The 15th annual sessions of Mennonite Central Committee (Saskatchewan) emphasized inspirational field reports of MCC workers and direct reporting by MCC (Canada/Akron) administrators. This resulted in minimal reporting time on the floor for provincial projects.

The 300 delegates and visitors meeting November 10-11 found it refreshing to hear Harry Harder and Abe Janzen (local young men) tell of their experiences in the Middle East and Latin America, respectively, or to hear Ray Brubacher (Akron) tell of the involvement of MCC in Africa, and to listen to Fred (MCC-Saskatchewan executive director) and Toni (Global Village Crafts director) Peters report on their short-term MCC assignment in which they visited a number of projects in the Far East.

Yet some delegates missed the opportunity to grapple with issues such as Christian lifestyle, offenders ministries, nuclear developments, native concerns, or the several homes operated by Saskatchewan Mennonites.

No doubt in future program-planning, organizers will be hard pressed to balance inspirational messages and a sense of frontline involvement with the practical, difficult involvement in policymaking, and of local project reporting.

Serious questions of Christian discipleship arose when the Global Village Crafts budget was examined. By providing a market for these items, it was noted, people in developing countries can earn a living with dignity—it is a good and Christian thing to do. On the other hand was the question of lifestyle and stewardship—how many wall plaques, pieces of art, and bowls, can individuals use? As was suggested, industry that supplies other than luxury needs ought to be encouraged and developed.

A budget of approximately $640,000 was accepted. *Jake Nickel*

Missions Focus goes inter-Mennonite

Elkhart, Indiana (MBM)—A missions journal published by Mennonite Board of Missions since 1972 will become inter-Mennonite with the January issue in 1979.

Titled *Missions Focus*, the magazine will respond to a growing interest and demand for a believers church perspective on missions, says Wilbert Shenk, chairperson of the editorial council and MBM secretary for overseas missions. "We want to stir up discussion on overseas and home missions."

Managing editor Willard Roth says that the 24-page quarterly magazine is for mission-minded persons wanting to consider "missiology in the biblical context, within a believers free-church tradition, from an interdisciplinary approach, and with a life-related perspective."

The expanded editorial council, in addition to Shenk and Roth, includes Adolf Ens of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba; Peter Hamm of Mennonite Brethren Bible College, Winnipeg; Ivan Kauffman, general secretary of the Mennonite Church General Board; Robert Ramseyer, General Conference missionary in Japan; and John Toews of the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, California.

The annual subscription rate for the journal is $5.00. All inquiries should be addressed to *Mission Focus*, Box 370, Elkhart, Indiana 46515.

National congress slated for church colleges

Newton, Kansas (GCNS)—Next June an anticipated 1,500 representatives from 750 church-related colleges and 25 religious denominations will be on the Notre Dame campus in South Bend, Indiana, to focus on issues confronting church-related higher education.

Billed as the National Congress on Church-Related Colleges and Universities, the June 21-23 meeting, says John Gaeddert, executive secretary of the Commission on Education will emphasize the role of church-related colleges in the future of American higher education. The congress will not only stress the challenges facing these colleges, but will produce an action-oriented program to encourage support for church-related higher education.

The June meeting will include major addresses by nationally known figures as well as discussion of studies researched by various denominations and special study commissions of the congress. Gaeddert noted that the department of higher education of the General Conference is planning some participation, though its extent has yet to be decided.

The special study commissions will explore topics that include educational purposes and programs of church-related colleges, issues in society, church-college relationships, legal issues, and financial pressures.

Additional information about the congress can be obtained by writing denominational executive officers or by contacting John D. Moseley, director, Center for Program and Institutional Renewal, Austin College, Sherman, Texas 75090.

"The Biblical Basis for Peacemaking and its Contemporary Application" is the title of a conference to be held December 27-29 at Camp Squeah, near Hope, British Columbia. The main speakers are Perry Yoder of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas; Malinda Thorne, of God's Rescue Mission and Miracle Centre, Vancouver, British Columbia; John Konrad, of the Corrections Branch of the Province of British Columbia; and Harvey Schroeder, Speaker of the British Columbia Legislative Assembly. Cost is $15. To register contact: Lorna Goertz, 387 Rees Road, Richmond, British Columbia V6X 2S4.

A community choir in the Swift Current, Saskatchewan, area, the Swift Current Bible Institute Oratorio Choir, is well into its sixth season. The choir was originally composed largely of SCBI students, but community involvement has grown to the point where the proportions are now reversed. The choir has sung Vivaldi's *Gloria* on two occasions, Handel's *Messiah* twice, and Mendelssohn's *Elijah* was performed last winter. They are currently working on Haydn's *Creation*. Performance dates are set at February 3 and 4, 1979.

Holiday Inn's president and chief executive officer, L. M. Clymer, has quit his job in protest against his organization's decision to build and operate a 55 million-dollar casino in Atlantic City. Clymer, number two man in the motel empire, boldly declared, "It is my overriding regard and respect for my Lord Jesus Christ which has led me to this decision." Holiday Inn's number one executive is Wallace Johnson, also an evangelical, who is currently heading Campus Crusade's billion-dollar fund-raising campaign.

Record

Workers

Fred Amstutz, First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, will become associate director of development and public affairs January 1, 1979, at Bluffton (Ohio) College. His two areas of primary responsibility will be the annual fund and alumni affairs. Since 1969 Amstutz has been director of Marbeck Center at the college.

Two board members were cited for outstanding service at the semiannual meeting of the board of directors of Mennonite Mental Health Services (MMHS), October 6 and 7 at Prairie View Mental Health Center in Newton, Kansas. *Robert Hartzler* was recognized for his 20 years of service with Oaklawn Psychiatric Center, first as board chairperson and then as administrator. *Aldred Neufeldt* was recognized for 10 years of service on the MMHS board, two as chairperson.

Three secretarial vacancies have been filled at the MCC (Canada) office in Winnipeg, Manitoba. *Sue Klassen,* Brandon, Manitoba, and *Martha Janzen,* Vineland, Ontario, began in September, while *Esther Dick,* Coaldale, Alberta, began October 2.

Ruth Keidel, Brookside Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana, began serving in Zaire in September at the missionary children's house in Kinshasa, known as the Hostel of the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. She will serve as a house parent, counselor, chauffeur, and in various other mission-related activities. A graduate of Indiana University in Fort Wayne, Ruth also studied at Fort Wayne Bible College. She is the daughter of Levi and Eudene Keidel, COM missionaries serving under AIMM in Zaire.

Paul King, First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, has been appointed director of development and public affairs at Bluffton (Ohio) College. He will have overall responsibility for college alumni affairs, public information, annual fund, deferred giving, church relations, and capital campaigns. A 1957 Bluffton College alumnus, King has been with the college since 1976, after being an insurance district sales manager for 16 years.

John and Leona Krause, Clearbrook, British Columbia, have been appointed by the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference to work in Zaire under African Inter-Mennonite Mission. They were commissioned November 12 in Olivet Mennonite Church in Clearbrook, and left November 20 for Brussels, Belgium, to begin French-language study. In July 1979 the Krauses will arrive in Kinshasa to replace Vern and Phyllis Lehman as house parents at the Mennonite youth hostel. John and Leona have four children of whom only Pamela will accompany them. However, the Krauses have had 25 foster children in their home over the years. They owned, and John managed, a printing firm in Clearbrook. John has also worked as a supervisor of a data processing office.

James D. Massie, Covington, Kentucky, has been appointed director of patient accounts at Mennonite Hospital, Bloomington, Illinois. He will be responsible for patient and outpatient admitting functions. Massie worked for the past five years as patient accounts manager at St. Elizabeth Medical Center in Covington, Kentucky.

Two new members have been elected to the Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas) board of directors by constituent groups. They are *Ronald Preheim,* Bethesda Church, Henderson, Nebraska, and *Gladys Goering,* First Church of Christian, Moundridge, Kansas. Preheim is presently chairperson of the board of the Bethesda Church and the Northern District peace and social concerns committee. Goering is a homemaker and worker in a number of causes. Most recently she has worked in the Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, Kansas, organizing general information on a large variety of subjects.

Ministers

Don Friesen became pastor of Ottawa Church, Ottawa, Ontario, on September 24. He previously served as assistant pastor at Bethel Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Prior to their work in Winnipeg, Don and his wife Dorothy spent two years at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Indiana.

Ernest W. Neufeld began a pastorate at Bethany Church, Freeman, South Dakota, in September. He served previous pastorates at Summerfield (Illinois) Church; Second Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and First Church, Allentown, Pennsylvania.

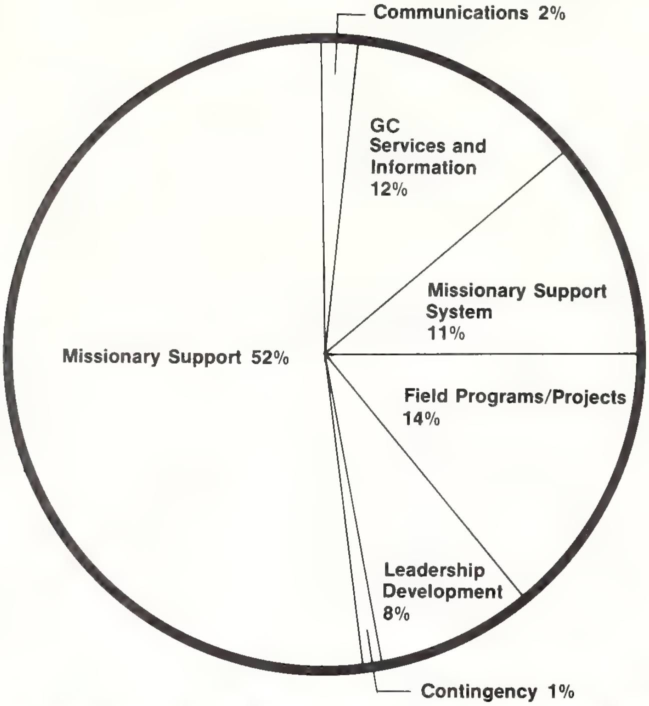
William Tilghman was installed as pastor of the Church of the Good Samaritans, Holland, Pennsylvania, on September 24. Tilgham attended the University of Maryland, Moody Bible Institute, and Lancaster Bible College.

Deaths

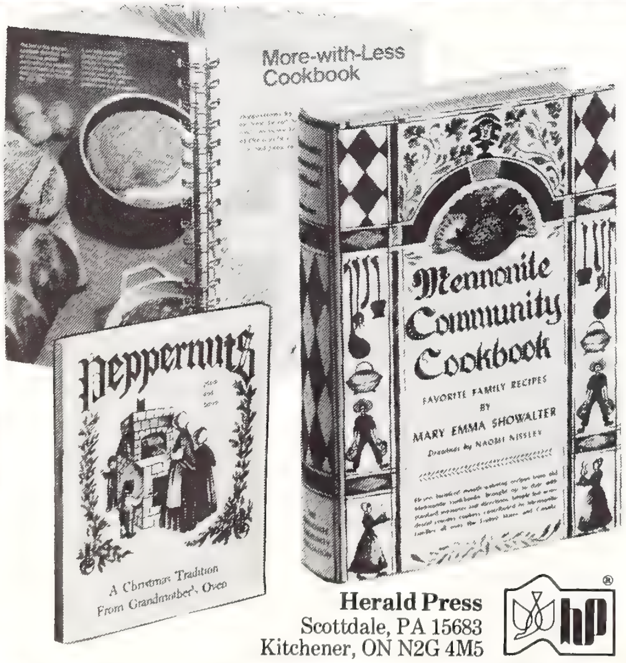
Irene Weaver, 30, died November 11 after a long illness. She was born April 20, 1948, in West Earl, Pennsylvania. Her parents are David M. and Katie B. Martin Weaver. She is also survived by one brother, Harlan, and four sisters, Kathleen Burger, Anna Mary Wenger, Elizabeth Weaver, and Ellen Weaver. Weaver, who had served with Mennonite Central Committee for over seven years since 1966, was MCC (Akron, Pennsylvania) office manager since 1977. She began work in the MCC Voluntary Service office and was administrative assistant for personnel services 1973-75.

YOUR MISSION DOLLAR AT WORK

Needed this year . . . $2,084,949



MISSIONARY SUPPORT	$1,094,129
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	156,881
FIELD PROGRAMS/PROJECTS	279,133
COMMUNICATIONS	47,200
GC SERVICES/INFORMATION	250,389
MISSIONARY SUPPORT SYSTEM	234,629
CONTINGENCY	22,588


More-with-Less Cookbook
Peppernuts
A Christmas Tradition From Grandmother's Oven
Mennonite Community Cookbook
Favorite Family Recipes
by Mary Emma Showalter

Herald Press: Your Last-Minute Christmas Checklist

☐ **More-with-Less Cookbook**
by Doris Janzen Longacre

Over 500 tested recipes that allow Christians to respond to world hunger by using food more responsibly. Delicious recipes, practical wire-binding, $6.95; in Canada $7.80

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☐ **Peppernuts: Plain and Fancy**
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A delightful cookbook containing 26 delicious recipes for these crisp and crunchy, spicy little holiday sweets and a wealth of stories. Paper, $2.95; in Canada $3.30.

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A prized gift for every kitchen. For 28 years the basic cookbook for Pennsylvania Dutch/Mennonite cooking. Cloth, $9.95; in Canada $11.15.

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Our Christian civil responsibility-3

For Canadians too

Larry Kehler

The war tax issue is a US issue and should be decided by them. Right?

Wrong! It's an issue for the entire General Conference.

But Canadians wouldn't be taking any of the risks if the US Government should bear down and hand out some jail sentences or fines for the Conference's not withholding its employees' income taxes.

Too much emphasis has been put on the possibility of fines or jail terms. These consequences might come, but they're not likely. The fear of a confrontation with the law has taken the focus off the main point of this whole exercise. The purpose is to give a firm, clear, and prophetic witness against the diabolic buildup of the machines of war, which is occurring at an ever-increasing pace in the United States and in many other nations. Are we going to sit back and allow this escalation to continue without at least giving our governments some sort of message that we cannot any longer go along with this race toward self-destruction?

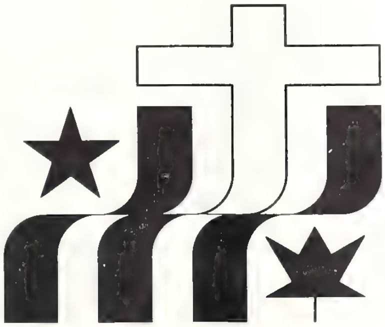
The arms race and the manufacture of war goods is very much part of the Canadian scene too (read *Making a Killing,* by Ernie Regehr, McCelland and Stewart, 1975). I have not yet been able to discover any tax resisters in Canada, but this does not mean that militarism is not a front-burner issue in Canada. It is, and it should be.

I don't know why there aren't tax resisters in Canada. There are certainly other forms of objection to the military buildup. "Project Ploughshares" is an interchurch witness against militarism. Mennonites are actively involved in its program of research and information-sharing. Thus, even though tax resistance isn't part of the Canadian experience now, Canadian Mennonites shouldn't withdraw from the General Conference discussion. They can legitimately be fully involved on the basis of principle.

If the General Conference is going to say, "Yes," to those of its employees who don't want their income tax withheld, that should be the decision of the entire Conference, not just a portion of it. The decision, whichever way it goes, will carry much more weight, I believe, if all the congregations in the Conference have participated in it. Canadian involvement is important.

Some have indicated that the present set of options offered to the delegates—that is to vote either yes or no on the withholding question—is not sufficient. Other alternatives must be developed. If not, the Conference may become polarized, and it might even split.

The question therefore is: How can the General Conference, as an international body, make a clear-cut witness against militarism without splintering the Conference? Some US Mennonites have stated that Canadian participation is crucial to the process.



After the conference in Bluffton in 1977 it appeared that there would be minimal Canadian involvement at Minneapolis. There is still no guarantee that participation from Canada will be adequate, but good efforts are being made to encourage Canadian churches to send delegates.

The General Board of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada at its last meeting went on record urging Canadian participation. It will communicate this concern to the churches. Several congregations are making special efforts to prepare for the convention. Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, held a weekend seminar on this topic. Grace Mennonite Church, Regina, Saskatchewan, arranged a similar event.

Sharon Sawatzky of the Canadian Conference staff in Winnipeg prepared a Canadian supplement for the study booklet *The Rule of the Sword* by Charlie Lord. Copies of the supplement have been sent to all Canadian congregations who have ordered the five-lesson study booklet on militarism.

Faith and Life Press, Newton, reports that to date (I write this on October 27) more orders for the study materials (*The Rule of the Sword* and *The Rule of the Lamb*) have been received from Canada than from the United States.

Now the question is: Will the conference be only for Canadians? Or will our US brothers and sisters be there too? *Third in a series of four.*

Article four, *The Prophets and the Managers,* will appear in the January 2 issue.

Letters

Our eyes and God's eyes

Dear Editor: I work at Broadway House, a residence for mentally retarded women. Something in the mood of the times makes me uneasy. I can't put my finger on it, yet the more I think about it the bigger it grows; and the unease becomes anger and disgust. It's the little remarks, the little actions, the little expressions of hostility that surface like tiny cracked edges but reveal an underlying mass of self-righteous intolerance. So I ask . . .

How many witches did we burn today?
How many did we ostracize in your name?
How many broken people did we shut out?
How many did we condemn?

Lord, they're different, sinful.
They'll corrupt our children.
Excommunicate them.
Put them over there with their own kind.
They're not a part of us;
after all, we're your children, Lord.
We meet under domes and spires and arches
and pray.
Lord, they don't pay their taxes;
they can't be your children.
Lord, they pay war taxes
they can't be your children.

Lord, they're unbiblical;
they can't be your children.
Lord, they're charismatic/Lord,
they're unspiritual.
Lord, they're too radical/conservative.
Lord, they're rich/poor, homosexual/heterosexual.
Lord, they drink wine/drive big cars/have long hair/wear fancy clothes.
After all, they can't be your children.
They can't be your children unless they see the Light through our eyes.
After all, aren't we the almighty judges?
After all, aren't we keeping ourselves pure by keeping them out?
After all, didn't you come to save the self-righteous?
We mean well, really Lord.
We didn't realize
we turned the open-armed shepherd
into a policeman
with a billy club.

How many witches did we burn today?
How many did we condemn?
How many crosses did you bear Lord;
enough for all us sinners? *Elizabeth Schmidt, Box 452, North Newton, Kansas 67117*
September 25

Righteous indignation

Dear Editor: I'm responding to Tim E. Schrag's letter (October 23 issue).

It is unfortunate, if that is the word, that at times we are called upon to center our "outrage" against sin on one particular sin, such as homosexuality. But I do not think the spate of letters against homosexuality is an expression of self-righteousness as much as of righteous indignation.

I am convinced that the Scriptures plainly teach that homosexuality is sin. They also plainly teach that pride, envy, and love of money are just as sinful and heinous in the eyes of our holy God. Those who are concerned with the homosexual issue are not denying the reality or seriousness of these other sins. Rather, they are pressing the point that homosexuality *is* sin in the face of growing conviction that it is not. Their purpose is not to speak out only against sins for which they feel no guilt, nor to single out homosexuality as a greater sin, but to be sure that it is not eliminated as a sin.

I want God to convict me of all sin in my life, even if it is not a "popular" one at the time. But I also intend to stand for his truth that all acts called sin by him are sin.

As to the implication that this one sin is receiving undue attention, may I invite the writer to read the very issue in which his letter appeared and see how much space is devoted to some theme on the sin of militarism. If admonition is in order, let it fall on the proponents of this issue as well. It has all the trappings attributed by brother Schrag to homosexuality. *Stephen C. Strunk, 700 South 19th Street, Clinton, Oklahoma 73601* October 30

Response to editorials

Dear Editor: Your editorial "Teachers Need a Special Sense" (September 26 issue) covered some of the issues in the educational system of our schools and congregations. Additional issues, possible solutions, and alternatives may be found in these books: Malcolm S. Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education—Andragogy versus Pedagogy*, chapters 2, 5, 9, and 11, (New York, Association Press, 1970); Carl R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person*, chapters 13, 14, and 15, (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1961); Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner, *Teaching As A Subversive Activity*, (New York, Dell Publishing, 1969); *The Soft Revolution*, (New York, Dell Publishing, 1971).

Their ideas will not necessarily solve all of the problems that may exist between the students, teachers, administration, (or pastor, superintendent, education committee, etc.) and community (or congregation). Since students and teachers (or leaders) are dependent upon each other, may I suggest that everyone read these books.

Your October 10 editorial, "Meanings Are in Persons" reminded me of a favorite quotation (from page 7 of *The Letter To the Romans* by William Barclay): "There are two kinds of teachers. (a) There are the teachers whose attitude is that they are standing above their scholars and they are telling them what they should and must accept. (b) And there are the teachers who, in effect, say, 'Come now, let's learn about this together.' " The first would be equal to illustrations under "If meanings are in words." The second would be equal to the illustrations under "If meanings are in people." My vote is that meanings are in people.

We enjoy *The Mennonite* and *do not* wish to cancel our subscription. We hope you will continue to publish articles and letters that present opposing points of view on *all* issues (abortion, homosexuality, etc.). Someone has to stick a neck out and inform us about both sides of an issue. *Harold Shelly, 229 North Scenic Street, Allentown, Pennsylvania 18104* October 25

Subscription Increase

Effective January 1, 1979, congregational and every-home-plan subscriptions to *The Mennonite* will cost $8.00 per year (an increase of $1.00). Individual subscriptions will cost $10.00 annually (an increase of $1.00). However, if individual subscribers renew for three years the rate is $25.00.

If you have friends who are not receiving *The Mennonite*, consider gift subscriptions for them, or suggest that they can order it themselves by contacting the Circulation Secretary, The Mennonite, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114, or 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Meditation

Skip it this year?

I recently suggested within earshot of our preteenage son that we skip Christmas this year.

"But I would miss hearing the story of Jesus," he said.

As I thought about that I wondered what I might miss: a last-minute trip to buy a gift that someone probably doesn't need or a trip to the post office to mail some Christmas cards to those I expect will send me one?

I also thought about the preparation for Christmas when I was a child: learning the Christmas story, a reading, or a part in a play to recite at the Christmas program, and making a gift to give my parents on Christmas. In this way I shared a bit of myself with others.

I thought of the first Christmas and of Christ, who came to share his life both with and for others, and I decided that we can't skip Christmas.

If Christ truly dwells in us, then we too must share at least a bit of ourselves. Maybe we can share a song or a kind word with a resident in a nursing home, a word of encouragement to one left alone because of a death, or share our home with a student, lonely because he can't go to his home for Christmas.

We will celebrate Christmas, for in the celebration of Christmas we find Christ.

Milton A. Claassen

Christmas gift alternatives

The Olmstead Community Church in Olmstead Falls, Ohio, prepared a Christmas catalog which offered a variety of gifts that members might select. They ranged from certificates and weeks of camp for handicapped children to meals for the elderly and books for the church. The catalog was complete with order form, which included volunteer services that might be offered as a gift to the church. Here is a letter by one of their church members.

"Enclosed is a Christmas catalog—an idea which we tried in our church this past Christmas. The idea was sparked by a brochure put out by the Lutheran churches in the Cleveland area several years ago to encourage persons to celebrate Christmas in alternate ways. Money redirected by our members through this catalog totaled $1294.84 and was well distributed throughout the various categories by persons placing 'orders.' The enclosed gift certificate was available in quantity to church members all during the weeks preceding Christmas.

"After final tallies were made a check and a copy of the catalog were sent by our treasurer to each organization. Included with words of thanks from each organization were comments on the idea behind the catalog: . . . 'What a lovely way to celebrate Christmas. . . . I'm tremendously impressed by your Christmas catalog brochure of 1977. . . . What a delightful way in which to share with your members the choice of outreach services. . . .' Many of our church members were happy to have an alternative to the traditional idea of Christmas shopping. We have been asked by them to make it a yearly project—and we will!"

Mary Miller

Another gift idea

The Milwaukee Archdiocessan Council of Catholic Women publishes a small catalog entitled "Gifts of Love." This sells for 25¢ and lists alternative gift items like books and records, shops which support outreach projects, and groups who need donations for continued support. Organizations that might be suitable gift receivers are listed as are general ideas for "alternative Christmases."

Alternative Celebrations Catalogue

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CONTRIBUTORS

Evelyn Minshull, Route 4, Box 4526, Mercer, Pennsylvania 16137 is a free-lance poet.

Marlace Berg Zacharias, Fiske, Saskatchewan S0L 1C0, shares her personal feelings about greeting cards and letters.

Maria van Dyck is the pen name of a free-lance writer, 60 Chapel Street, Kitchener, Ontario N2H 2T1.

Larry Kehler, 699 Haney Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3R 0Y7, continues his series to prepare us for the Minneapolis midtriennium.

Milton A. Claassen, Route 5, Newton, Kansas 67114, is a member of the Commission on Overseas Mission. His meditation is reprinted by permission from the 1977 winter issue of *In the Service of the King*, publication of Bethel Deaconess Hospital Association, Newton, Kansas 67114.

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CREDITS

Artwork for 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, is by Judith A. Rempel, Route 1, Box 52, Ste. Anne, Manitoba R0A 1R0; 710, Joyce Shutt; 711, Jim Stucky; 712, MCC photo by Jay Garber; 713, Vic Reimer; 717, John Hiebert.

The Mennonite

Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman.

Servant leadership—2
Leaders in an antileader climate

We have "born again" people serving as chief administrators, legislators, judges, and corporate executives. More church growth and church planting is planned than for several decades. Our schools and churches have building projects unprecedented. It would seem that the kingdom is "coming" among us in a super way.

At the same time immodesty and immorality are flaunted publicly; violence grips children, youth, and adults; greed goes unabated. We can fly safely to the moon but can't walk on our streets or make our earth properties safe. Even as the energy resources clock points closer to midnight we consume thoughtlessly. Internally we are nations of spectators (at public performances), watchers (of TV), and pleasure seekers (at resorts, theaters, clubs, and pubs).

Robert K. Greenleaf (*Servant Leadership,* page 228) writes, "We are not wanting for knowledge of how to do things better, or for material resources to work with. But we are sorely in need of strong ethical leaders to go out ahead to show the way so that the moral standards and the perceptions of the many will be raised, and so that they will serve better with what they have and what they know."

C. J. Dyck, professor of historical theology at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, told the General Conference Mennonite Church's General Board and staff (Camp Friedenswald, September 22-24, 1978) that renewal and purpose in our congregations "cannot come about without vigorous leadership." And the "priesthood of all believers does not mean no leadership . . . but more leadership because more people are at work and need coordinating and direction."

There is a serious shortage of pastors in our conference. This comes at a time when many denominations (*Maclean's,* October 9, 1978, page 54) are reporting record enrollments in their seminaries, with a concern that they may face a clergy surplus in the 1980s.

Our conference was probably the first Mennonite group to emphasize shared leadership. We mobilized our laity to speak out and to exercise their gifts. Clergy were regarded as "one of the team" or "one among many" leaders.

At a parallel time, some of the "great" leaders were shown to be less than we'd expect. Spiro Agnew was recalled; Richard Nixon had to abdicate.

By default, much of the leadership vacuum has been filled—in the larger society—by corrupt and self-seeking persons. In the church it has frequently been thrust upon the first willing person, who may mean well but has little aptitude—often because of heavy demands from another job—to meet all the needs arising in our congregations.

The whole system has led to devastating results. Many congregations are divided and suspicious; others drift listlessly about—who knows in what direction? Anybody who dares to stand up as a servant *and* prophet, quickly finds the system ready to grind down one's resources faster than you can find renewal at the "spiritual well-spring." Attitudes are antileader (Greenleaf, page 228) *and* anti-innovation. Because of the confusion people want to go "back to basics," where they hope to find an old security.

There is a new seeking for leaders in our conference. And the land abounds with "gurus" who are ready to guide us. One problem with some leaders is that most of their energy is used to try and cancel out what they regard as error. They give little attention to building basic foundations for long-term kingdom building. There is no future in such leadership.

We need leaders today who will serve by leading: persons who are willing to immerse themselves in the prophets and apostles of the Bible; persons willing to immerse themselves in the records of Conrad Grebel, George Blaurock, Pilgram Marpeck, Hans Denk, and Menno Simons; persons ready to receive the wonder and insight of God's Holy Spirit; persons who will then dare to step out and shout the truths of the gospel once again from the housetops (and the pulpits, the Sunday school classes, the choirs, the Bible study groups, the committee meetings, and conferences).

For congregations this will mean a greater commitment to discerning leaders from among us and encouraging them.

For those who feel the calling it may require a commitment—to your inner guidance—that can stand up to the antileader and anti-innovative grindstone.

I am not afraid to call for such leaders. History tells us that the initial Anabaptist movement mushroomed—not in spite of its sacrificial demands—precisely because it expected much from all who joined. *Bernie Wiebe*

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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South Africa:
Will the situation change?

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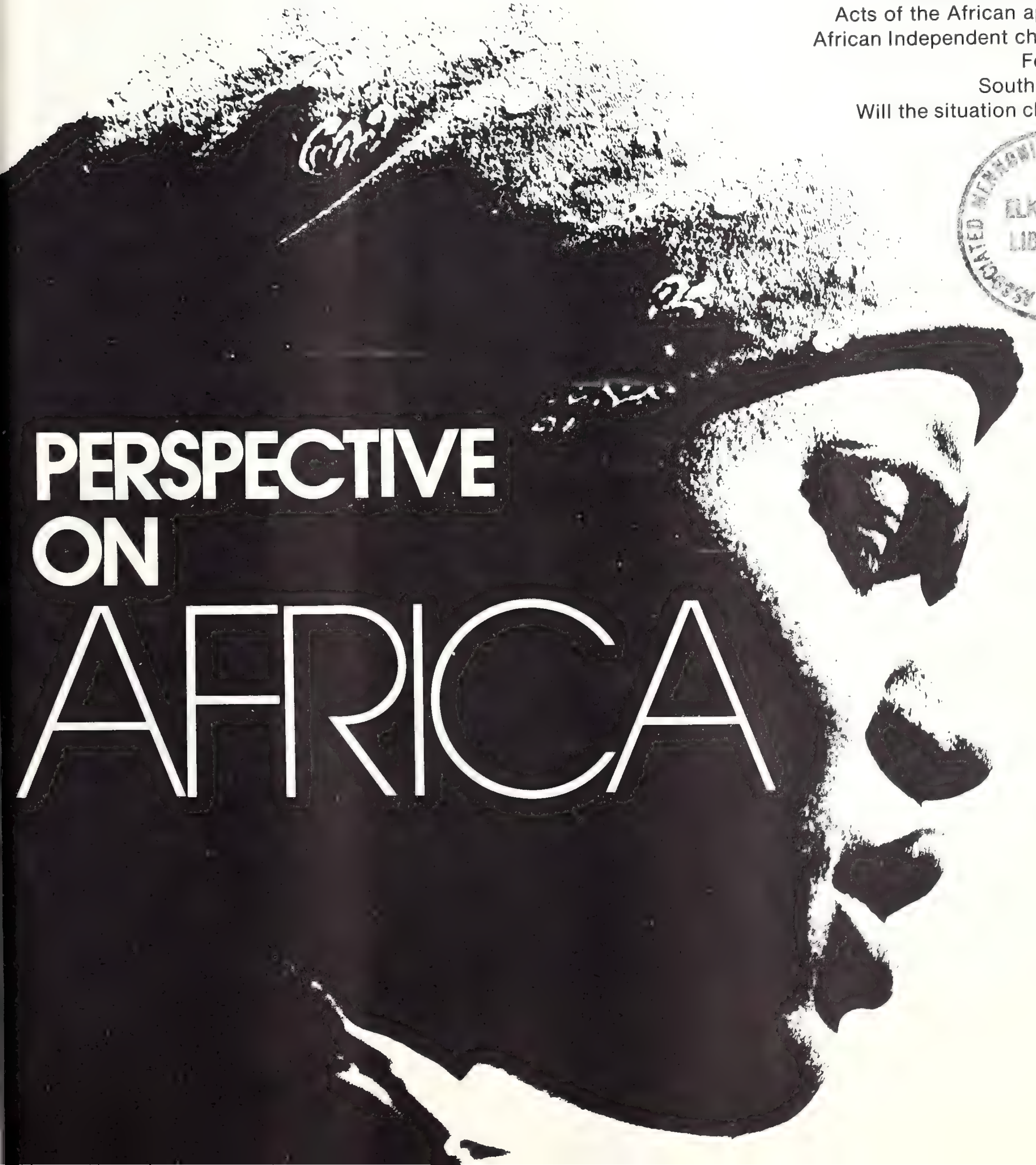

PERSPECTIVE ON AFRICA

THE ACTS of the African apostles

Jim Juhnke

Toward the end of 1959, not long before the coming of political independence and military upheaval in the Congo, the executive secretary of Congo Inland Mission, Harvey Driver, suggested in a letter to mission leaders on the field that "the acts of the apostles of the Congo Inland Mission church is about to begin. . . ."

Driver was right. A new chapter in church history was unfolding. Previous pages of the history had accented the acts of the North American *missionary* apostles. The coming chapter would highlight the acts of the African *church* apostles. The Congo Inland Mission in the decade of the 1960s faced the glorious and painful transition from mission to church, from white leadership to black leadership, from colonial-style domination to national self-assertion.

The Congo Inland Mission in 1960 was one of the largest and most successful Mennonite missionary programs in the world. There were about 100 missionaries whose work was concentrated in eight major mission stations. There was an extensive educational program, aided by a subsidy of $200,000 from the Belgian colonial government. There were mission clinics and hospitals, Bible translation and literature programs, evangelism teams and a Bible institute, and much more.

Above all there was a growing community of believers. Africans were won to Christ in much larger numbers than Mennonite missionaries had experienced in India, China, Japan, Taiwan, or Latin America. There were some 30,000 Christians in the Congo Inland Mission field. Even though many of these may have been nominal Christians who added a few new ideas to their traditional core of religious belief and practice, the numerical success of the mission was notable.

In early 1960, on the eve of national independence, the Congo Inland Mission agreed with the African church to adopt a new plan of mission-church *integration.* The mission and the church would adopt a single legal identity, and would share authority and responsibility in one organization. Before a constitution for integration could be drafted and implemented, however, the relationships between missionaries and Africans were transformed from an outside political force. The Congo exploded in revolution. The promise of integration was not fulfilled until the final adoption of a new plan, now known as *fusion* in 1971. Meanwhile the Congo, and the white and black Mennonites who lived there, went through a time of troubles.

Twice in the early 1960s the political and social situation became so volatile that missionaries had to pack up and leave. In 1960 when the Belgian colonial rulers left and the entire country was beset by intertribal violence and anarchy the entire group of missionaries fled the country. In 1964 two mission stations in the area of the Kwilu rebellion were extensively damaged, and several missionaries and PAX men were caught in the Stanleyville crisis which received international attention.

No Mennonite missionaries died in the upheavals of the 1960s, but many African Mennonites were killed. Intertribal warfare between the Luluas and Balubas, two tribes which had many Mennonite members, disrupted longstanding relationships. The Balubas were defeated and thousands fled as refugees to ancestral homelands to the east. The strongest African Mennonite leader, Kazadi Maudianvita, was a Baluba who had to flee in this tragic migration. Kazadi later led a group of the Balubas who split off of the Congo Inland Mission church and formed a separate church.

A degree of political stability finally came to the country in 1965 when the head of the army, Mobutu, took control and established a one-party military dictatorship. In the subsequent years Mobutu struggled erratically to find economic and social policies which would enable the country to survive the threats of tribalism, inflation, foreign domination, and secessionism in the copper-rich Shaba province. Mobutu in the early 1970s proclaimed a policy of authenticity, renamed the country "Zaire," decreed the changing of personal names and places, and attempted to "Zairianize" the national economy.

The upheavals of political independence and the movement of the mission and church toward "fusion" transformed relationships between Mennonite missionaries and African Christians. Three levels of change were particularly important.

- **Personal relationships.** The colonial era was fashioned out of assumptions of white superiority and black inferiority. Mission

"One great symbol of missionary institutional control was the ring of keys for all the buildings on the mission compound. It was a dramatic moment when the keys were handed from a missionary to a national church leader."

programs were not exempt from such attitudes. Jules Lambotte, a European Mennonite pastor who visited the Congo Inland Mission field in 1959, observed that some missionaries "give the impression that they belong to a superior caste." Lambotte noted two kinds of benches in several Mennonite churches. Benches with backs were reserved for missionaries; benches without backs were for Africans. He observed that Africans rode on the back floor of the truck bed even when there was room with missionaries in the cab. He observed attitudes of condescension in the way missionaries related to their African house servants.

The independence revolution in Zaire and the demise of colonialism required many changes in personal relationships. It was important for Africans to overcome their imposed heritage of dependence and subservience. It was important for missionaries to learn to subdue their North American impatience, to withhold their voice of authoritative command, and even to absorb unjust charges that missionaries were responsible that the high hopes of independence had not been immediately achieved.

- **Institutional controls.** In the colonial era the missionaries were in control of the resources of mission and church. Missionaries made the important decisions. How was money to be spent? What were the standards of church discipline? When should African pastors be promoted to higher positions? Harvey Driver wrote in one letter to the mission field chairman, "I think it is no secret that most of the Congolese church leaders have chafed considerably under the autocratic discipline of the missionaries."

One great symbol of missionary institutional control was the ring of keys for all the buildings on the mission compound. It was a dramatic moment when the keys were handed from a missionary to a national church leader. In some cases this happened at the time of missionary evacuation, and the situation when missionaries returned could never be the same again. Africans now had the keys and were taking charge.

The Mennonite Church in Zaire remained dependent upon financial support from the mission board through the 1960s and 1970s. Africans were required to give an account of the ways they spent funds from North America. But it was also possible for leaders of the church to make decisions for themselves which were unpopular with the missionaries and the mission board.

- **Cultural authenticity.** A persistent theme of the independence period was criticism of white colonialists for having stripped the Africans of their cultural heritage. The early missionaries had assumed that the proper way to worship God was in Western cultural forms—sitting in rows of benches in churches with Western architecture, and singing four-part harmony with regular rhythms of three or four beats to a measure. African drum rhythms, ceremonial masks, and healing ceremonies were rejected as manifestations of heathen darkness.

With the coming of independence in the 1960s some shifts in the direction of African "authenticity" began to take place. Traditional African tunes began to be used in the churches. African rhythms became more acceptable. African Mennonites, following the lead of President Mobutu, stopped using the "Christian" names which they had been given at baptism, and took traditional African names.

For the most part, however, the cultural changes in the churches did not take place rapidly. There had been some fear that Africans would reintroduce the practice of polygamy but this did not happen. A new Christian cultural synthesis was emerging. The gospel was being Africanized.

The coming of independence forced agonizing readjustments in relationships of whites and blacks on the mission field. It was not an easy time to be a missionary, nor an easy time to be an African church leader. But the adjustments were made and the church survived and grew. Missionaries learned to take their role as servants of an autonomous church. Kabangy Shapasa, general secretary of the Zairian Mennonite Church wrote in 1975 that he disagreed with the popular call for a "moratorium" on missionaries. "Among the missionaries placed at the disposition of the Zaire Mennonite Church by the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission," Kabangy said, "I've never found anyone who aspired to become a 'chief' within the church; this is a sincere truth."

Ongoing relationships of mutual trust and forgiveness would enable the Zairian Mennonite Church to fulfill its special role in the building of the kingdom of Christ. •

EGLISE DU CHRIST AU ZAÏRE
SERVICE DE DEVELOPPEMENT
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MENNONITE AU ZAÏRE
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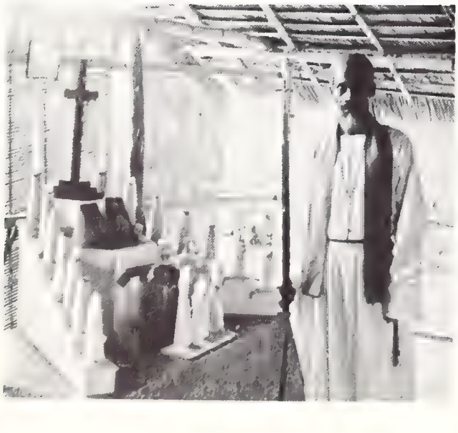
The incredible African Independent churches

Irene Weaver



Not too long ago, in a Sunday evening worship service in Botswana, an Anglican churchman from South Africa stated that "the future of the church in South Africa will be influenced by the fast growing numbers of Independent churches in black Africa."

To the African who lives and moves in the environment and culture of Independent churches there is no question as to who and what these churches are. But to the Western Christian many questions about them remain unanswered. When one realizes that the indigenous movements in Africa represent the fastest growing sector of Christendom a proper understanding and appreciation of what is happening is essential.

Who then are the African Independent churches? James Bertsche, executive secretary of the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, has written: "It seems in every generation of the history of the church there have been those people to whom Jesus referred as his other sheep; those who were viewed with suspicion; those who didn't fit into neatly drawn lines of orthodoxy; those whose concerns and views of God and themselves didn't fit well into traditional patterns. Of them Jesus said, 'I must bring them also' " (*AIMM Messenger,* 1976 summer issue).

For those of us engaged in Christian mission in Africa today the African Independent churches might well be numbered among those other sheep. They have emerged in many settings under the leadership of a diverse mix of people. These churches are independent of any direct expatriate missionary role. They all address themselves to issues that matter a great deal in the daily life of the African. They profess solutions for problems with which the African is much concerned in daily life. All exhibit great zeal and enthusiasm in their worship, and freely employ song and dance. The great majority of their leaders have minimal training in Bible or secular subjects. Nevertheless, there is an increasing desire to study God's Word.

> *"It seems in every generation of the history of the church there have been those to whom Jesus referred as his other sheep . . . Of them Jesus said, 'I must bring them also.' "*—James Bertsche

Having lived and moved among them for the last 18 years, we know them as being truly *African.* They are socially, politically, and economically oriented to Africa. In contrast to the mission-founded churches, which tend to be Western in practice, the AICs are African. They want to be African and will fight to remain that way. They are *fiercely independent* with a passion for freedom. They prefer to be called "Spiritual" or "Zion" churches which better describe the kind of churches they are.

We must see and understand them in the context of what is happening in Africa. In the beginnings of the AICs many members were imprisoned and suffered for their faith. Hence they are not only African and fiercely independent, they are part of Christ's body in the church. True, some of these churches are on the borderline, closer to traditional religion than to Christianity. On the other hand, there are many among them who are evangelically Christian although oriented to their own culture. We have much to learn from them.

In contrast to the deep resentment against AICs a few years ago, today they are more accepted by governments, mission churches, and other societies within African countries. They are rapidly growing in numbers. They are motivated to establish as many churches as possible. The Church of the Lord Aladura has congregations all along the coast of West Africa as well as in London and New York City. This says something about their zeal for evangelism which even goes beyond Africa.

There are good reasons why Mennonite mission boards should respond to the challenge of the AICs. (1) Sincere requests keep coming from their leaders from all over Africa for Bible study and leadership training. (2) The door is still open in many countries in Africa, so there is freedom to respond. (3) We find certain similarities in the Independent churches with our own Anabaptist tradition. (4) Finally, in James Bertsche's words, "The ancient reminder of Christ himself still stands. . . . 'I have other sheep. I must bring them also.' "

My own feelings about why we should work among them is wrapped up in this early morning experience in a little bush church in Nigeria. It was very early on one of those days in the rain forests of Nigeria. The mist and dew were dripping from the eaves, and through the morning air came the sound of the prayer bells; bells calling people to pray. Twenty-one, 49, 19 times—always an odd number—they sounded. The villagers stirred. Although cooking fires needed kindling and food needed preparation, first there was the call to pray.

I slipped out from under my mosquito net and went out into the night, following the path to the nearest little thatch church. I moved easily, I had no baby to carry, not even a water pot to carry on my head. I could see the gleam of the small kerosene lamp and with the help of the flashlight I made my way to the church. Stooping low I entered the low door of the church and soon found that I was not alone. A mother had arrived ahead of me. Two sleeping children lay on the floor beside her, and the wee tiny one was at her breast. Soon others arrived. We were almost 30 people packed into a very small space. Bassey Udoh, a young schoolboy who had been attending the Bible classes, was standing by the old pastor, ready to read the Scripture. We sang and prayed and Bassey read from the Bible with meaning. The pastor also gave him the privilege to say a few words. With the mention of God's name on their lips, "Abasi, Abasi, Abasi," they went out into the dawn, hurrying to the tasks of the day. They had met God. Bassey had read the Scripture for them and the old pastor was able to say a few words. But what if there had been no Bassey? What about all the other little churches who were meeting at the same time where there was no Bassey?

In a manner similar to the invitation of the prayer bells, the people of African Independent churches repeatedly ask us to come and help them with Bible study and leadership training. Are we going to respond?

In a letter to one of our friends, the late Canon Max Warren of London wrote, "Part of the meaning of walking by faith is that there are hardly any certain answers, only the assurance that the Way is open, that truth is discovered on the Way and that life is experienced by living this Way."

The African Independent churches are incredible.

They are an exciting discovery in mission today.

Let us respond to their plea for help. ●

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News

Advisory group criticizes General Conference program planning

Meeting in Newton, Kansas, on November 11, the executive committee of the Division of Administration (DA) of the General Conference raised questions on how budget and program decisions are made for the conference.

The DA functions mainly as an advisory group on financial matters to the General Board. Present at the meeting were Ted Stuckey, conference treasurer, and the DA executive—Erwin Goering, Paul Zerger, Art Rempel, and Duane Heffelbower.

The group met to project General Conference budget for 1979 and consider proposals for program planning for the 1980s.

Dissatisfaction was expressed in that some program decisions are made by the commissions (overseas mission, education, home ministries, seminary) without rigorous analysis of the financial impact of the decisions. The idea of zero-base programming surfaced. Heffelbower suggested the need for an executive secretary in charge of killing programs. Although no definite recommendation evolved, the committee did consider the need for an objective review of both programming and budgeting as a way to eliminate programs which proceed more from inertia than from any strong support for them in the constituency. The close connection between programming and budget promotion efforts was noted. It is difficult to promote programs for which there is a lack of support.

Ted Stuckey, on the assumption that the current trend in 1978 receipts would hold up, recommended a 10 percent budget increase for next year. He also reported that despite the drop in the Canadian dollar to US dollar exchange rate from 103 percent to 84 percent in the past few years actual receipts from Canadian churches have increased during that period. To minimize the effect of the exchange rate insofar as is practical, Canadian dollars are spent in Canada, he said.

Considerable discussion focused on the move to have a stewardship secretary for the General Conference. This suggestion came out of the General Board retreat in September as a concrete way to bolster giving to the conference. Some of the concerns expressed by the DA executive were that friction could result with the Conference of Mennonites in Canada if a US person primarily counseled giving to the General Conference. Close coordination would be necessary. Further, the committee asked whether such a person should work on income giving or deferred giving. Despite their reservations the executive committee is recommending to the Division of Adminstration that they proceed with the search for a stewardship secretary. But a job description will need to be worked out first. Currently their thinking is that the person would work on the broader concerns of stewardship education, not just on the narrower concern of fund raising. *Vic Reimer*

Mennonites present brief at multiculturalism conference

Ottawa, Ontario—The voice of Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) was one among many at a recent Ottawa conference on multiculturalism. Other voices came from organizations representing Ukrainians, Italians, blacks, Asians, Arabs, Jews, the native people, and others.

Each had been asked to bring ideas for this area of governmental policy. This they did. And they expressed them with amazing candor, not in the form of neatly packaged policy suggestions, but rather as calls for recognition and understanding.

A representative from the native people said, "Metis are a national and indigenous people, not an ethnic group." Commenting further he said, "The government feeds us the 'two-founding-nations' myth while tossing in some Ukrainian Easter eggs, Italian grapes, or Metis bannock for some extra flavor."

He pointed with pride to the fact that "it was the Metis Provisional Government of 1869 headed by Louis Riel which negotiated Manitoba's entry into Confederation on terms designed to protect French and English as official languages. It was Louis Riel, championing the cause of the Saskatchewan Metis in 1885, who insisted that the Metis desired possession of only 1/7 of the West with the remainder to be distributed to all the oppressed people of the world. . . ."

An Arab representative applauded the government's commitment to multiculturalism, but charged that "racism keeps raising its ugly head." School textbooks often carry an anti-Islam bias, and television and newspapers, even cartoons and comic strips, portray the Arab "either as a sinister financial threat to the West, or as a terrorist bent on blowing something up," he said.

The problem of racism was spoken to even more strongly by the blacks. Their representative began by recounting some facts of Canadian history: that the first blacks had been taken to Canada as slaves; that in 1793 the importation of slaves had been made illegal; that not until 1833 had slavery itself been abolished; that in the following decades over 20,000 slaves from the United States had made their way into Canada through the "Underground Railroad"; that after an initial welcome many discriminatory practices had developed; and that many problems remained.

He criticized the government's multiculturalism program for its emphasis on ethnic foods, crafts, songs, and dances while not dealing adequately with the problems of discrimination in jobs, housing, educational opportunities, and social services.

Similarly, the Asians, it was noted, were welcomed when they came to do the hard, dirty work of lumbering, building railroads, clearing land, and building forts. But they were no longer wanted when this work was completed.

In contrast, the Baltic Federation in Canada, made up of Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians, expressed gratitude for the freedom and opportunities they had found in Canada. Their concern was that unlike other ethnic groups, they could not depend on their homelands for cultural or any other sort of sustenance.

Can these ideas be translated into a governmental policy on multiculturalism? Perhaps, in part. The government's commitment to a program of multiculturalism began in 1971. It grew out of the well-known Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism which began its investigations in the mid-1960s.

When that commission completed its work, it recommended a policy on bilingualism (French and English), but not one on biculturalism. Rather it recommended the promotion of multiculturalism.

The commission recognized that Canadians of neither English nor French background were also an important part of Canadian life, and that their particular traditions also needed support.

Since then the government has been trying to do this. Multiculturalism is now a separate department, and Mennonite Member of Parliament, Bill Andres, is its parliamentary secretary. Its budget is about $10 million and some significant things have been done.

Languages other than English and French are now taught in many schools. Authors are given funds to write the histories of smaller groups so that other Canadians can learn about them. Ethnic festivities and celebrations are supported financially. And a few steps have been taken to deal with racism in some of the big cities.

But the policy also has many critics. Some French Canadians say that just when they were being recognized as one of Canada's two "founding races," the multiculturalism thrust turned them into "just one more ethnic group." Native people also object to being seen as just one more ethnic group. If there are such things as "founding races," then they should be recognized as one of them. Other critics say that we should be concerned about the things that Canadians have in common rather than with those things that make us different from one another. Still others say that the program deals only in superficialities.

What did the Mennonite voice say at the conference? Actually, when the invitation came to Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) there was some reluctance about accepting it. MCC (Canada) had not been to earlier conferences on multiculturalism. It was not familiar with the government's policy. Nor did it see the nurture and preservation of "culture" (in the way that word is popularly understood) as being very high on its priorities.

However, it was decided that Mennonite history and theology do have a message, one that would call for an integrated community life. Its spokesman said in part, "We see some of the spiritual and social problems of our times as a result of an excessive fragmentation. Not only is the past separated from the present, but entertainment and athletics come from outside professionals; education takes place in one setting; people earn their living in another setting; social welfare—in the sense of caring for people who are weak or who have handicaps—is handled by separate institutions; and people who commit offences are taken 'behind the walls,' so to speak. We see culture as that which grows out of community. Our main recommendation is to look for ways of encouraging an integrated community life for the groups of people who live in Canada." *William Janzen, MCC (Ottawa)*

Castle recalls a previous age in the Jordan Desert

Jerusalem—This beautiful aerial view of part of the Jordan Desert reveals a huge Moslem castle. The area is part of the West Bank of Jordan that is under Israeli military control. The countless small mounds surrounding the empty complex are burial mounds.

Koinonia said to be most fundamental challenge

Washington, DC—Principalities and powers referred to by the Apostle Paul are not some mystical otherworldly notions.

Rather, they are the political and economic forces, ideologies, cultures, and structures of society that exist to provide basic order in that society, said Delton Franz in talking to 125 students from Mennonite and Brethren in Christ colleges gathered for the Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship October 26-28. Franz is director of Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section in Washington.

The assembly theme was rooted in the theological concept of the "powers" outlined in Hendrik Berkhof's book, *Christ and the Powers*. These powers, said Franz have become false gods and false securities and have overstepped their legitimate bounds in their demands on people's loyalties.

What are the major forces that control power and dominate decisionmaking in our society today? How can Christians respond to the military goliath and to injustices?

Father Richard McSorley and two fellow members of the Community for Creative Nonviolence (CCNV), Jim Wallis of Sojourners Fellowship, both in Washington, suggested ways to work for social change. CCNV community members described their efforts at public witness, such as protests at a recent arms sale bazaar.

Wallis drew on insights from his experience as a founding member of Sojourners Fellowship. He said analysis of powers and structures is important. "Many people," he observed, "have solutions to confronting the powers—evangelism, the filling of the Spirit, service and action on behalf of justice, acts of prophetic resistance. All of these are inadequate in themselves. We must start at something more basic—the formation of living, breathing communities of faith where the life and blood of Christ are experienced. This is the most fundamental challenge to the powers—koinonia."

An annual event, the assembly drew capacity attendance from nearly all member schools. Five persons traveled across the continent from Fresno (California) Pacific College, and 22 persons represented the two Mennonite Bible Colleges in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Others were students at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries and Bethel, Bluffton, Conrad Grebel, Hesston, Messiah, Eastern Mennonite, Freeman Junior and Goshen Colleges. *Linda Schmidt*

The largest amount ever granted to a voluntary organization by the Swedish International Development Authority ($2.75 million) has been given to the Swedish Evangelical Mission Society for work in war-stricken Ethiopia. A spokesperson for the mission society says that the funds will be used exclusively for food which will be distributed in areas where the war and droughts have destroyed all normal ways for the local population to obtain food. Many educational institutions, hospitals, and churches have been built in Ethiopia as a result of the society's work.

Permission for importing 25,000 Russian Bibles into the USSR was given recently to the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists by Soviet authorities, reports the Canadian Bible Society. The United Bible Societies will also supply 5,000 Russian concordances. The last major shipment of Bibles into Russia by the Bible Society was in 1947 when 10,000 copies were allowed in. Demand for Bibles among Russian Christians continues to outstrip supply even though 10,000 Bibles were printed in Russia recently. Legal distribution of Scripture in Eastern Europe has increased threefold in the past five years.

Indonesia appears to soften antimissionary stance

Hillsboro, Kansas (MBNS)—Although Indonesia is considering passage of a law which would severely restrict religious freedom and activity by missionaries, a recent statement by the Minister of Religion has been hailed by Indonesian Christians.

Under the proposals aid to any religious society to promote the spread of religion would require permission from the Department of Religion; foreign citizens whose basic job is in business or industry could participate in religious activity only after obtaining a permit from the Department of Religion; religious societies could employ foreign personnel for religious purposes only with permission and would be obligated to conduct a training program to prepare Indonesian personnel to replace them.

The Council of Protestant Churches and the Council of Catholic Churches of Indonesia responded by stating that they could not accept the proposals of the Department of Religion because they are contrary to religious freedom guaranteed by the constitution.

Missionaries Dale and Joyce Warkentin write that in spite of this pending legislation Christians in Jakarta are as active as ever. Campus Crusade conducted a "Here's Life" program in this city of six million. Banners all over Jakarta proclaimed, "You can have life with meaning." About 30,000 persons wrote or called in for the booklet, "How You Can Find Life with Meaning in Jesus Christ."

The banner proclaiming "Jesus Christ, King of Kings" was prominently displayed behind the Minister of Religion (always a Muslim) as he gave greetings to a mass rally of Christians at the Sports Palace. His speech, which was nationally televised, clarified that his recent ruling which severely restricted evangelistic methods was not intended to keep Christians from evangelizing. The Warkentins say this was a direct answer to prayer.

Interdependence claimed key to Christian education

Wheaton, Illinois (NAE)—As a primary teaching-learning environment for Christian education, the family has never had greater responsibility or less help, David L. McKenna said during the National Congress on Christian Education November 7-9 at Arlington Heights, Illinois.

Identifying the continuing functions of the family as procreational, generational, educational, relational, and spiritual, McKenna, the president of Seattle Pacific College, said that separation and specialization of these same functions is resulting in a takeover of familial responsibilities by society.

"A contemporary view of the family," McKenna said, "shows churches exercising the spiritual function, courts ruling in human relationships, schools clinging to their educational prerogatives, industry guaranteeing economic security, and government regulating sex and sexual roles."

Yet in planning for the future, McKenna advised the 450 educators at the congress to view Christian education as beginning with the recognition that no institution, secular or religious, formal or informal, is independent, but all are interdependent, and contribute, either positively or negatively, to the nurturing of Christian character.

"Christian education is not a curriculum, a school, or a movement," he said. "It is an intricate and interlocking system of institutions and influences which make up the ecology of a learning environment. At the center is the Christian family, beleagured by change, but intact by divine appointment."

Lifestyle study on deck

Philadelphia (LCWE)—An international consultation on simple lifestyle is to be held in London, England, in 1980.

Sponsored by the World Evangelical Fellowship and the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, the gathering, to be held March 17-21, will bring together Christian leaders from all parts of the world.

The consultation will be preceded by deliberations in local study groups which are in process of formation. The sponsoring committee is supplying bibliographies, articles, and guides to assist in formation and programming. The local units will grapple with the relationship between the simpler lifestyle, evangelism, relief, and justice.

Christians in the industrialized nations are giving more attention to the examination of their standards of living in contrast to the needs of deprived people everywhere. Evangelical leaders and others are calling for the adoption of biblical standards if there is to be any credibility in evangelization outreach.

John Stott, who heads the Lausanne working group that is cosponsoring the consultation, observes, "We may not all give an identical definition of justice and injustice, or share the same economic theories and remedies, or believe that God's will is an egalitarian society in which even the slightest differences of income and possessions are not tolerated. But we are all appalled by poverty, that is, by the immense numbers of people who do not have enough to eat, whose shelter and clothing are woefully inadequate, and whose education, employment, and medical care are minimal."

Local groups may secure study data by writing to Ronald J. Sider, International Consultation on Simple Lifestyle, Box 12236, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19144.

◀ **New York**—Narrator Ron Eyre (left) and Peter Mkize, African guide, are shown interviewing a Christian in Africa during filming of an episode of "The Long Search" which is appearing nationally in the United States on the Public Broadcasting System television network. It is one of a series of telecasts which takes viewers on a three-year journey of more than 150,000 miles in 14 different countries in a study of what religion holds for people in the modern world.

"Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful singing" (Psalm 100:1, 2). Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, British Columbia, set aside October 26 as a prayer day. Students spent the day in times of praise together as a student body, as well as a period of solitude with the Lord. The day ended with a communion service.

Are Mennonites about to embrace a new theology?

North Newton, Kansas—It's all well and good to talk about justice "out there," but we also need to give attention to our own communities and the way we live our lives, agreed participants at the close of a three-day "Theology of Justice" colloquium in North Newton, November 16-18.

"What do we do about the injustices that flow so richly from *our riches*?" spoke up John Stoner of Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section, sponsor of the second such "Mennonite Peace Theology Colloquium," which brought scholars from Mennonite academic centers across North America to the Bethel College Mennonite Church.

Others asked how they could be expected to resolve issues of the Transkei in southern Africa and of native people of northern Canada (the two "case studies" of the colloquium) when questions of justice remain unresolved within the very academic institutions from which participants came. (Faculty salaries and tenure were mentioned as examples.)

"Justice" is a relatively new word in the Mennonite vocabulary, the group of about 50 was reminded at several points during the colloquium. How does it fit into traditional Mennonite thought, and how does it translate into situations facing MCC, administrators wanted to know.

While neither question was answered definitively, members of a panel of four waved flags of caution for any who might be tempted to jump on a new "justice" bandwagon.

"The awareness of a need for a change of focus . . . is not very dramatically solved by fixing on a new slogan," said John Howard Yoder, professor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries and Notre Dame University. Yoder suggested that work should rather be done on analyzing the inadequacy of past Mennonite patterns of withdrawal, lack of "systems analysis," and short-range vision.

"We do not need to develop a new-fangled theology of justice," stated Gordon Kaufman, professor at Harvard Divinity School. "Our long-standing theology of human need can do us perfectly well." He noted that only recently have Mennonites recognized that certain forms of suffering are "our business," and that only recently has the church become aware of "the interconnected character of all aspects of modern life."

A slightly different tack was taken by the two other "reflectors," J. Richard Burkholder of Goshen College and Duane Friesen of Bethel College. Burkholder suggested that the next step for Mennonites is to debate different concepts of justice; Friesen produced a chart attempting to outline criteria for deciding on a just action.

Burkholder probably summed up the consensus of those present when he reiterated that the concept of "nonresistance" was no longer an "adequate rubric" under which to do social ethics. "In a strict sense this was never true, even though we thought it was," he said. Friesen's criteria drew vigorous reactions on the issue of whether they were uniquely Christian or biblical; the resulting debate was not resolved.

In terms of real world situations, colloquium participants fixed not only on southern Africa and northern Canada but also on Latin America—the latter as the result of an address on "The Challenge of Liberation Theology" by Joel Gajardo, Latin America director of the National Council of Churches.

In all three cases disagreements emerged over foreseeable effects and possible long-term effects (or the lack of them) of actions taken in the name of justice.

Gajardo, for example, chided his Mennonite audience on the matter of an absolute nonviolence. Might not "revolution" in some cases be less violent than "a violence which, though bloodless, condemns whole populations to perennial despair?" he asked. The transformation of society, a Christian's calling, is possible only with varying degrees of violence, he said.

Sparking a different kind of conflict between participants was the case history of MCC's involvement with native peoples in northern Canada, presented by Menno Wiebe, Native Concerns director for MCC (Canada). Wiebe has been involved in efforts to give Canadian Indians a voice of opposition to a government hydro-electric project which will flood land that is theirs by treaty.

While participants could agree that the Indians had been unjustly ignored in the process of making the decision, there was less agreement on the rightness or wrongness of their plea and the government project. "What is the just thing to do when legitimate interests collide?" someone asked.

But Roy Vogt, economist from Winnipeg, admitted that the economist's "cost-benefit analysis" approach to problems might be inadequate for the Christian. No cost-benefit analysis would say "leave the 99 and go after the one," he noted, alluding to Jesus' parable.

Ray Brubacher, MCC Africa secretary, offered the second case, MCC involvement in the Transkei, as a clear example of conflict between short- and long-term benefits. Should MCC have treated Transkei as an illegitimate puppet of the interests of South Africa (which created it), or should it have sent in volunteers to work at development on a small scale (the latter was done)?

The "obvious answer" of responding directly to human need may not be so obvious in this case, suggested some participants. MCC may actually be working to bolster an entity conceived to perpetuate racism. *Bruce Leichty*

Bolivian President General Juan Pereda Asbun (left) and Argentine evangelist Luis Palau pray together during the presidential prayer breakfast in La Paz.

The most "explosive" evangelistic campaign ever held by Argentine evangelist Luis Palau and his team resulted in almost 20,000 public decisions for Christ in Bolivia last month. General Juan Pereda Asbun, Bolivia's new president, accepted an invitation to attend a presidential prayer breakfast where Palau was the principal speaker. A total of 150 attended, including eight cabinet members, the 25 highest ranking military personnel, and local church leaders. The Argentine evangelist outlined the positive national benefits that result in a country that obeys the voice of God.

Record

Calendar

January 8-26—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries interterm, Elkhart, Indiana

January 25-27—MCC annual meeting, Reedley, California

January 25-27—Council of Boards of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba

January 29-February 2—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries pastors' workshop, Elkhart, Indiana; theme, "The Pastor As Person, Professional, and Person of Prayer"

February 6-8—Council of Commissions, Minneapolis, Minnesota

February 9-10—Midtriennium Conference, "In Search of Christian Civil Responsibility," Minneapolis, Minnesota

February 16-17—Conference of United Mennonite Churches of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia

February 16-17—Conference of United Mennonite Churches of Ontario, St. Catharines, Ontario

March 2-3—Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan

March 16-17—50th annual Mennonite Conference of Alberta, Rosemary, Alberta

March 22-24—Central District Conference, Fort Wayne, Indiana

March 24—MCC (Kansas) Assembly, Hesston, Kansas

Workers

Ross Bender, dean of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, has submitted his resignation effective June 30, 1979. He has served as AMBS dean since 1964. Bender is also professor of Christian education. He earned a PhD from Yale University in 1962. From 1972-74 he served as executive secretary of the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries.

F. C. Peters, chairperson of the Mennonite Brethren Board of Missions/Services, will teach in Union Biblical Seminary in Yavatmal, India, January-March 1979. Peters recently retired from the presidency of Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario.

The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference has named *Hector Valencia* associate executive secretary to commence January 1, 1979. Valencia will also continue as secretary for Latin America for COM. His additional responsibilities mean that he will act as executive secretary when Howard Habegger, executive secretary for COM, is out of the office for extended periods of time. The appointment is for the period January 1, 1979, to the triennial sessions of the General Conference in 1980. Valencia, a native of Bogota, Colombia, has been actively engaged in educational and church missionary work most of his life. Since May 1975 he has been the secretary for Latin America of COM. His education includes a PhD in educational administration from Ohio State University in Columbus. His activities as a Christian teacher and administrator have taken him to almost all Latin American countries, to the United States, and to Europe. He is currently a member of the board of managers of the American Bible Society.

Margaret S. Yoder, Silver Street Church, Goshen, Indiana, has begun a one-year term of voluntary service with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana. She is

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A 19-article statement on biblical inerrancy was drawn up at a gathering of theologians and Christian leaders in Chicago, October 26-28. A summary statement declared: (1) God, who is truth, inspired Scripture to reveal himself, to which the Bible is his witness; (2) Scripture, God's own word, is authoritative in all matters upon which it touches; (3) the Holy Spirit, its divine author, authenticates Scripture to believers by his inward witness; (4) the Bible is without error in all its teaching; and (5) scriptural authority is denied if inerrancy is disregarded.

"If anything is wrong with American life today," says Clare Boothe Luce, "it is in not placing the proper value on age. Old age is like threatened shipwreck. You keep throwing things overboard until, when you are down to compass and rudder, you suddenly realize what you have valued all along." To her at 75, she says, "it is people who are important."

"New Testament Evangelism," "Church and Ministry," "Psalms and Hebrew Poetry," and "Anabaptist History and Theology Seminar" are the courses being offered during the January interterm at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Indiana, January 8-26. Either college credit or graduate credit can be earned.

Doctors needed

COM urgently needs two physicians (obstetrics/gynecology and internal medicine) to serve at Mennonite Christian Hospital in Taiwan for two-year terms. Write or call for details:

Commission on Overseas Mission
Overseas Personnel Secretary
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100

working as a nurse's aide in LaJunta, Colorado. Margaret is the daughter of Betty and Wilmer Yoder of Syracuse, Indiana. Before entering service she worked in New Paris, Indiana, as a secretary.

Valencia

Yoder

Ministers

Lorne Friesen will become pastor at First Church, Sugarcreek, Ohio, beginning in December. He graduated from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in 1973 and served as chaplain for Manitoba Hydro project camps at Gillam, Long Spruce, and Sundance, Manitoba, from 1973 to 1978.

Jerry Kaiser became pastor of Bethesda Church, Marion, South Dakota, September 1. He and his wife, Allene, are graduates of Grace College of the Bible, Omaha, Nebraska, and have served churches in Hutchinson, Kansas, and Washington, Illinois.

Howard T. Landes, Whiting, New Jersey, celebrated the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the ministry in September. He served as pastor of several congregations: Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1926-46; Ebenezer, Bluffton, Ohio, 1946-55; Pine Grove, Bowmansville, Pennsylvania, 1956-59.

Audiovisuals

Signs of the Kingdom is the title of the Commission on Overseas Mission's new 19-minute slide set with cassette recording. It tells the story of the work and witness of our missionaries overseas. The slide set may be ordered from COM, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; or from Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Conscience and War Taxes, a slide set produced by the National Council for a World Peace Tax Fund, gives information on the military budget, interviews long-time tax resisters, and introduces the option the World Peace Tax Fund presents. The set of seventy-nine slides comes with cassette tape and script and is available from Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; rental $2.00.

The Race Nobody Wins, a slide set produced by Citizen's Organization for a Sane World (SANE), views the world's race for arms and the probability of nuclear war. The set comes with cassette tape, script, and questions for discussion. It is available from Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; rental $2.00.

FULL CIRCLE

FULL CIRCLE, Stories of Mennonite Women
edited by Mary Lou Cummings

The book contains stories of 19 Mennonite women. "I never thought much about what a 'woman' should do. My main concern was to know what God wanted me to do, and I knew He would help me do it," says Dr. Ella Garber Bauman. Through the simplicity of these words, a great power is unleashed. This power, this focus, is an unspoken theme in many of these biographies. Each biography is a story, of a woman on a journey with God through this imperfect, real world.

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Review

A people of mission

Dateline: 13 November 1978. "How does one celebrate?" asked James Juhnke this morning as he closed Gerald and Mary Stucky's picture album. We had just removed a photo from it: the rolling hills of Cachipay, Colombia, with mission buildings in the foreground. That photo and about 14 others will illustrate Jim's newly-completed history of General Conference Mennonite missions overseas. The moment of completion passed; we simply rejoiced. Jim dashed back to his teaching duties in North Newton, and I began banging out this preview for *The Mennonite*.

"How does one celebrate?" asked the Commission on Overseas Mission three years ago as it looked back at seventy-five years of missions history. A book? A book it turned out to be, and those 385 pages are now being set into type at breakneck speed. The pages tell about the work of hundreds of our missionaries, about visions made tangible because of generous giving by hundreds of General Conference Mennonite congregations, and about the *sense of mission* nourished among our people.

There is celebration on many fronts as this new book, *A People of Mission*, rolls off the presses. The "feasibility committee" (Willard Claassen, Harold Schultz, Art Waltner, and Hector Valencia) back in May 1975 said the book should be selective, interpretive, and readable. Then there are the COM members who affirmed the decision to have a book written, and asked Jim to do it. There is the advisory committee (Robert S. Kreider, Howard Habegger, and myself) who met with Jim to grind out such questions as "From which perspective will the book be written?" and "Where are sources of information?" There are the scores of people whom Jim interviewed and queried—in Canada, the United States, Japan, India, Taiwan, and Colombia. There is Anna Kreider Juhnke who, with ever-ready notepaper, traveled with her husband for information gathering. There are staff people—Gladys Goering, Sharon Epp, Jane Janzen Schmidt, LaDeen Goering Frey, Dick Rempel, Shirley Stucky, and Donata Wiens Gillen—who researched, perfected, managed, coordinated, proofread, typed, and styled the manuscript.

How does one celebrate a history? By erecting an altar of thanksgiving—in this case a book. How does one celebrate the completion of that book? By thanking God for the events and the people that it documents. I commend to you James Juhnke's *A People of Mission*, available March 1979. *Muriel Thiessen Stackley*

Beside my Bible

Mary F. Heisey

Holiday reading

If this week's books beside my Bible had ice on them, the warmth of their ideas would convert it to steam. While some folks feel that winter was made for spring, I think it was created to stimulate the imagination. May these brave books fire your mind and fuel your faith this winter.

Mennonite Identity and Literary Art, *by John L. Ruth (Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and Kitchener, Ontario, 1978, 72 pages).*

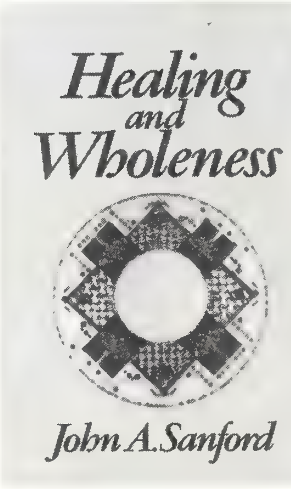
This is a short, deep book. Example: "The capacities for delicacy, powerful play of the imagination, inventiveness, curiosity, or strenuous response to beauty seem to me marks of God's nature visible in man, rather than signs of depravity, and to force them to atrophy because they are also dangerous is, as it were, to live in unheated caves because fire can get out of control. It is even, sadly, a kind of handing God's gifts back unused. It is working so hard at certain points on our moral agenda that we forget others." Breathe deeply, reread, think, pray, and read on!

Passing On the Gift (The Story of Dan West), *by Glee Yoder (Brethren Press, Elgin, Illinois, 1978, 168 pages).*

Dan West (1893-1971), founder of Heifers for Relief International, was a prophet. He believed that "changed people could change the world." A practical mystic, he advocated concern for ecology, the wise use of money and materials, the value of questioning everything, the need for daring ideas, the importance of arguing for your convictions, and the compassion of determining long-range goals and long-term consequences. Obedience to Jesus Christ drove him to work out his dreams through faith. Inspiring!

The Church: Change or Decay, *by Michael R. Tucker (Tyndale House, Wheaton, Illinois, 1978, 192 pages).*

With humor, practicality, and love for God's church, Tucker advocates these risk-taking imperatives: provide freedom for change; plan procedures for change; propagate unity to encourage change; organize properly; purposely compromise for change; promote big goals; practice courage; protect people; and preach grace.



Healing and Wholeness, *by John A. Sanford (Paulist Press, New York and Toronto, 1977, 162 pages).*

Hello (meaning I hope you are *hal* or whole). You know, when you think about it, it takes a lifetime to get well, to achieve the wholeness we all seek from birth.

By an Episcopal priest, this deep book about psychology (particularly that of C. G. Jung), religion, and the healing process provides insights and direction for anyone who asks, "Where does healing come from?" and "How can I help myself feel/get better?"

So, good health to you—body, psyche, and spirit.

Letters

Editor's note: Bob Ross, confessing to be neither Mennonite nor a confessing Christian, but a reader of The Mennonite and a war resister since the 1960s, wrote a letter in the June 20 issue (page 414) as a critique on some comments made in an earlier article. Bob later sent me a copy of a letter sent directly to him, along with his response to the anonymous writer. It seems to me that we should all have a chance to see both of those letters. That is why they are included here.

Response to Ross letter

Dear Mr. Ross: Have been wanting to reply to your letter (June 20 issue) for some days, but have been too busy making a living to pay taxes to support perverted bums like you who are so mixed up you no longer can tell right from wrong.

What would happen to this great big, most beautiful nation on earth if everyone was a mixed up draft-dodging, homosexual hippie?

Your mind must be almost completely blown to entertain the weird ideas you express in your letter.

How do you even find a place of employment with other sensible people? Most probably you have some way of mooching money from someone, to travel around to the various despicable gatherings you have been to.

Probably by the time my letter reaches Dallas, you will already have gotten the ____ out for some other place to plant your worthless carcass; and this may never reach you. *John Q. Public*

July 26

Bob responds to John Q.

Dear Brother: In my travels I have been involved with many spiritually minded people, like yourself—Moslems, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, and Christians. I appreciate your letter.

At present I am seeking to learn from a group of Hindus who claim that Christ visited India sometime between the ages of 14 and 30—and that it was there that he learned from the yogis many things that helped him in his work as a teacher.

Apparently there is a basis for this claim in the book of Revelation.

This does not deny the spirit-ness of Christ, but rather, I believe to admit this is to realize that he was indeed man and God. As any man, he had to get in touch with his father. As the Son of Man and God incarnate, he was able to travel the world (possibly by astral projection) seeking holy men who put him in contact with the powers that he already possessed.

Perhaps he saw God his Father in every soul.

Seeing that which is the peace witness, he was able to go fearlessly into the world and conquer death.

I don't know. I am not he—only a student am I.

But, perhaps you are he. *Bob Ross, 21071 Waveview, Topanga, California 90290*

July 26

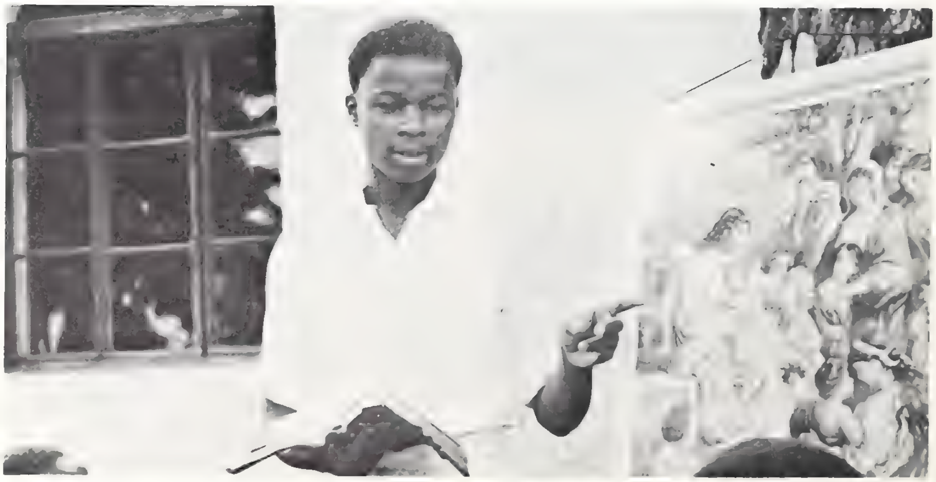
Disturbed by outbursts

Dear Editor: Tim Schrag (Letters, October 24 issue) expresses a valid concern with which I deeply identify. I too am disturbed by the endless outbursts of condemnation about homosexuality, a sin of which many of us feel we are not guilty and thus can self-righteously condemn in others, instead of calling attention to the countless sins of which all of us are guilty daily.

Another sin which we like to spell with a capital "S" and which fits into the same category as homosexuality, is the sin of divorce and remarriage. Those who are involved in the pain and trauma of such tragedies need a special portion of inclusive love and compassion from us and not the "stone-throwing" attitude of which the Pharisees were guilty and which we are often so eager to administer ourselves.

We need only to be reminded how compassionately Jesus dealt with the woman at the well (John 4), or the woman who was taken in adultery (John 8), and then follow his example. But for the grace of God we might be in that situation ourselves. *John D. Wiebe, Route 3, Beatrice, Nebraska 68310*

October 24



I Care . . . ad is bad

Dear Editor; The I Care . . . ad (October 17 issue, page 604) is morally, ethically, and socially reprehensible. The practice it represents is heinous.

It is as if 200 years of history, the police and penal systems of Chicago, New York, Detroit, and a half dozen other major northern cities, as well as innumerable counties and districts throughout the south were not sufficient. Must we insist on training black men and women in other countries to teach their children that the face of their Lord and Master is white? *Paul Manning, 3620 North Fremont, Chicago, Illinois 60613*

November 2

Meditation

"Fear not . . ."

You're kidding! In a world of fear? In our world today there's reason for fear. Plenty of it.

"PEACE ON EARTH . . ."

You must be joking! Read your newspapers. Check the map. You call this a peaceful planet?

And yet there they are; those words so much a part of the Christmas facts.

"Do not be afraid, Zechariah . . ." (Luke 1:13)

"Do not be afraid, Mary . . ." (Luke 1:30)

"Do not be afraid, Joseph . . ." (Matthew 1:20)

"Do not be afraid, shepherds . . ." (Luke 2:10)

Is this a naive world view on the part of the angelic messenger?

Whether in the days of Caesar Augustus, and centuries of nothing but grasping traditions of the past and keeping alive a longing for a deliverer; or whether in today's world of might and manipulations by nations, of empty systems and depleted ideas for meeting complex problems, and of dimming hope that there is any future worthwhile, the words "fear not" still come to those ready to listen.

To Zechariah and to us comes the message—"Do not be afraid . . . God hears you." There is an infinite but personal God, not merely a force, that is real, and he *hears*. He is in touch with the world he made, and he is listening not only to the praise but to the pleadings as well, whether first century concerns or 20th century complexities.

"Do not be afraid, Mary . . . God is going to use you." God *uses people*, not in the sense of exploiting or overriding their will, but in grace, bestowing his favor.

In this world, in our world today, God works through human channels, through persons like us—we are significant. It was a human agency that God used to enter this world to reveal himself, and it is still through human agency that he is made known to a fearful world today. *God uses people*, people yielded, willing to submit themselves to him.

"Do not be afraid, Joseph . . . God is the one doing it!" He, the wonderful, mighty God is at work in our world. Some of the activity can be described only with the word "miraculous." Much of his working we get used to and call "ordinary." But for all the Josephs who are frightened by God working so close to home—rejoice, fear not. He is the active, working, sending, sustaining God, but also tender and trustworthy. He has invaded this planet not to destroy but to deliver.

"Do not be afraid, shepherds . . . the news is good! And it is characterized by joy. For God's plans were not thwarted by a Caesar or a Herod or a Caiaphas or a filled-to-the-brim inn. And that good news is for all. Fear not sheepherders; though your job seems lowly you now have something to pass on to others. You are privileged. You have met the Sent One, the Savior! Now you are sent ones, for you have good news for all peoples.

That news still is "for all"—not just the snow-blanketed North American nations, but for the sun-drenched savannahs of Zaire, for the summertime mountains of Lesotho, for the highrise sophistication of Japan, for the hectic cities of Brazil, for the industrializing regions of India, *for all. . . .*

And that's what missions is all about—passing along the good news received from the God who hears and answers, and who chooses to work through human beings. He is the God who not only commissions but also accompanies, commands and then empowers. There is no room for fear.

Robert W. Gerhart

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CONTRIBUTORS

James Juhnke, 104 West 26th Street, North Newton, Kansas 67117, is professor of history at Bethel College. During a sabbatical this past year he researched and wrote a history of General Conference overseas missions.

Irene Weaver, Schowalter Villa, Hesston, Kansas 67062, is a former missionary to India and Africa under the Mennonite Church Board of Missions.

Mary F. Heisey, 56 East Street, York, Pennsylvania 17403, does regular book reviews for *The Mennonite*.

Robert Gerhart, 24 East Swamp Road, Quakertown, Pennsylvania 18951, is a COM/AIMM missionary on North American assignment from Lesotho, Africa.

Howard J. Habegger, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114, executive secretary of COM and former missionary to Colombia, made an administrative visit to Africa in September.

CREDITS

Cover, Robert Maust, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801; 723 (left and middle photos), Robert Gerhart; 723 (right photo), RNS; 724, Ed Weaver; 727, 728, 730, 734, RNS; 735, Robert Gerhart.

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Editorial office: 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Telephone: (204) 888-6781.

Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

South Africa: Will the situation change?

Howard J. Habegger

The revolutions and independence experienced by the majority of African nations in the late sixties and early seventies affected two white-controlled countries, Rhodesia and the Republic of South Africa. These nations continue under white domination, although Rhodesia is making an attempt at an all-parties transitional government which includes blacks. South Africa remains under white rule.

The policy that has governed South Africa for decades is apartheid. Apartheid literally means separation. Different racial groups are classified by the government and segregated. This policy not only includes racial segregation, but political, social, and economic discrimination against South African blacks.

What is the stance of the Christian church in South Africa? It is a mixed picture. The traditional Dutch Reformed Church—in which the Afrikaner worships—blesses the present government and its policies. Many persons of English descent who attend the Presbyterian Church in South Africa oppose apartheid. The South African Council of Churches, representing a variety of Christian communions, has consistently raised a strong voice against racial oppression. Antiapartheid church leaders have been harassed, their offices searched, and their movements monitored. There are courageous Christians within all Protestant persuasions who speak for change and reconciliation.

The racial problem in South Africa is compounded by the big powers and big businesses. South Africa is a very wealthy nation because of its natural resources. Many of the black-controlled African nations (Lesotho, Botswana, Zambia, Namibia, and others) are partially or totally dependent on South Africa for food, raw materials, transportation, and communication links. Large numbers of blacks from Lesotho and Botswana are employed in the mines of South Africa. This dependency is exploited politically by the government and economically by big businesses.

What is the solution to the injustice and oppression of the black African majority in South Africa? Military intervention? Violent revolution? An economic boycott? South Africa possesses sophisticated military hardware. She is capable of producing her own arms. It is doubtful that any coalition of black nations could successfully wage war on South Africa.

Some radical black leaders are convinced that the only solution is violent revolution. A few African church leaders condone a war of liberation based on what they term a "theology of the violence of the cross." Radicals who call for revolution are imprisoned. Yet most black and white church leaders struggle for nonviolent alternatives.

Last year David J. Bosch, a prominent South African theologian and churchman, in a lecture delivered at the Overseas Ministries Study Center in Ventnor, New Jersey, recognized the dilemma of those advocating revolution and those who call for change from within. "Those who are in South Africa have to express whatever they want to say in a very guarded way for fear of banning or detention. This surely constitutes a dilemma. Those who have fled the country are in a different dilemma. They know they cannot return to the country as it is at the present. So I find myself asking which of the two voices is more genuine: the guarded criticism and gentle prodding towards change from inside South Africa or the incitement to complete isolation and even violent intervention from outside?"

Another proposal is an economic boycott. In my judgment it is not an answer. It is indiscriminate in that its efforts are felt first and foremost by the black majority, not by the white minority. In reality an economic boycott is ineffective because both white and black nations and big corporations cheat.

Will the situation change? Hopefully, but not with one grand stroke. Those who think the present regime can be dislodged from power through one massive uprising, an overnight political coup, or military intervention do not understand the present realities. Hope for change will come from within the nation and not from without. I believe that black and white Christians from within the various Protestant and Catholic communions will eventually be the catalyst for change. No matter how entrenched, apartheid and its evils cannot forever stand against the clear claims of the gospel. A minority of Christian whites and courageous Christian blacks will be the salt, light, and leaven to bring liberation, reconciliation, and peace to that troubled nation.

We as Mennonite Christians should stand with those working for a new day in South Africa. We must add our voices and support to a great host of other witnesses in the Church in the firm hope that truth and justice will triumph.

The Mennonite
Overseas Mission
Edition

encompass

DECEMBER 12, 1978

Mission is a movement of sojourners and pilgrims moving through history and throughout the world witnessing to the kingdom of God and incorporating into the movement all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord.

Looking for the Real Way

Fukuoka, Japan, among other things, is a city of colleges and universities. The third largest of these is the Seinan Gakuin University, founded in 1916 by Southern Baptist missionaries.

Each week I teach three classes in English conversation at this university. The university pays me to teach English and, ordinarily, unless the students broach the subject, religion is not discussed. Students do, however, bring up the subject frequently, and then I feel complete liberty to give them a reason for the hope that is within me.

Occasionally I make written assignments. The following two compositions deal with the subject of religion. Choice of subject was entirely that of the two sophomores who submitted them. I share them here with the hope that many readers will be led to pray for these two sincere young men and hundreds of others who, like them, are wondering what life is all about. I present their paragraphs exactly as they wrote them, with only a few minor corrections in English; even the titles are their own.
George Janzen

The Happiest Day by K. F.

I have never known what "happiness" is. I cannot remember whether I have ever had a happy day or not. What situation is happy? I cannot imagine such a condition. Where is happiness to be found? Certainly I am most anxious for it, but my brain and heart cannot resolve the issue.

I was born as a human being. But what are human beings? What is the meaning of the sun, the moon, and the earth? What is the meaning of the universe? Why do they exist? What is the meaning of that which I do every day? And what on earth will ever become of me? Do you know? Do you know? Or *do* you know? Please, someone, tell me the answer. I have read many books, but none has been able to answer my questions. I have heard many people talking about these things, but no one has been able to offer a real answer.

I have recently become aware that there is a certain being with a strong will around us every day, all the time, everywhere. The name of this being is "God." His existence is real and true. I do believe in God. He is the very origin of our souls. But he never addresses himself to me at all. Even his angel never does so.

According to my poor knowledge, we can see him only in religion. But there are many religions in the world. Which one do I have to choose? Each one introduces him to us plausibly: the Bible, the Buddhist Scriptures, and many other various canons like that. My poor head cannot resolve which one is right. God is hidden by someone, or by something. I believe Jesus Christ, but the Bible was not written by him. I can resolve nothing for myself. The day I will feel happy will perhaps be the day I find a real way to obey God.

(Continued on page 7)

First Asuncion Seminary Choir Tour

Through worship and fellowship God's people take on his nature and purposes. In worship they encounter afresh God's grace and love and submit themselves to his will.

Mary Colman, Montevideo, Uruguay, a student at Evangelical Mennonite Theological Center of Asuncion, Paraguay, describes the student choir's first tour to the colonies. The school opened August 15, 1977, with six students. It offers three-year courses in theology and music. Gerhard Goerzen is the director and David Suderman the music professor.

We are a student center recently begun with a small nucleus of believers who have dedicated themselves to train for the Lord's work. One way of praising our God is to unite our voices in choir.

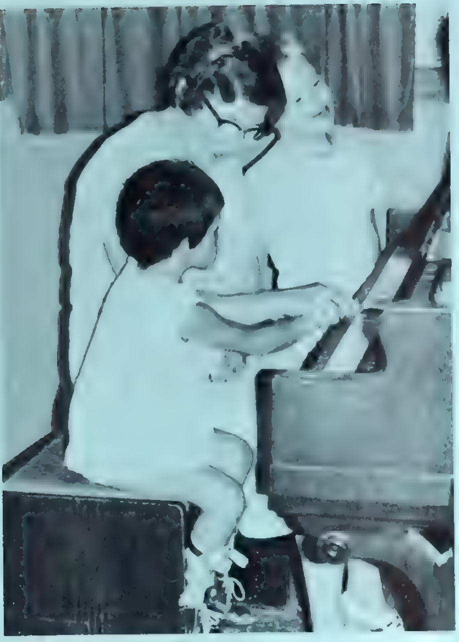
To show the immense gratitude we feel toward the people who are helping us, we decided to make a tour in order to establish contact with some of the congregations that support this institution. And so on July 20 we began a five-day trip to the Chaco. We rejoiced to be able to share with our brothers and sisters in the colonies of Para Todo, Neuhof, Loma Plata, Filadelfia, and Neuland.

It was a pleasure to learn to know the people in their homes. A warm reception was given us everywhere. We could see that they supported us spiritually as well as materially.

In preparation for each presentation, ten minutes before the scheduled starting time, we would meet with our choir director who would tell us, "Every song is a prayer to God, and every prayer should carry the spirit contained in it in order to attain perfect communion with God. All of the people who will be before you are your brothers and sisters and should feel the love that you, through Christ, have for them." So it was that every time we stood before a congregation we felt we were communicating with each other with our eyes and saying, "Hallelujah! Christ lives!"

One of the things that impressed us most was "the greatness of God's people over there in the Chaco." This reveals God's power working so mightily that He has produced large, flourishing congregations that are happy in a completely barren place. These people have suffered much, but the Lord has given them the peace of living in communion with Him and each other. We were filled with joy when some of the young people, upon hearing us testify to what God has done in our lives, expressed keen interest in joining us in the future.

Our choir is only a small group of persons who wish to praise God; but we have the wonderful hope that all of us together as God's people may be in Paradise forming the great choir of which John speaks in Revelation 19:6, singing, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns!"



Melva Lehman with Stevie and Paula Dirks

Hey Tommy! Did You Know . . . ?

The following letter from Stevie, a mongoloid, to Tommy, a cerebral palsied boy, indicates something of what is happening at the New Dawn Developmental Center in Hualien, Taiwan, a school for developmentally disabled or delayed children.

Dear Tommy,

I am Stevie Dirks. I live in Meilun, Hualien, Taiwan. My teacher's name is Miss Melva Lehman. She must love you very much. She tells of the many happy times you had last year when she taught you in Newfoundland, Canada. She let us hear the song you made up about Jesus. I like the part about you praying to Jesus and when you talked to Him He touched your body and helped you. I like to sing Chinese songs and act them out. "I Love You, Jesus" is our morning song. When we sing this song it makes Jesus seem very close to us. We also sing, "Thank You, God."

Hey Tommy! Did you know that you live on an island and I live on an island? That's what Miss Lehman says. Your island is much bigger than Taiwan, but we have lots of people. She says that seventeen million people is more than she can count.

My daddy, Otto Dirks, says that people are more important than things. He works with people in the churches. My mother must think that children and teachers are more important than things, too. She is with the New Dawn Center teachers and children every day. My big brother Randy is in the American school. My little adopted sister Paula is seven years old. I forgot to tell you I will be nine years old on my next birthday. Teacher says she thinks you will be ten. Is that right or did she forget?

Tommy, I wish you could take a jet and see this island. Our family and Miss Lehman had a long, long ride across the marble mountains to the west side for our holiday. Paula and I had classes and the adults went to meetings where they sang and listened to God's Word. The best part of each day was when we could go swimming. The weather was Oh so hot, but the pool was cool.

One week we went to a house where Miss Lehman could teach Paula and me. That week Randy went to a music camp. My parents were doing what you do on vacations, like write letters, sing, play, cook, or eat out. It was lots of fun being together, especially when we went on a picnic to a bamboo forest and saw a bamboo house. Miss Lehman says that you have lots and lots of fir trees. You won't know what bamboos are.

Bamboos make a lot of noise when people in the Ami Dance hit them together. One of our Chinese teachers invited us to her village. Her father is a tribal leader. The dancers have colorful costumes, many beads and feathers. Miss Lehman says they do not worship our God. Our God brooks no rival. We should have no other God. I do not understand when mother and teacher use big words. Miss says that it's teacher talk. But I wish people who worship others gods would learn to love our Lord Jesus, don't you?

We are back in Hualien. We like it best here for we have a big tank to swim in and our pets are lots of fun. Binkey the monkey will sit on your shoulder if you let him. The rabbits love to have Paula pull their ears and put them in her lap. The turkeys are big enough to have for dinner, if you take the jet trip and fly over the hump from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.

Oh you say you can't fly? But you can send us a reply (a letter). Just try.

Your new friend,
Stevie

(Sent in by Melva Lehman, teacher and consultant at New Dawn Development Center.)

The Church is not called simply to serve the world. Beyond good works and humanitarian efforts it points to the claims of the kingdom from whose existence and dynamic it springs.

The summing up of all things in Christ signifies the new creation in which the power of sin is overcome and a new universe of relationships and well-being is established. Within this new reality individuals experience salvation because they have begun to live as members of the new creation, a new order.

When the Hills Green Again

The winter and spring and even early summer can be so dry and brittle in Cuauhtemoc, Mexico, that when the foreign blues settle down upon a person, he isn't certain whether he is looking out upon the hillside or into the mirror. The heart cries out with the prophet, "The hay is withered away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing" (Is. 15:6).

But the summer rains came in August, releasing some ten inches of moisture, and changed the barren drabness into a green mountainside, simultaneously energizing the weary cells made from such dust of earth into a singing, hopeful creature.

The barrenness of a hillside and the bleakness of weary man can be changed as the clouds release potent forces to revive latent energy. A month ago people wondered whether or not there would be a crop, but after the rains the grain fields headed out, the beans podded, and hope in man revived.

Life is that way! The greenness is there all the time, but something has to come from above, from the outside, to quicken what is within. When it comes, one says with Ephraim, "I am like a green fir tree" (Hos. 14:6), or with David, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures" (Ps. 23:2).

Man is inclined to go dormant or revert to the old or lesser. The "sent" missionary can't cope with himself or harmonize with his coworker. The person in the village looks for some ray of hope. Life has squeezed him into a mold that is warped and hardened with age. People at every level of life need the refreshing rains that soften the rigid walls and bring out the new shoots indicative of life. But somehow, somewhere, someone has to help them respond appropriately to the dew from above.

Sara (not her real name) came to my class and, although she was twenty years old, she was as rigid and fearful as a scared child. She came from a village home, the first to come to our church. She would hardly speak or face a person. Her life had made her severely inhibited.

The refreshing powers of Pentecost came upon her. She married a young person from our fellowship, deviated from a few hardened traditions, and began to blossom. The parched life received new spirit and has greened again. Where once her face was taut and stern, now her eyes sparkle and her lips smile.

That is why we are in Cuauhtemoc.

Aaron J Epp

German young people's retreat in Mexico

Science student at Quinta Lupita School in Mexico

Filozina

Filozina grew up in a small town in Brazil. She was a pretty, lively girl and led a pleasant life. At seventeen she married a man more than ten years her senior, and, full of typical newly-wed excitement, moved with him to Gama. When she arrived she discovered that he had ten children who had been left to him when his first wife deserted him. Then her life lost its joy.

But her husband was good to her. She truly loved him, forgave him for deceiving her, and took on the task of raising the children. One day a widow, Dona, came by trying to sell children's clothing made by her married daughter and struck up a friendship with Filozina. Shortly after giving birth to her baby, Filozina developed complications and Dona took care of the new baby for over a month. Filozina accepted the Lord one day while she was very near death and Dona prayed with her.

Filozina's husband is full of questions and very skeptical about Christianity. Although he occasionally accompanies his wife to church, he makes fun of her faith. She recently opened a small school supplies store, but the owner of the building, a strong spiritist, is threatening to evacuate her because she is a Christian. However, she leaves her Bible out for the man's wife to read.

Erwin and Angela Rempel

Central to mission is God's calling out of a people whom, in turn, he will send.

Sunday school opening service in Gama, Brazil

Because he is a sending God, they are a sent people and are dispersed among the peoples as witnesses to what God is doing.

Commencement at Union Biblical Seminary, Yavatmal, India

The people of God are called to witness. They respond to God's mission through specific efforts in time and space.

Assisting a customer in the selection of Christian literature in LaMesa, Colombia

Teaching Bible to African Independent Church group in Botswana

Burn patient flown to hospital in Zaire by mission plane and Missionary Aviation Fellowship pilot

The Thief Got It All

The Kawakatsus of Kobe, Japan reported one Sunday morning that a thief had broken into their house the night before while they were at the public bath. He had taken all of their pay check which had been cashed that morning. The police said it was the first break-in in that community for thirty years. The thief apparently observed the Kawakatsus' daily habit of leaving at eight o'clock.

In discussing their need, the church decided to pay the Kawakatsus their loss in full from the church treasury. "This," write Bernard and Ruby Thiessen, "is understanding the meaning of Christian brotherhood."

The Messianic community is a visible and living expression of the gospel.

The people of God are called to mission. The mission is God's and they are his people. They daily pray, "Thy kingdom come . . ." and thereby reaffirm their true calling.

Last Report

Excerpts from the last activity report of a missionary who, after a person is supposed to be too old to begin that kind of work, spent nearly ten years in a foreign country.

Our experience has challenged us to the utmost—the need to learn such a difficult language; learning to live in a completely different, ancient culture with some measure of understanding and love; the need (considering our ineptness in the language) to find ways to communicate our love for the Lord to those about us; to find time in our busy days to be alone with the Lord; to find time, while working full-time, for language study; to take time to be to each other what husband and wife should be; to do our share of hosting the numerous guests that come through; and on, and on, and on. . .

It has been a great privilege to be given the opportunity for this most interesting experience at a time when we would otherwise probably have begun to slow down mentally as well as physically. Being so involved here should certainly have kept us on our toes! It has been interesting and helpful to our understanding to see firsthand the difficulty of penetrating the seemingly solid wall of heathendom as we see it here, which keeps church growth at a minimum. It has saddened us greatly to see how often professing Christians turn out to have idol worship items prominently displayed in their homes; or people who have been exposed to the gospel daily, but have never made a commitment to Christ. Another area of deep concern is the Christians who could carry some clout, making little or no effort to identify with the Christian image, and yet being the first to complain about conditions here. It sometimes seems that our impact has been negligible. Then again we are reminded by some word or deed that we also have many truly committed Christians here who are an inspiration and example to us.

We must also admit that frustrations have been real and sometimes almost devastating, and that most of them stemmed from language—or the lack of it—a condition we lived with intimately for nine years. Reassuring each other that it was not our decision that we make do with inadequate communication has been cold comfort. Learning a language piecemeal, and in the process picking up incorrect grammar that becomes a habit, is *not* the way to attain proficiency. Countless minor and major unpleasant incidents stemmed from the inability to communicate adequately. The other side to this coin is that we were so long past the time of life when study comes easily that neither we nor anyone else knew if we would be able to "hack it." We can say without reservation that the Lord made it possible for us to learn what we had to know, and maybe that is enough.

The rewards have been beyond measure. We have had to learn to rely on the Lord for His daily guidance, help, and wisdom. It has taken an extra measure of faith to leave our loved ones and to accept the fact that our Heavenly Father's care is infinitely wiser and more tender than our own. The inspiration and fellowship of missionaries and national Christians are without price. Our spiritual life individually and as a family has deepened. These have been good years! We can wholeheartedly witness to the truth of Isaiah's words: "And it shall come to pass, that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." We have called upon the Lord, and He has heard!

(Continued from page 1)

The Greatest Thing by H. I.

The greatest thing in all my life is knowing Jesus. During my junior high school days I was a very bad boy. Every teacher knew my name because of my behavior. I was all messed up, and my concepts were all wrong. I wondered about the purpose of living for a long time. I wanted something, and I wanted it so badly that I flung out my hands in desperation.

Then a gentle Stranger whispered words of love. I said: "Lord, please come in and show me what life is about, and how I can begin all over." Yes, then I met Jesus. He gave me grace inside to have a humble heart. I will be glad and rejoice. In Jesus I will sing. I have decided to follow Jesus, and there is no turning back!

Printed in U.S.A.

The gospel addresses every culture from within rather than from without.

Lunar New Year

Firecrackers had been crackling all night, it seemed. Voices of children and adults are heard up and down the street. There is celebration in the air. Some shops are closed, others are crowded, and public transportation is taxed to the limit. It is Lunar New Year, for the Chinese the most important celebration of the year.

In our years of living in Taiwan, Lunar New Year has almost become a part of us, too. Of course, without family here it is inconceivable to celebrate the Lunar New Year, which is an important family festival. However, we usually find ourselves included in a Chinese family and sometimes in several.

A particular joy is to be included in a Christian family as it gathers in the house of worship on the first day of the New Year. We were with the church family in the Hopeng Mennonite Church on this particular occasion. The youth group was in charge with Miss Chen, a young student and the first Christian in her family, leading us in worship. In her prayer litany she enumerated events of the past year for which we could be thankful. Two young men brought thoughtful messages on the deeper meaning of traditional New Year practices. Expressions of thanksgiving and praise in song were followed by fellowship, food, and games.

It was an inspiration to see family units worshipping. One young woman was radiant because it was the first time her husband had joined her in the New Year's service. Together with their two small children they could form a complete family circle. Another family had been without a mother last year, and now the Lord had graciously provided a new one to take her place. We praised the Lord together. It was good to celebrate the Lunar New Year in a Christian way.

Martha Vandenberg

日日新洗衣店
室内装潢

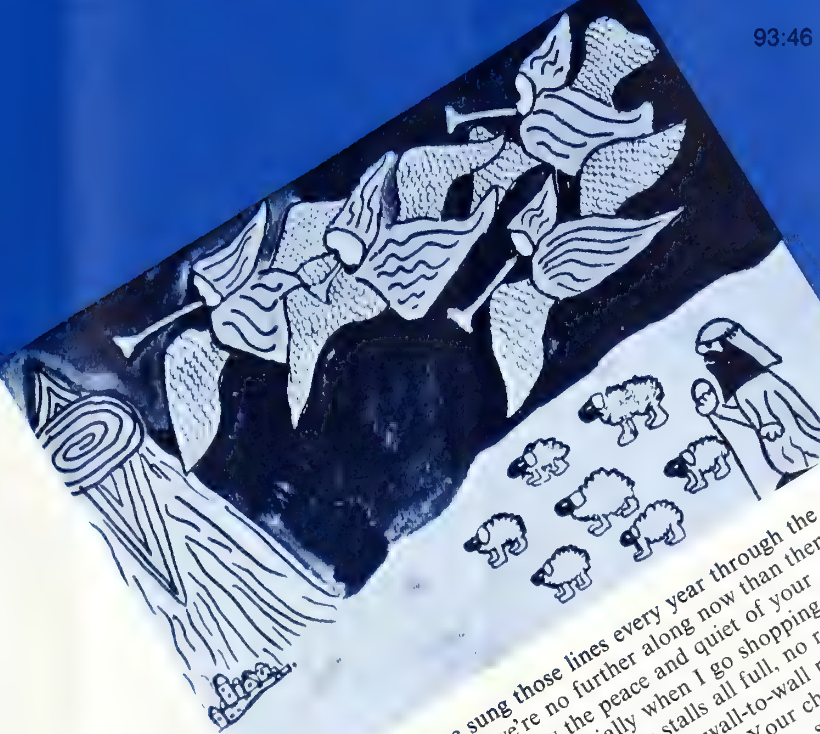
View in front of Mu Cha Mennonite Church in Taipei, Taiwan

All title quotations are from W. R. Shenk, "Summary of a Theology of Mission" in *Commission on Overseas Mission Report to Council of Commissions for 1977.*

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

93:46 DECEMBER 19, 1978



Dear Shepherds: It's that time of year again. I do hope this gets to you in time—our postal workers keep talking strike, you know. I guess God knew what he was doing when he sent his message to you via angels. Can't even depend on special delivery, zip code not withstanding. Just imagine. What if Gabriel had threatened to strike just before the first Christmas? From what I know of the hills of Bethlehem he could have demanded an isolation bonus. They say the issue today is automation. I can understand that God didn't send his message technologically. He sent his son; now *that* is personal. Nothing automated about a baby . . . well, almost nothing.

Things are busy around here as usual—preparing for Christmas, of course. In church we're in the midst of our Christmas celebrations. We've had our banquet already . . . say, you never had a pre-Christmas banquet, did you? Remember the music the angel choir sang for you? Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth among people of good will? We're still singing the same words. Fellow by the name of Handel did a fantastic job of putting them to music.

I keep being bothered by the text. Did the angels really mean peace on earth, peace among people? I can understand peace within . . . inside of me; sometimes I feel that peace. But peace on earth? **People have sung those lines every year through the** centuries, but we're no further along now than then.

Sometimes I envy the peace and quiet of your hillside campfire, especially when I go shopping at Edmonton Center—parking stalls all full, no room anywhere (almost like the inn), wall-to-wall people, frantic merchandising, loud music. Your choir couldn't have been heard here without a stereo amplifier and the largest speaker system made. But it's the faces that bother me most; eyes: frantic, greedy, selfish, empty, trying to buy love in a department store.

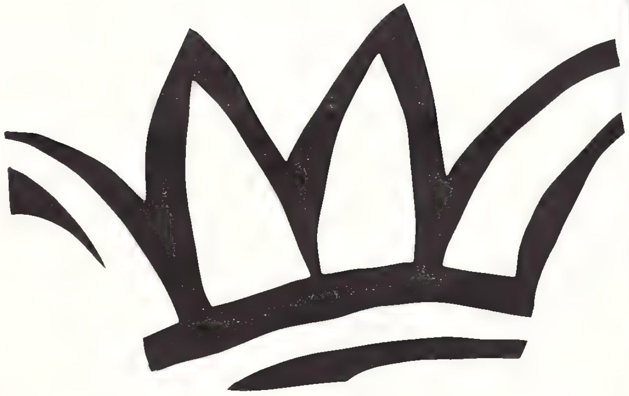
I didn't really want to get this cynical. It's just that life is hectic enough already without all this rushing madness we call getting ready for Christmas. Say, I just thought of something. Luke tells us that you went with all speed to find Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus. Maybe that's the point. You hurried to see Jesus, to see for yourself what the good news was all about. So often our hurrying is after all the diversions, all the superficial things, all the things that don't really matter. We rush about without your sense of destination and purpose.

You know, many times I envy your simple faith. You weren't expecting anything, just tending your sheep, when suddenly there were angels, and news about the Savior being born, and you just believed it, and left your sheep, and ran to see this miracle for yourselves. We would have been skeptical. We would have suggested a psychiatrist for anyone seeing and hearing angels. It's so much harder to believe today. Your simple faith gives me courage.

Well, I have to end this letter. Do have a good year. Shalom, peace on earth.

Christmas letters

Gary Harder



Dear Herod: This is the first Christmas greeting I've ever sent to you, King Herod. I don't usually correspond with nobility, and I'm just a little afraid. You have quite a bloodthirsty reputation, you know; but I've wondered what you think of Jesus now from the perspective of history. Can you see the coming of Jesus, from your vantage point now, as being good news for the world and for you? Or is it still bad news these many years after your kingdom and your crown have turned to dust?

Reading about you sometimes makes my blood boil. How you tried to trick the wise men . . . that one backfired on you, didn't it? But the story that I can't deal with is the one of you killing all those babies. It sickens me, all the male babies two years old and under in Bethlehem; a river of blood on your conscience. I've tried to understand the desperation that drove you—the absolute terror of being replaced as king.

Did you ever comprehend the power this one helpless little baby, lying in a manger, had to drive you almost out of your mind with fear? That helpless little cradle rocked the world, didn't it? It sent fear surging up through all the power structures, didn't it? Can you see that now, these many years later? Can you see that his power was a different kind of power than the kind you thought you had? Yours was very fleeting; his is still growing stronger. I suppose it's hard for you to accept that weapons of love and compassion can win more battles than can weapons of steel and might. I guess that's why you didn't know how to deal with a baby. You could have dealt with an army, but you couldn't deal with a baby.

I have to confess something to you, and I guess that's why I'm writing this letter. I didn't really want to admit it, but he threatens me too. Oh, I've never wanted to be your kind of king; I've never flown into a frantic rage like you did; I've never wanted to kill little babies; but I have wanted to rule my own life. I would like to be king of my own life. But if Jesus is king, I've got to move over, and offer the throne of my life to him, and that frightens me.

I begin to understand your problem at least a little bit. It's almost as hard to give up kingship of one's own life as giving up being king of a country. In fact, maybe it's just as hard. King Jesus, eh?

Like you, people today (myself included) find it very hard to understand the kind of power Jesus had; the power of a person who refused to use violence, refused to play power politics, and insisted on the power of love. That threatens emperors and nations, and even today it continues to change the world much more radically than the power brokers can. That about blows your mind, doesn't it Herod? How can love be so powerful? But it is. I've experienced it. I can't fully understand it either, but that's what we're celebrating now during this Christmas season.

I would just like to wish you the joy of this season, the joy of love, the joy of the powerless power of King Jesus.

And please, no more dead babies; not Vietnamese babies, nor Irish babies, nor Lebanese babies, nor South African babies.

Dare I sign it this way—yes, I will—in love, Dear Simeon: I've thought about you quite a bit this Christmas season. I don't mind telling you that I've read your story, as told by Doctor Luke, a number of times this week, and I'm quite taken by it. It makes me feel a bit sentimental; an old man waiting to hold the Son of God in his arms just once before he dies. You really were convinced that you would see the Messiah come before you died, weren't you?

You looked forward to that event so eagerly, didn't you? It's that eagerness for the Messiah to come that I sometimes miss in my own life, even during the Advent season. Advent is supposed to mean preparing, getting ready to celebrate Christ's birth.

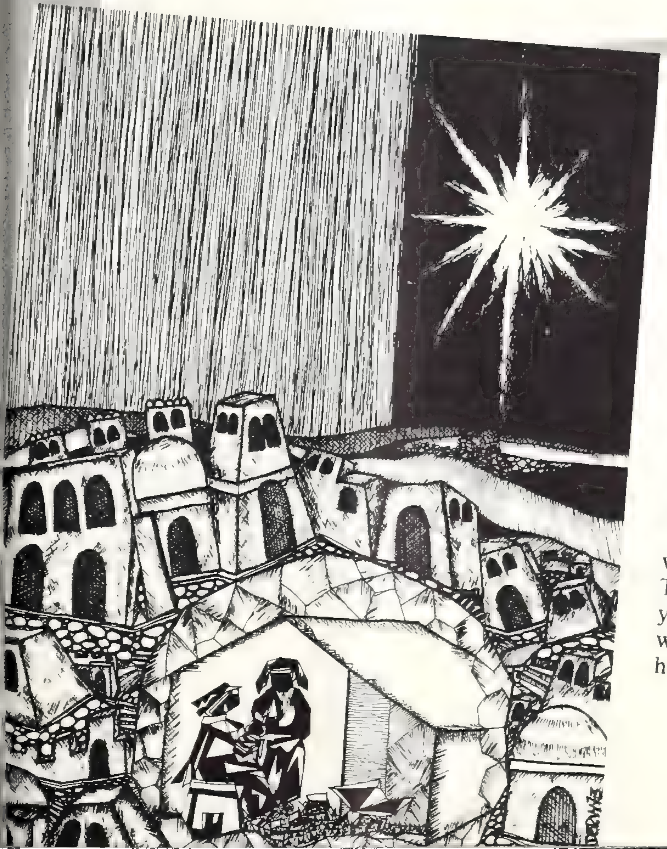
Well, we've done it so many times already. For you it was the first time, and maybe that's why it was so special. For us it is routine, we do the same things every year. Sure, we look forward to Christmas, but we're also sort of glad when it's over again because it is a rather hectic time. We have to get our gifts bought by mid-November if we expect to buy what we want; we know we have to get our cards in the mail by the first week of December if they are to arrive by the 25th; we never seem to get our choir rehearsals going soon enough to get completely ready for the concert, and we're usually still looking for a pageant for our Sunday school to put on long after the kids should already be memorizing their lines. But all this is routine—the same every year.

I envy your sense of anticipation and excitement, Simeon. And I feel moved by how you took the baby Jesus in your arms with such joy and contentment, and said that you were now ready to die in peace because your deepest longing had been fulfilled, that you had seen the salvation provided by God for all peoples. You know, you were really quite farsighted for a Jew of your time, and quite open-minded for an old man. You saw then that Jesus was born for all people. Jews and Gentiles alike. Remarkable insight, really.

I mentioned that I envied your anticipation of the coming of Jesus. Well, I do see the same longing and excitement in the faces of my children. I don't feel it that much, but the children certainly do. It's good to see the sparkling excitement in their eyes, the sheer exuberance on their faces. This week our children went to a school Christmas concert, and one would have thought heaven itself came down. Come to think of it, that's really what happens, isn't it?

Maybe the old and the young have a lot in common. Well, thanks again for a beautiful story. I wish you continued joy and peace and anticipation and that deep contentment of holding the Son of God in your arms.

Shalom Simeon



Dear Jesus: You were born into a rather messy world, weren't you? Bethlehem was a small, dingy place, full of people because of the census. There wasn't any room for you except in a stable. Herod wanted to kill you. The Romans couldn't be bothered with you then; they were preoccupied with enslaving the world to their power. Your fellow countrymen expected someone better suited to their wants. The whole world was dark and messy. Why did you choose to be born then, and there, and among those people? You knew you'd get your hands dirty just being there.

I guess our world is sort of like Bethlehem's world—dirty, dark, lonely, in spite of all the people. Thank-you for coming to our world as it is, thank-you for coming to us as we are. Come into our world again with your light, your love, and your healing this Christmas time.

In hope,

David R. Nicholas

Have you ever paused to imagine what Pontius Pilate was doing the night Jesus was born in Bethlehem? Or thought where Peter might have been found? Or what was happening to Judas Iscariot?

Pilate: an aspiring centurion?

Pilate might well have been a young centurion marching with others across the green Roman hills, on his way to capture Gaul for their beloved Caesar.

What a difference the next 33 years would make on this youthful life.

Trudging energetically through the starry night, the young legionary already visualized himself a provincial governor. Little did he realize that promotion would place him where he must decide daring issues for which he would be totally unprepared. Perhaps even then he was ready for promotion, though not for its attendant responsibility.

But Pilate in his starry dreaming could not foresee the future. Had he been able to do so, he might well have prepared himself differently.

The temptation to judge Pilate harshly must be brushed aside, for his was a common failing. There is something of Pilate within us all; we like and desire power, yet frequently don't know how to use it.

Peter: a boy with a temper?

If Pilate was unaware of the future that night when the shepherds were disturbed, so was Peter.

Imagine Peter as a young lad fishing with his father out on Lake Galilee. His father is not a placid man, and Peter is growing into his father's likeness, especially in temper. (Of course, we fathers like to think such things as sincerity and zeal also come from us.)

As Peter hauls in a net full of fish, the rope snaps and a sudden roar escapes from the rough lips of old Zebulun: "Look out there, keep your mind on your work."

Peter's pride is hurt by his father's gruff voice but somehow he holds back a torrent

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A Christmas fantasy

of abuse. This future "fisher of men" dreams of one day owning his own fishing boat and being able to please himself.

Yet, in 33 years, in one weak moment, he will fail his Master bitterly.

Judas Iscariot: a baby with hope?
While Pilate marched and Peter fished, Judas Iscariot was but a babe.

As Adah, his mother, gently nursed her firstborn son, she possessed a multitude of hopes for his future—a merchant sailing the high seas, a high-ranking religious official, a beloved physician, a vineyard owner, a rich businessman. The gamut of tantalizing possibilities flowed with tremedous ease through her inspired mind as she gently rocked her young charge backward and forward.

What was it that turned the innocence of a childish heart into the heartlessness of Judas the betrayer?

How it happened we do not know. We can only surmise that with extreme craftiness and cunning the destroyer of men's souls won the battle for the soul of Judas.

Time to look at our own blunders
Pilate, Judas, and Peter; who could possibly have foretold their future? All three were to fail, and fail miserably. One, however, failed with a difference. Peter stumbled but repented in time, for he admitted his blunder.

With Christmas once again upon us, it is time to admit past blunders, kneel with the wise men of old, and bring the gift of our newly dedicated life to the one who can turn our mistakes into success.

Thirty-three years before the crucifixion, the stories of Pilate, Judas, and Peter were unwritten. The future years of our own lives remain unwritten. The coming years may well bring responsibilities of a tremendous nature.

Perhaps today we yearn for promotion. Maybe we are not ready for it. Will we be ready if it comes?

The way we live today can have far-reaching results. These consequences do not simply stop at our unwritten years but pass on to those who are yet unborn to time.

From the first Christmas to the first Easter was approximately 33 years. These were years during which the lives of Pilate, Judas, and Peter were being moulded for good or bad. The years could never be relived.

These lives can serve as signposts directing us to deal carefully with the unwritten years, for we can never relive lost opportunities. What Pilate wrote could not be unwritten; what Judas was paid could not be unpaid; and even Peter could never forget his failure even though he was completely forgiven.

Unwritten are the years ahead, but if with loyalty and obedience we serve the king of all the years, whether written or unwritten, we will one day hear his, "Well done, my good and trusty servant; come share your master's delight."

Stuart Hamblen writes:

"You cannot control the length of your life
But you can the width and the height.
And the place you attain in those quiet halls of fame,
That position is yours to decide.
And the trail that you blaze on life's rugged hill,
Can be broad and easy to find.
And the height that you reach inspire others to climb,
Those generations yet unborn to time.
You cannot steal back from a day that is spent,
Idle words nor one single deed.
They're posted at night on the billboards of time,
For others who follow to read.
Nor can you dictate what history will write,
Be it mean or be it sublime;
But what's written of you will have an effect,
On generations yet unborn to time.
Did the world get a bargain the day you were born?
Or has your life to others brought shame?
Do you ponder the fact of how the folks will react,
When descendants of yours speak your name?
Will the ink of your life stand bold or fade out
As history appraises the line?
Is there untarnished value in what you bequeath,
To those generations yet unborn to time?"

If we believe in the Christ child, he will control our unwritten years. Then, in the unborn Christmases ahead, our descendants will surely rise up and call us blessed. •

GC executive reflects on a church in flux

Analysis and reflection characterized discussion during meetings of the executive committee of the General Board of the General Conference in Newton, Kansas, December 1-2.

Present for the sessions were Elmer Neufeld (president of the General Conference), La Vernae J. Dick (secretary), Jacob Tilitzky, and Marvin Zehr. Vice-president Donovan Smucker did not attend.

General secretary Heinz Janzen highlighted major joys and concerns. Among the joys and signs of the kingdom, he said, are increased giving, more overseas missionaries, and new congregations. Among the concerns are the effects of inflation on program, leadership for GC churches, an apparent shift in the image of the General Conference related to theological and social issues, and direction for the Commission on Home Ministries.

Reporting for CHM, outgoing executive secretary Palmer Becker noted that though there is no thrust to disband CHM as a North American structure, staff changes needed by next summer present an opportunity for a change in emphasis. There could even be a slimming down of central office staff if district and Canadian structures decided to increase their activities. Dreaming just a bit, Becker wondered whether regional inter-Mennonite resource centers were a possibility.

"Other mission agencies are moving forward in their programs. We also need to move forward," said Howard Habegger during discussion of the Commission on Overseas Mission report. Habegger, who is executive secretary for COM, firmly asserted that COM would make cutbacks in personnel in 1979 unless there was a 12 percent increase in budget. "That," he said, "will only allow us to keep the overseas program going at the present level."

Habegger also reported that during the past year there has been a net increase of 15 missionaries to a total of 146. He noted too that the next frontier in overseas mission organization is the extent to which Mennonite mission agencies will become interdependent. Is an international Mennonite missions body down the pike?

Communications and fund raising received careful scrutiny. One proposal, which will be brought to the entire General Board in its February meeting, centered about getting the counsel of all GC congregations on program planning for the 1980s. During discussion and subsequent approval in principle, Marvin Zehr asked, "Will we take the counsel of the congregations seriously?" There was consensus that the communications effort—from the grass roots up—would need to have integrity, and that the agenda should not be set by the kind of questions asked. On the issue of money the executive agreed that at this juncture it was more important to have a person who could ask potential donors for dollars, than to have a person who would lead workshops and develop literature on stewardship. Both issues will be tested further at the February board meetings, which will precede the midtriennium conference.

Even though planning for the midtriennium conference is well advanced it came in for a checkup. Executive committee members expressed deep concern about process. Would there be putdowns? Should there be a ban on clapping and guidelines for debate? How much fudging on Roberts' Rules of Order is OK? Should small groups, in the interest of efficiency, have leaders appointed before the conference? What happens if there isn't a quorum? On this question the decision was to simply go ahead with a study conference and a recommendation. Group leaders will not be appointed, but a convenor will be designated to help get each group organized. Each group will choose its own leader and recorder. Preregistration was encouraged to ensure an adequate mix of delegates in each group.

The final major item for the executive was how to deal with theological and social issues. Heinz Janzen stated that the social activists in the General Conference are proposing a fundamental shift in the nature of the General Conference. On this point Howard Habegger related that during his speaking engagements this fall he was asked, "Is there still room for the conservative church in the General Conference?"

Evolving out of this hour of reflection came a recommendation for staff to phrase a normative statement on abortion and homosexuality in time for it to be presented to the General Board in February. "The statements," said president Elmer Neufeld, "would state where we as members of the General Board are in our thinking on these issues. They would be an expression of what we know and think at this juncture." The decision represented a conscious action to take some leadership—and a position—on theological and social issues, something which has not generally been part of the agenda for the GB heretofore.

As a budgeting guideline for the commissions and seminary for 1979 the executive agreed to a 10-12 percent increase. There will be problems working this out though because some programs are faced with costs soaring by 20 percent. *The Mennonite* and the seminary in Elkhart are two of these. Slicing programs could be on the agenda in February. *Vic Reimer*

Religious education essential for children says Spock

Religious education should be given to children by all parents, including those who consider themselves atheists or agnostics, says pediatrician and author, Benjamin Spock.

"Judaism and Christianity are integral parts of the history and culture and attitudes of most of the people in the United States, even of those who have rejected these religions," he said, "and it's an important aspect of education to understand our pasts."

Childhood experiences with religion contribute to eventual religious attitudes in adulthood according to Spock.

Children "admire and adore their parents" at three to five years of age, he wrote. "They are eager to imitate their parents' behavior and attitude (including religious beliefs) . . . and will accept God on the parents' say-so."

Attempting to become more independent in the six-to-12-year period, and experiencing influence by peer pressure, children (even if parents are unbelievers) will pick up references to religion and question their parents, he said.

They may rebel against parental influence in areas such as dress, but "do not rebel against their parents' more serious beliefs about morals and religion," Spock noted.

Adolescents, however, look for intense and meaningful relationships. This includes a personal relationship with God, said the pediatrician, if they have been brought up religiously or were converted to religion.

"There is the desire to have someone to

depend on for understanding and love under all circumstances, to have a moral code for guidance and to have the promise of relief from guilt if one will renounce what parents, society, or God considers wrong," Spock maintains.

When children ask agnostic parents if they believe in God, Spock said the parents can say: "We don't, but we have a lot of friends who do," or "We don't. But when you are older you may decide to believe in God."

He urged religious parents to stress the loving aspects of God rather than the image of a wrathful God. He said parents should avoid making impossible demands on children that produce guilt feelings when mistakes are made, or when they fall short of expectations.

"The concept of the universe as a purely physical system and of the human being as merely a contraption made up of cells and chemicals developed through the process of evolution leaves many of us who are agnostic, or are only vaguely religious, feeling unsatisfied," he wrote.

"We strongly sense a spiritual force within us and in those around us. We want to give that force a name and identity, and to define our personal relationship with it." *Excerpted from the* Canadian Churchman

Boat people helped by Hong Kong Christians

Hong Kong—Vietnamese boat-people rest after a long trip from their homeland and await help in a Christian aid station. A senior US official, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, has warned that more must be done to cope with "the growing mass migration of refugees across the borders of the Indo-Chinese states." He advocates coordinated world efforts to absorb the refugee exodus. Despite efforts by the United Nations, more than 135,000 Indo-Chinese refugees now are living a hand-to-mouth existence in camps in Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and the Philippines.

For your informative, inspirational and challenging reading this year be sure to include our General Conference periodicals.

The Mennonite

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

seeks to witness, teach, motivate, and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. Published by the General Conference Mennonite Church under the editorship of Bernie Wiebe, it appears weekly.

DER BOTE

is a German language Mennonite family periodical of information and inspiration. Correspondents from Mennonite communities in Canada, South America, and Europe participate to make it a periodical of international scope, as well as being a unifying link for the German-speaking membership of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Published weekly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, its editor is Gerhard Ens.

Our General Conference periodicals include district inserts, *Window to Mission, Encompass,* and special commission issues of *The Mennonite.*

Your congregation will soon be planning its 1979 budget. Encourage one another to include your congregation on the reduced rates available through the Congregational Subscription Plan. It is the best way to "keep in touch" with the General Conference "family."

Tips on writing fiction, short articles, and getting published will be featured January 12-13, 1979, at the second annual writers' conference at The People's Place. Guest instructors will be David Augsburger of Goshen, Indiana; Omar Eby, Harrisonburg, Virginia; and Phyllis Pellman Good of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. For information write to The People's Place, Main Street, Intercourse, Pennsylvania 17534.

◀ **Memorial services for Thomas Merton** (left), the famed Trappist monk and author, and *Karl Barth* (right), often called the leading Protestant theologian of the 20th century, were held throughout the Christian world on December 10, the 10th anniversary of their deaths. Merton is probably best remembered for his autobiography, *The Seven Story Mountain,* an international best-seller. Barth, the author of some 200 books, made big waves when he startled Protestantism in 1919, puncturing optimistic, humanistic theology, by reasserting the themes of God's sovereignty and man's dependence on God's grace.

The "New Call" continues in Seattle

"Don't let the process stop here," was a closing cry of the New Call to Peacemaking conference (NCP) at Green Lake, Wisconsin, October 5-8.

Peace church members in Washington had a followup meeting on November 11 in the Olympic View Community Church of the Brethren in Seattle.

Convenor John Braun, pastor of Friends Memorial in Seattle (and former Mennonite minister), reflected on passages from Matthew and urged the 35 persons present to reestablish the centrality of a Jesus lifestyle.

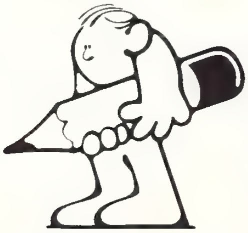
The filmstrip "A World Hungry" connected the issues of peace and starvation. Delegates learned that every 14 hours the US military spends 10 million dollars more than the annual United Nations' food budget. However, less such statistics only create despair, a chart accompanying the filmstrip suggests a grid of response—moving from knowledge to modifying personal lifestyle, to working for change within church and political structures. The filmstrip was recommended as a teaching tool in congregations.

Later in the day small groups discussed everything from immigration policies to ROTC in high schools. The importance of a spiritual foundation for a peace witness was pointed out.

Suggestions for future agenda included a newsletter and a local peace library.

A question raised by Kathleen Allstot, Church of the Brethren, remains: "Are we merely historic peace churches, or indeed current peace churches?" *Peggy Newcomer*

Attention Writers, Poets, Dramatists



Needed: Original scripts
readings
poems
stories
short plays
For performance by a traveling drama troupe summer 1979

Theme: Poverty and Affluence
Examples: simpler living; dealing with inflation; stewardship of wealth; the circle of poverty; the chain reaction of affluence; taxes; what poverty and affluence are; what we can do about poverty and affluence; dealing with the "hard sell" of advertising; guilt and money; etc.

Payment for manuscripts selected
Submit manuscripts by March 1979.

For further information contact: Lois Bergen, Commission on Education, 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114

What's on Wood St.?

On the North Shore of Hamilton, Ontario, in the middle of a low income/industrial neighborhood, there is WELCOME INN—on Wood Street.

For 10 years Welcome Inn has responded to the needs of its community. As a Friendship Center, it is committed to social services including Boys & Girls Clubs, Friendship to the Elderly, Emergency Care, planning family "get-togethers," organizing community meetings, and much more. MVSers have also been involved in an emerging community worship group.

Mennonite Voluntary Service has been heavily involved in supplying staff to this center.

RIGHT NOW!—we need three long-term (two years) volunteers willing to consider this assignment. Please respond—we need you!

Service opportunities through MVS are available in many other locations across the US and CANADA.

For more information please write:

Mennonite Voluntary Service
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Newton, Kansas 67114
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A United Church of Canada brief on divorce recommends the easing of divorce laws but calls for improvements in family counseling and support services. Though recognizing the importance of marriage as an institution, the brief states, "We believe the institution of marriage is more likely to be protected by enriching and supporting the relationship than the relationship is likely to be upheld by strengthening the institution." The brief supports the Canadian Law Reform Commission's suggestion that marriage breakdown be made the sole grounds for divorce which would be established by the conclusive evidence of one spouse.

The annual Pastors' Workshop to be held again on the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries campus in Elkhart, Indiana, has been slated from Monday noon, January 29, to Friday noon, February 2, 1979. It will have the theme: "The Pastor As Person, Professional, and Person of Prayer."

From ruins of institutional Christianity in China new life appears

In August, Dorothy Friesen and Gene Stoltzfus took a trip to Hong Kong and Canton in southern China. Friesen-Stoltzfus are a married couple who serve with Mennonite Central Committee in the Philippines.

Davao City, Philippines—In Canton we saw and photographed four abandoned church buildings. At one sleek, New England style church in the old British concession, the gate of the church was padlocked and high on the steeple a little bush was growing. Another church was being used as a regional government office and another (a former Catholic cathedral) appeared to be a small brick factory or storage dump. All were in ill repair.

Religion, like all prerevolutionary movements and values, has been thoroughly tested. Institutional religion is a thing of the past. When we asked the chairman of the 75,000 Jenho commune if any religious life existed in the commune, his answer was, "The constitution of the People's Republic of China assures freedom of religious belief and freedom not to believe. In our commune there is no organized religious life although a few older people still hold to some ancient Taoist beliefs." Later he added that in other communes there is more religious life.

Despite an outward policy of repression of religious life and the elimination of religious institutions, visitors to China have had a wide variety of contacts with Christian families where faith is passed on to sons and daughters, relatives, and other trusted close acquaintances. Public worship is rare but small group prayer/worship sessions are frequent. No one has any idea how many adherents there are now in this underground Christian movement. A member of our group quite by chance met a Chinese Christian on the street.

A closed Protestant church in Canton

Bibles are not available for purchase but visitors to Christian families have observed Bibles openly displayed on family book racks. During the cultural revolution, religious literature along with capitalist writings were often confiscated by roving bands of enthusiastic Red Guards. That was the most difficult time for people of faith. Institutional church life ended in the early 1960s.

A Hong Kong based Chinese man has been systematically interviewing citizens of China who identify themselves as Christians. Among these is a Chinese girl who reported regular gatherings of Christians in her remote village and in neighboring villages. She also described annual retreats in the mountains where groups of 50 to 75 Christians would gather for up to a week of worship, Bible study, singing, and fellowship. She reported that itinerate pastors occasionally ministered to these believers. Other interviews confirm the existence of groupings of Christians in urban and rural China.

On the surface much in communist-goverened China resonates deeply with biblical Christians' outlook on life—mutual help and communalism (the vision of Acts), simple life, just distribution of resources, and a prejudice in favor of the poor and powerless.

Why then do we find such a determined policy of religious repression? At least three considerations are pertinent. First, Marxism itself has little use for religion. Marx thought that religion, specifically the Christianity of his day, took people's minds from the real work that needed to be done to build a more just socialist society.

Second, Chinese intellectual life and society has historically had strong misgivings about too much religion, in part because religion in China has often emphasized magic.

Thirdly, in the specific case of Christianity, it has been clearly identified with Western nationalism and power, injustice, and corrupt "foreign devil" influences upon Chinese life. Despite its medical and other social and spiritual ministries, Christianity was not seen as a force for change towards a new or better China because many of these ministries existed as a result of the protection of foreign power or corrupt local landlords.

Nevertheless, seeds of Christian commitment that have the elements of health have taken root in China. Numerous reports suggest that frequently Christians find themselves in respected positions because of their honest and responsible work records.

Perhaps that little bush that is growing high on the steeple of the abandoned Canton church building suggests that out of the ruin of institutional Christianity a new life is rising. •

A Russian language Christian radio program for youth in the USSR is under consideration. Persons studying East-West relations report increasing interest in Christianity among Russian youth. Walter Sawatsky, a Mennonite Central Committee staffer working in Germany, says the new program should catch the attention of "thinking" Russian listeners. Research has shown that many non-Christians in the USSR consider religious broadcasts dull or outdated. Peter Dyck, secretary for Europe and North Africa affairs for MCC, has voiced support for the concept.

A study tour of the Middle East is being offered by the Council of Mennonite Seminaries June 11-July 2, 1979. Students may also participate in an archeological dig for two additional weeks. The major focus of the tour will be Israel, but other stops will include places in Greece, Egypt, and Jordan. The tour is open to anyone interested in learning more about the lands and cities important in the study of the Bible. Interested persons should write: Middle East Study Tour, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, 3003 Benham Avenus, Elkhart, Indiana 46514.

Record

Workers

Katie Funk Wiebe, well-known Mennonite Brethren writer and speaker, has been appointed literature coordinator of the Mennonite Brethren Board of Christian Literature. She will coordinate Mennonite Brethren conference publications, identify and encourage writers within the church, organize writers' workshops, solicit manuscripts for publication, promote published materials, and provide consultative services for other Mennonite Brethren boards involved in literature production. Wiebe teaches English and journalism at Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas, and frequently serves as a resource person at seminars and conferences.

Wiebe

Published

A Vietnamese Pilgrimage is a new book written by Max Ediger during his five-year experience with MCC in Vietnam at the end and following the Vietnam war. The book contains stories, poetry, and drama by both Max and his Vietnamese friends and is illustrated by the Vietnamese artist Buu Chi. It is available from General Conference bookstores for $5.25.

Since 1953 business, professional, and agricultural persons from Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches have participated in a cooperative venture known as Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), to help support people in developing countries who lack finances or skills to develop the resources around them. *The MEDA Experiment* by J. Winfield Fretz gives the story of MEDA's first 25 years. Copies may be obtained from MEDA of Canada, Centennial Drive, Kitchener, Ontario, T2B 3E9, or MEDA, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

In a MEDA project, Harry Peacock (left) of the United Church Committee in Bolivia and a local man lay a seedbed to protect seedlings from the scorching Bolivian sun.

Congratulations, You're Gifted is the title of a 13-week study of spiritual gifts produced by David C. Cook. This study is designed for young adults and older Sunday school classes and groups. The material includes a teacher's guide, several short taped messages on cassette, and visual aids. It is available from General Conference bookstores for $10.95.

A findings statement from the New Call to Peacemaking national conference is available from the Peace and Social Concerns office, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

Benjamin Sprunger, former president of Bluffton (Ohio) College, has written his first book, *Handbook for College Administration.* It is a collection of actual examples and working documents being used in higher education today with narrative/discussion of the generally accepted principles of management in administration. It is published by the Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges.

The life story of one of the leaders in the resettlement of Mennonites from Russia to Canada has been published by the Board of Christian Literature of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. *With Courage to Spare,* written by John B. Toews, gives the reader a close look at B. B. Janz, Mennonite Brethren minister and elder statesman, who gave leadership in the resettlement of Russian Mennonites to Canada in the 1920s. It is available as clothbound and paperback editions at $5.95 and $7.50 ($6.60 and $8.85 in Canada).

New additions to Mennonite Central Committee's ongoing development monograph series center on biblical faith and on family life education. "Biblical Obedience and Development," by Tim Lind, MCC Transkei, attempts to relate biblical faith to development. "Family Life Education," by Juanita Leonard, former MCC Kenya, uses a case study in Kenya as a model for discussion of teaching male-female expectations and conduct throughout the life cycle. Individual copies of the new monographs are available from Department DMS, Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501.

A supplementary packet to Kindergarten, Quarter Two, of *The Foundation Series* for deaf and hard of hearing students is available. The packet was designed for use with classes of deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing students, ages four to seven. It is available from Mennonite Publishing House, 616 Walnut Avenue, Scottdale, Pennsylvania 15683, for $6.95.

Just give us peace and we'll take care of ourselves."
(war-weary Lebanese)

In Lebanon, long distrust
between Christians, Moslems,
Palestinians and Lebanese,
has meant endless
fighting, confusion,
lost lives, lost hope.

Ralph and Phyllis Miller
worship with the local church,
work with Lebanese officials,
take seeds, poultry
and expertise to farmers
and aid to refugees.
They move
across conflict lines,
deep into Christian
and Moslem zones.

There is little peace in Lebanon
this Advent season.
The Millers, cherishing
a vision of Christ's peace,
stay in a land at war
to share with the suffering
of any faith,
to bring small beginnings
in a land where beginnings
are too quickly crushed.

Mennonite Central Committee
21 South 12th Street
Akron, PA 17501
or
201-1483 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8

"Don't build us houses, don't give us food . . .

Gifts of Christmas

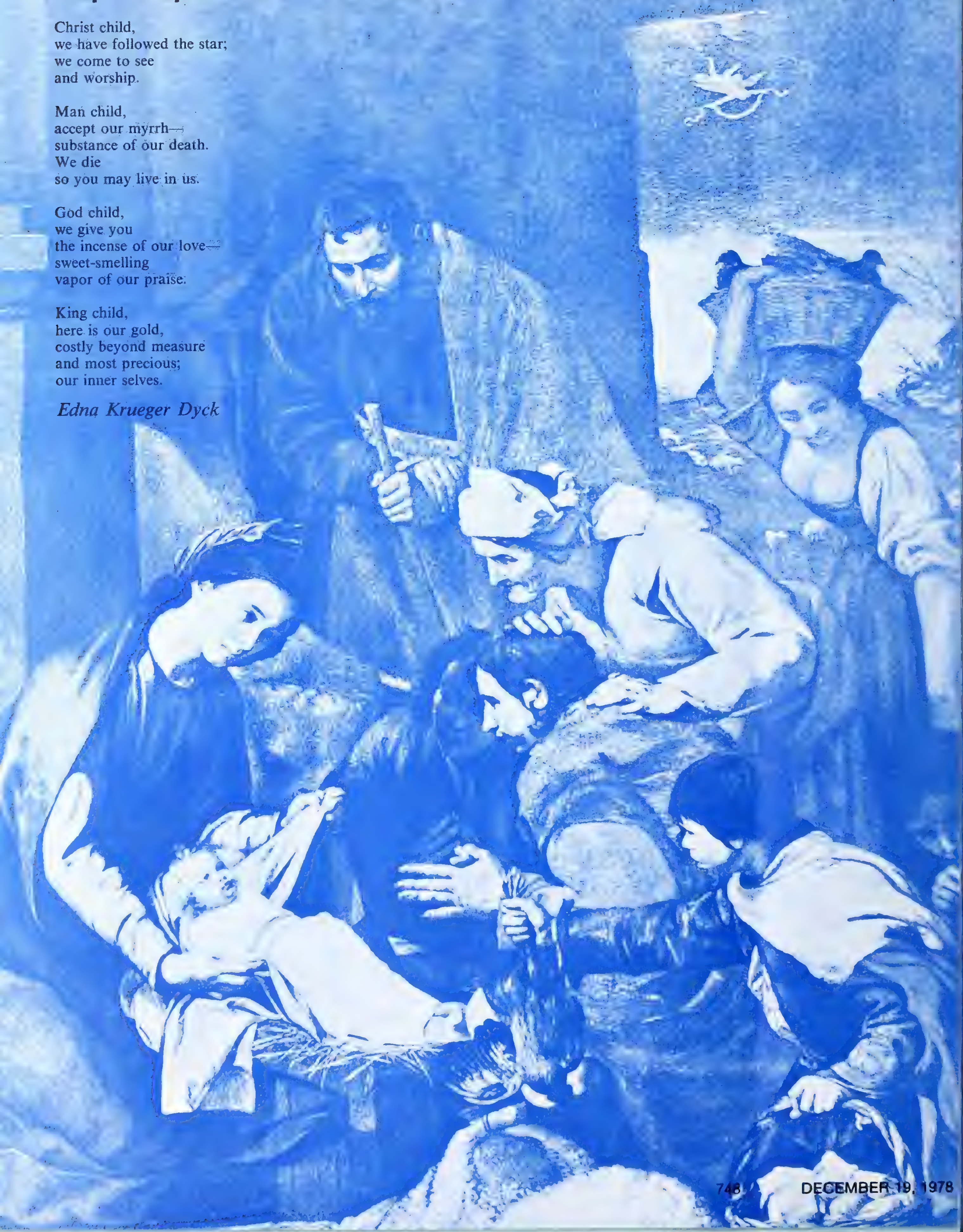
Christ child,
we have followed the star;
we come to see
and worship.

Man child,
accept our myrrh—
substance of our death.
We die
so you may live in us.

God child,
we give you
the incense of our love—
sweet-smelling
vapor of our praise.

King child,
here is our gold,
costly beyond measure
and most precious;
our inner selves.

Edna Krueger Dyck



Haze

Louise Dueck

haze
over the city
impenetrable
by the suburban
sun

haze
over my spirit
penetrable
by His constant
love

haze
over the future
penetrable
by childlike
faith

haze
over black death
penetrable
by a glorious
hope

haze
need never be
impenetrable.
He sent his
Son!

In the softened glow

Joyce M. Shutt

In the softened glow of candlelight,
in a room fragrant with the scent
of spicy breads and pungent pine,
I wrapped my Christmas treasures,
messengers of love and friendship.
Carols, ancient and new, spun dreams
of peace and harmony cradling me
in an aura of warmth and security.

In the softened glow of candlelight,
in a room fragrant with the scent and
sounds of shimmering Yuletide magic,
I saw reflected in the twinkling
tinseled balls, a swirling collage
of shattered lives, bitter disillusioned
men, crumpled, dismembered dead,
broken families, haunting eyes,
psychic pain screaming out
in deafening crescendoes of silence.

Silent night, holy night
a sniper's bullet finds its mark
All is calm, all is bright
a demonic plane, a searing light
Round yon virgin, mother and child
an angry, looting mob run wild
Holy infant, so tender and mild
landscapes denuded, our waters fouled
Sleep in heavenly peace

Dear God, hope of Christmas,
take our fragile, fragmented beings
and infuse us with the courage
and caring that dares to integrate
our diverse worlds of candy canes,
self-actualization, sumptuous feasts,
with the wartime massacres and the
agony and pain of hatred, apathy
and despair. Give us the gift of
awareness and enduring hope that reaches
past the boundaries of self and mistrust
to a life of Christlike openness,
expectant listening, loving acceptance,
and unwavering commitment to the promise
of God's love and abundant life.

Letters

Not respond to letters

Dear Editor: My husband and I agree with the position of not responding to letters on the letter page, even though it must be difficult to stick to that. Glad you print addresses so we can write directly to people we want to dialogue with on questions we may have. *Erlene Unruh, Route 2, Box 56A, Newton, Kansas 67114* November 2

Correction re ME news article

Dear Editor: I read with great interest "We Want Marriage Encounter to Begin Among Mennonites" (October 17 issue). I would be the first to say that Marriage Encounter is desperately needed, not only among Mennonites but for all people.

One little correction I would like to make is that Marriage Encounter (ME) weekends will not be "initiated" in the GC churches by the family life committee of the Commission on Education. The first ME weekend initiated by a General Conference church was May 1976, and by the time this letter is printed, the East Swamp Church of Quakertown, Pennsylvania, under the leadership of Norman and Janis Schmidt, together with their team couples, will already have had 17 couples attending ME weekends. Of course, I think of the Conference as being a conference of congregations instead of a conference of Commissions. So I may be wrong, since what we are doing here is very much a grass-roots movement initiated by the local church. Perhaps that doesn't really count, since it didn't come from the top level down.

Janis and I first attended ME in March 1974. Our first weekend with 19 couples, which we conducted, was held in 1976. The upcoming weekend of November 10-12 has 29 couples registered, including the four couples who work on the team. The couples, are coming from many different churches and various walks of life. As usual, we will again have pastors and their wives, doctors, a PhD in psychology, a television executive, and people from other vocations. They are coming from 19 cities and four states. One thing they have in common is a desire to strengthen and grow in their marriage relationships. The weekend primarily teaches a technique of communication, based on the principles taught in the Bible.

We have seen some truly fantastic things happen in the lives of couples. I do pray that the ME ministry may spread throughout the Mennonite churches and communities. I am convinced that we need to work hard at strengthening marriages, thus preventing major problems instead of spending so much time solving problems. A church is no stronger than the homes that make up that church; and those homes are no stronger than the marriage relationships between husbands and wives.

I would be happy to send a brochure describing our marriage retreat ministry. *Norman Schmidt, 25 East Swamp Road, Quakertown, Pennsylvania 18951* November 6

Theses not adequate

Dear Editor: I was initially interested in reading Weaver's *95 Theses* (October 24 issue) as I too have been asked about the uniqueness of Mennonites. But as I read, I was ultimately disappointed. There were several points that I found hard to swallow, but the thing I objected to most was not something that was said; but something that was not said. Of the 95 theses and over 3000 words written, only one thesis and some 20 words are devoted to the Anabaptist-Mennonite teaching on nonviolence. And even then, the statement is so weak and shallow that even the most avid 12th century crusader could agree to it. "Sure it's wrong to kill other Christians," he would say, "but the heathen are fair game in a 'holy' war."

In contrast to the 20 words on nonviolence, Weaver uses two theses (85 and 86) and over 60 words in statements about the architecture of church buildings! Where are our priorities? I am glad he concludes his article with an invitation to discussion and debate, because if he has hoped to illustrate the uniqueness of the Mennonite church, I don't think he has us well represented. *Barry Rands, 1521 North Bentley Avenue, Tucson, Arizona 85716* November 6

Some opposites are related

Dear Editor: I confess that after two careful readings there are still parts of Rosa Stone's article, "My Dream of a Consuming Fire" (October 24 issue) which I do not understand. I suspect there are many other readers in the same situation.

But one statement in the article, which is clear, is one which I feel deserves to be reemphasized: ". . . we cannot begin to forgive until we have already condemned the other person."

As I listen to what is written and said around me, I get the impression that it is assumed that forgiveness and condemnation are opposites and have nothing to do with each other. We must realize that not only are they related, but forgiveness is not possible without condemnation. This implies, of course, that to be forgiving as individual Christians or as a body of believers, we must accept a definite level of behavior and attitude and unashamedly adhere to it. How else will we ever come to condemn? (For Mennonites this norm is set by the Bible.)

It would be interesting to list more pairs of concepts which to our modern "logical" minds seem unrelated opposites, but which are in fact necessary to one another. I suggest *authority* and *love* as one such pair.

There is more in the "Consuming Fire" article that is useful. Rereadings are often rewarding. *Anette Eisenbeis, Marion, South Dakota 57043* November 7

Liked article on artist

Dear Editor: I enjoy *The Mennonite* coming into our house. Yes, it's controversial at times, and so am I. I also like your "soft" editorial position. I hope you can get me in touch with Stan Miller (October 31 issue). I'd like to see some show literature and/or price information from Stan. Philippians 4:11. *Russell B. Darling, 565 Churchville Lane, Holland, Pennsylvania 18966.* November 14

Subscription Increase

Effective January 1, 1979, congregational and every-home-plan subscriptions to *The Mennonite* will cost $8.00 per year (an increase of $1.00). Individual subscriptions will cost $10.00 annually (an increase of $1.00). However, if individual subscribers renew for three years the rate is $25.00.

If you have friends who are not receiving *The Mennonite*, consider gift subscriptions for them, or suggest that they can order it themselves by contacting the Circulation Secretary, The Mennonite, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114, or 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OM4.

Meditation

Add one more this Christmas

All morning we busily excited ourselves as we opened our gifts and displayed them. The warmth and joy of our family was obvious. One o'clock was the time set for Christmas dinner. Once the gifts were all opened final dinner preparations began. Wrapping paper was cleaned up and the table was set. We were ready to sit down and enjoy the turkey, stuffing, jello salads, and all the rest.

Just as we were sitting down to eat, there was a knock at the door. It was our neighbor, an older lady who lives alone. She had gone to church in the morning and had accidentally locked herself out of the house. She came now to see if someone could crawl through her basement window. One of my brothers volunteered and opened the house for her. Instead of letting her have Christmas dinner alone we asked her to stay and join us. We thoroughly enjoyed her company. Having her over for dinner added an extra touch to our Christmas celebration.

* * * * *

The Christmas season for some people is their worst time of year; they are unhappy because of loneliness. Many are old, friendless, and have no families. Some are young, in new cities and towns, away from family and friends for the first time, and are not able to go home for Christmas. Others are too poor to celebrate the way we do. They can't afford gifts for the family or even a Christmas dinner.

Look around you. In your neighborhood. At work. In church. At school. Can you find one person to share your family Christmas with? Can you see one person who will spend a lonely Christmas? Family services or welfare offices could suggest a needy family for you. It's too easy to give to charities and not have to deal with these people ourselves, especially at Christmas time when we think we're too busy and are more concerned about our own families. Think about this!

* * * * *

The Christmas spirit has been kindled in each of us as we've again listened to the Yuletide music. Kids have gone to see Santa and are eagerly awaiting his arrival on Christmas Eve. All month we have searched for special gifts for each member of our family.

Our houses are gaily decorated with lights. Christmas trees are adorned with tinsel, sparkling balls and ornaments. The aroma of cakes, puddings, cookies, and all the other specialties fill our house. Nuts, candies, peanuts, chocolates, oranges, and pop are bought and waiting to be devoured.

Time is taken to attend choir concerts and Sunday school Christmas programs. We watch television Christmas specials and listen to special music on radio and on records. Outdoor caroling is shared and enjoyed by many of us.

To make this Christmas celebration *more special,* concern yourself with the old person down the street, or a lonely person from church. Share your time and Christmas dinner with that person. Christmas is the time of year when lonely people feel lonelier and poor people feel poorer. Act in love and share your abundance this Christmas. It may not be much that you share or give to someone other than your family, but that someone will surely appreciate what you've done. Add a little extra touch to your Christmas this year. Share it!

Brenda Schroeder

hope

we stumble
and blunder
our way in a world
which benefits only
as we acknowledge His blunderless coming

it is incredible
that the Lord of the cosmos
becomes an earthling
to bring against all odds
hope

Menno Wiebe

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CONTRIBUTORS

Gary Harder, 11125- 76 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 0J9, is pastor of the First Mennonite Church, Edmonton.

David R. Nicholas, 108 Malden Road, Mattydale, New York 13211, is a free-lance writer.

Our special feature poets are Edna Krueger Dyck, Newton, Kansas 67114; Joyce M. Shutt, Route 1, Orrtanna, Pennsylvania 17353; and Louise Dueck, 55 Flerimac Road, West Hill, Ontario M1E 4B1.

Meditation writers are Brenda Schroeder, 528 Manchester Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 1N8; and Menno Wiebe, 10 Concord Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 1H7.

CREDITS

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Business and subscription office: 722 Main Street, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Telephone: (316) 283-5100.

Editor: Bernie Wiebe, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4. Associate editor: Vic Reimer, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114. Editorial assistant: Gordon Houser. Art director: John Hiebert. Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, Ohio 45817; Pacific District, La Vernae Dick, 588 Southwest Maple Street, Dallas, Oregon 97338; Western District, Elbert Koontz, Box 306, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Encompass, Mary Rempel, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114; Window to Mission, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805; and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

Servant leadership—3
We want prophets

Herman Hesse's *Journey to the East* tells of a band of men on a mythical journey. Leo accompanies the party as the *servant* who does their menial chores. All goes well until Leo disappears. Then the group falls into disarray and the journey is abandoned. They cannot proceed without the servant Leo.

After some years of wandering the narrator of the story again meets Leo. He now discovers that Leo is, in fact, a great and noble leader.

Was Hesse illustrating a universal truth—that great leaders are first of all servants?

Such a model for leadership would fit the Christmas event—God becomes a supremely vulnerable servant in an earth-baby—and it would also be appropriate to the Mennonite church in our day. Our tradition calls for servants of the Word ("Diener am Wort").

When we ponder the leadership needs among us today, it may be that we are looking too hard at the "popular" models of the world. Power comes from position, prestige, and popularity. Church workers who have given much of life, resources, and energy to preparation rarely have the "clout" which worldly leaders have. They are extremely vulnerable and can only *serve*.

But today's churches want more than *servants;* they are looking for *prophets* who can speak forth the truth and lead out dynamically.

What many Christians neglect is that prophets are not automatically so regarded. Most prophets have suffered repeated persecution and even death ("O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! . . ." Matthew 23:37a); from those people who should have recognized and affirmed them.

The prophets are among us; but it may be that we don't hear them even today. Those who seek for truth and prophecy have much to do with the leadership which we now have. If the servants are not recognized for what they really are (God's prophets among us), we must expect that they will become discouraged, like Elijah ("Lord, they have killed thy prophets, they have demolished thy altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"—Romans 11:3), and be ready to give up.

Too many seekers are looking for prophet-leaders of a totally different mold. They still want a Messiah who will sit on the earthly throne and visibly show his kingdom here and now. All the self-fulfillment, assertiveness, total this-and-that, actualization, true awareness, and command programs are tantalizing and can be of help. But none of them can be the prophet-leader.

That is what Christmas is about. Let us remind ourselves again.

Jesus Christ, Son of God, comes among us to be our priest, prophet, and king. But his style is that of "no form or comeliness, and no beauty that we should desire him . . . despised and rejected . . . like a lamb that is led to the slaughter . . ." Isaiah 53:2-7. A totally vulnerable, helpless baby!

His first capacity to serve was the sweet infant innocence, which always serves to stimulate smiles and affection. Only some 30 years later would he step out and serve publicly.

Was he really a prophet-leader to anyone before his death? (Well yes, there were Simeon, Anna, Mary, Mary Magdalene, the Gadarene demoniac, Lazarus, etc.; surely to them he was prophet, priest, and king. But I was thinking of the religious groups in Jesus' day.)

To the leaders and seekers in our churches; **the prophets are among us.** But their style may well again be that of the "lowly" servants. Look for Leo among you. Drop everything and follow the star to Bethlehem. And when you see the babe (the one many may regard as the lowliest of all) commit your support and prayer. Give what you can to help the weak become strong; to let the servant of God also be the prophet of God.

Christmas reminds us that the key is in our hands. Let us go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God in a manger. *Third in series of three. Bernie Wiebe*

This is the final issue of *The Mennonite* for 1978. The next issue will be dated January 2, 1979. A copy of the 1978 index is available to any reader requesting it from *The Mennonite,* Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114.

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